Using Peer Support In Developing Empowering Mental Health Services

Peer Support Worker Training Manual and Workbook

Field Version

www.upsides.org
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Content

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I Introduction

The UPSIDES project

UPSIDES (Using Peer Support In Developing Empowering Mental Health Systems; Puschner et al. 2019) is an international research consortium that studies peer support in mental health in different contexts, including low-, middle- and high-income countries in Europe (Germany, United Kingdom), Africa (Tanzania, Uganda), and Asia (India, Israel).

The consortium is led by Prof. Bernd Puschner at the University of Ulm (Germany). UPSIDES partners include: University of Nottingham (United Kingdom), University Medical Center Hamburg-Eppendorf (Germany), Butabika National Referral Hospital (Uganda), London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (United Kingdom), Ifakara Health Institute (Tanzania), Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (Israel), and the Centre for Mental Health Law and Policy (India). UPSIDES has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under grant agreement No. 779263.

Key part of UPSIDES is developing a training programme for people to be prepared to work as peer support workers, this document describes the training programme.

For more information see: www.upsides.org

Intervention and training development

The UPSIDES peer support worker training is based on: (1) systematic reviews of peer support worker trainings (Nixdorf et al., in preparation), of influences on the implementation of peer interventions (Ibrahim et al. 2020) and intervention modifications (Charles et al. 2020); (2) previous experience of each consortium partner in delivering peer support trainings and interventions; (3) focus groups and expert panels at each study site. At a joint train-the-trainer workshop in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania in February 2019, a working draft of this manual was delivered by experienced peer trainers with personal and/or professional experience of mental health conditions to future UPSIDES peer support trainers from each study site. It was then adapted according to feedback collected from train-the-trainer participants, manualised and piloted at each study site. Overall n = 45 participants were trained. After the six-week pilot phase, feedback from UPSIDES trainers, peer support workers and service users was used to finalise the manual.

The training consists of 12 core modules: Recovery, My Tree of Life, Peer Support, Communication, Supporting Recovery, Building on Strength, Community and New Perspectives, Trialogue, Role Description, Group Facilitating, Work Preparation and Peer Network. Additional modules from the UPSIDES toolbox can also be added to the core modules (e.g. Stigma; Rights and Advocacy; Trauma, PTSD and Dealing with Catastrophe; Financial Empowerment). Which additional training modules are included on top of the 12 core modules depends on their relevance to the specific setting and its users in question, making the training easily adaptable to different study sites.
How to use this manual

This manual is divided into two parts:

(1) Guidance for trainers to deliver the UPSIDES training (pp. 8 – 81)

(2) The accompanying UPSIDES workbook for the training participants (Appendix C, p. 87)

In the training part the trainers are guided through the peer support training, considering how it is facilitated, and what issues and questions might arise. It includes a detailed description of each module and the exercises of each session. It covers all 12 core training modules, including the core principles of peer support.

Each training module starts with a check-in for all participants to get time to settle down. Each module ends with a reflection and check-out to review the past training module and to implement a routine that the participants can rely on. During each module, different learning methods are applied. In the legend on page 15 an overview of the key training methods used in the UPSIDES training is presented.

How the training content translates into the peer support intervention and is currently implemented in the UPSIDES study is presented in table 1 on page 83.

In appendix A of this manual a list of references of articles on recovery and peer support is provided for additional reading. Appendix B covers suggestions for activities during the training. To include some physical activity in the training room, the participants can guide active exercises for the group. This could involve some dancing, clapping, drawing etc.

The core training is accompanied by a workbook (part two: appendix C) that is completed by all training participants. It contains all elements discussed during the training, the different exercises, and space for the participants to practice these.

The UPSIDES workbook should be printed out for the participants, so they can work through the exercises.

Throughout the training manual the pages in the workbook are mentioned in grey boxes.

All participants are invited to complete the workbook and the additional reading with material from their context, and to make this training their own.
Il Trainer guidance

Welcome to your role as a trainer for the UPSIDES peer support training!

This guide is intended to explain the key principles underpinning training of UPSIDES peer support workers, and to clarify the role of the trainers, the topics of the training, and the purpose of each exercise.

The goal of this training is not to teach or impart skills and knowledge but to access the participants’ existing skills, experience and knowledge and enable them to share this with others in the safety of the training room.

You will see that there are no formal lectures or PowerPoint presentations in this training. Instead, each topic begins with a discussion or group work to explore the experiences and ideas of all participants.

For the participants to be able to speak freely, they need to be sure that the training room is a safe place where they will receive constructive feedback rather than criticism and will be able to consider various alternative ideas and experiences suggested by others.

Also, for the participants to discuss freely and assess the appropriateness of different ideas and experiences, the first training modules focus on the recovery-focused values underpinning the training and the principles underpinning peer support. These provide a strong and effective framework for all training room discussions and for all of their practice as peer support workers.

The tree of life is an approach to tell your own story and it will play a big part in the UPSIDES training. The tree of life is an approach derived from Narrative Therapy. It was developed in Zimbabwe by Ncazelo Ncube-Mlilo and David Denborough (2007) to help young people who had been traumatised to feel safer when talking about their challenges. Since that time, it has been used all over the world by many, different groups of people, e.g. in Uganda (the Brain Gain Project, 2018). It is an approach to telling our stories in ways that make us stronger. The way tree of life is used in this manual is based on previous experiences from the Brain Gain Program (2018) at the Butabika Recovery College in Uganda.

Co-production, co-delivery and co-receipt of the training

This training aims to empower and enable people with lived/personal experience of mental health conditions to believe in their own ability to support others, to speak with confidence and authority to other mental health professionals as advocates and in pursuing the rights of people with mental health conditions. It is essential for participants to see this as a real possibility. It is therefore inappropriate for the training to be delivered solely by trainers with professional experience of mental health conditions. This simply reinforces the view that these professionals hold all of the expertise. Instead, participants must see professional and peer trainers in the training room modelling an equal and reciprocal relationship. The two trainers should prepare the sessions together and decide on an equal basis, taking into consideration their unique individual expertise, who leads or assists with which parts of each session. Contributions from all participants must be valued equally – whether they are peers, professionals or family members.
Creating a safe and inspiring space to learn

Number of participants

Since this training is all about sharing ideas and personal experience, giving feedback to one another and exploring different ways of being, it is essential that numbers are small enough for everyone to have a voice. We would suggest no more than 16 participants; an even number is recommended for exercises in pairs.

Support in the training room

The training is quite challenging and demanding for all involved. It can be tiring being in a training room all day long, and listening to others can be overstimulating and overwhelming. Participants may talk about personal experiences that remind others of things that have happened to them, and this can be distressing. Some participants may find it too challenging and not what they have expected. Therefore, when planning the training, it is essential to think in advance about how to support participants who appear to be distressed.

At the start, it can be helpful to let participants know that we all find the training quite difficult in different ways. If they have any concerns or start to feel upset or overwhelmed, they can either let one of the trainers know or leave the training room and one of the trainers will follow shortly afterwards to talk over options with them. Another idea is to prepare signs with different messages on them for those who need to leave the room. The signs can be left on the doorknob, saying, for example: ‘I just need a minute alone’, ‘I will be back in a moment’; ‘I cannot deal right now, please can somebody come after me?’; ‘I think I can handle, if I’m not back in 5 min, please have a look!’ You can decide in the first session with the group how to do it.

The physical environment

It is important to create a training room culture of equality and openness. We suggest that the training room is arranged with chairs around one large table or in a circle or with everyone sitting on the floor. You can also arrange something for the eyes to rest on in the centre of the group, e.g. flowers, reading material, stones etc. The point of this training is to demonstrate and value the expertise of everyone in the room. It is important that there is not one position for teachers and one for participants, so all chairs should not be facing the trainers.

It is helpful if the training modules can be held in the same room, as over the course of the training the walls of the room will gradually fill up with ideas, quotations, pictures, and questions. If possible, provide spare paper, pens, stickers etc. for participants to use in their workbooks as they complete exercises and make notes.

The emotional environment

It is essential that the training begins by clarifying the way that participants and trainers will interact during the training. This is often achieved by setting ‘ground rules’. However, we feel that a more empowering way of achieving this is by agreeing together the way we want to relate to each other in the training room. We call this the ‘Let’s Be’ exercise (see facilitators manual, module one).
Inclusion in the training room

Each participant in the training room will bring different strengths, skills and experiences, but they will also bring different concerns, anxieties, and different educational histories. For example, participants may have fears about their ability to complete the training and feel uncertain how to be in this new environment. It is therefore essential to include a wide range of different teaching methods to meet different learning styles, and ensure that everyone can find a way of understanding the key messages.

Teaching styles focusing on shared knowledge

The expertise is in the room

In the UPSIDES training, we consider the trainers to be more like facilitators, rather than teachers. During the workshop, the trainers should aim to actively engage everyone in the learning process and to participate. For example, when the trainer presents a new topic to the participants, e.g. recovery, it would be best to ask every participant about his/her own experience, definitions, thoughts or opinions about the topic, before the trainer brings their own ideas. During group discussions, it is important to make sure that everybody can contribute to discussions and to balance the time to ensure everyone can say what they want to say. This way, the trainer can make sure that every participant feels valued and can actively learn during the training.

From single knowledge to shared knowledge

For some topics, specifically the ones about personal experiences, a good way to bring together the knowledge is to work in three steps: First, participants reflect on their own, taking their time to think about what the topic means to them, what it makes them feel and then deciding which of their own experiences they would like to share with the group. Second, the group is split into pairs (or small groups) and participants are encouraged to share how the process of reflecting on the given topic has worked for them and what thoughts and conclusions they had about the topic. The pairs/groups then decide and write down together what parts they want to discuss with the larger group. They do not need to agree on each point but should have an understanding of why their partner included the information. Third, participants are encouraged to share with the whole group. Note the answers on a large piece of paper for everyone to see, e.g. on a blackboard, a flip chart or a poster on the wall. While collecting the answers, think about how the individual aspects can be brought together and synthesised. Make sure everybody is heard, in order to conflate the rich individual knowledge in the room into shared group knowledge.

Preparation of sessions

Please read the training manual module by module and think about how you want to prepare the sessions and exercises. We recommend having a preparation session in your training tandem to split up the tasks equally. You will need some big pieces of papers (here named “flip charts”), but it could as well be a paper roll or the back of old wall calendars, posters and the like. Some other items that may come in handy are colourful pens, paper, sticky batches, post-it’s, and maybe glue or other crafty things you have on hand.

In some exercises, optional ways to provide the exercise are provided and important
things to keep in mind while delivering the exercise are highlighted under ‘note’.

There are few roleplays you might want to prepare a small scenario that fits your country’s setting, in case the group does not come up with their own examples, or to save time.

You can decide how long each module and training session should be and when you would like to include breaks.

We recommend giving enough time for the tree of life sessions because these are about participants’ own experiences and will need to be handled carefully and with enough time for the presentations.

There are a lot of exercises in the training. If you have other examples for exercises with the same aim that fit better in your context, please use the UPSIDES implementation manual to document what changes you have made.

We would recommend you keep the first and last sessions in place as book-ends to your core training, but if you want to change the order of the sessions in between, or join sessions together to have fewer training days, that’s also possible. Again, please note down how and why you changed it in your site’s implementation manual, as it is important for UPSIDES to track how the training is modified for different contexts.

Thank you!

For additional training material and to connect with the UPSIDES trainers please also visit our UPSIDES training platform, available under https://www.upsides-community.org/.

We wish you a great training!
III UPSIDES Peer support worker training

This part guides the trainers through the UPSIDES peer support worker training. It contains:

- The concept of the training
- The purpose of the training
- A legend

Afterwards, the 12 core modules are explained in detail:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>Introducing the concept of personal recovery and discussing recovery from different perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>My Tree of Life</td>
<td>Explore own recovery journey based on the tree of life, and reflect on others’ trees of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Peer Support</td>
<td>UPSIDES key principles and values of peer support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Encouraging and supportive communication, including listening and recovery-oriented language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Supporting Recovery</td>
<td>Translate own experience and values into practice to support recovery planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Building on Strength</td>
<td>Translate own experience and values into practice to encourage moving forward by activating own resources and facing stigma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Community and New Perspectives</td>
<td>Support social inclusion and networking, linking with other resources in the community and developing a resource network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Trialogue</td>
<td>Bridging between different perspectives in the family and mental health treatment settings; opportunities and challenges as a peer support worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Role Description</td>
<td>Code of conduct for peer support worker, development of a role description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Group Facilitating</td>
<td>How to organise, prepare and deliver peer support in group settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Work Preparation</td>
<td>Describe own peer support worker role, application processes and prepare for work roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Peer Network</td>
<td>Build a peer support network</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The concept of the UPSIDES training

The UPSIDES training consists of a core training, which must be completed before starting work as an UPSIDES peer support worker. The core training is supplemented by additional training modules. Trainings on additional modules are held at regular intervals after the core training is completed, to support the peer support workers in their further development.

The **UPSIDES core training** includes 12 training modules. It is important to note that the structure and timeframe for delivering these modules are flexible and can be amended and changed as necessary. For example, it is possible to deliver each module in one training day or to split up the module and deliver the first and second part of the module over two days.

It is not recommended to schedule all the training days in a row. Rather, allow participants to have some training-free days in between, to rest and let the learning sink in.

The **UPSIDES training toolbox** provides additional training modules that can be delivered according to contextual needs.

Exemplary toolbox modules are:

- Empowerment
- Rights and Advocacy
- Use of Own Experience
- Trauma
- PTSD and Dealing with Catastrophe
- Experiences with Diagnoses
- How to do Community-Facing

Note: This list is not comprehensive and can be supplemented with your own topics and ideas at any time.
Purpose of the UPSIDES training

Aims of the training:

- To provide an introduction to peer support work
- To enable participants to draw on their personal lived experience to offer effective recovery-focused support
- To reflect own boundaries and resources to deliver support that is safe for themselves and the recipient

Learning outcomes:

The training will enable participants to …

- define principles of peer support and apply them in their practice.
- use their own lived and life experience appropriately and effectively in their practice, in a way that is safe for them and the person they support.
- take a recovery-focused approach in their work to inspire hope, encourage, empower, and support people to take greater control of their lives, their symptoms, their treatment, and facilitate access to opportunities in local communities.
- support people to identify their own goals and perspectives and begin working towards these, utilising community resources as well as appropriate services.
- support people to recognise their own strengths, skills and abilities, and the resources around them including friends, family and communities.
- support people in their social inclusion.
- support people to work out the best ways of keeping themselves well, drawing on their existing strengths, resources, and strategies.
- support people to identify when they need additional support and know what they need and how to access it.
- help to translate and be a bridge between the different perspectives of the persons involved in the support system.
Legend
During the training different styles of learning are used:

Check-in
The check-in session allows all participants to settle for the day and hear how everybody feels. It is also a good opportunity to ask if there are any questions left over from the last training module.

Sharing with the group
The participants are asked to share their experience and opinions with the group.

Presentation
Some core elements are defined and explained by the group facilitators.

Exercise
The training includes various exercises to practice and explore different important skills.

Working in small groups
The participants split up in small groups (3 to 5 participants per group) to discuss a specific issue. Afterwards, they present their small group ideas and thoughts to the other participants.

Brainstorming
All participants are asked to share their ideas and thoughts about a certain topic or question.

Role play
The participants are asked to engage in a role play and to work in a group or a pair to practice different skills.

Tree of life
In these sessions, the participants reflect on their own story using the analogy of a tree, the tree of life.

Reflection and check-out
At the end of each training module, the participants are asked to write down 3 or 4 key take-home messages about what they have learned during that module.
1st module: Recovery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overarching aim</th>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Understand the meaning of personal recovery</td>
<td>(1) Reflect on what recovery means in own life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) Be able to discuss recovery in different contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3) Be able to discuss different aspects of recovery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overview

Objectives

(1) Getting to know each other
(2) Creating a recovery-focused training room culture
(3) Participants reflect on different perspectives on recovery – their own understanding and other perspectives
(4) Participants discuss different aspects of recovery, e.g. hope, encouragement, empowerment, control, and opportunities
(5) Getting familiar with the idea of being a peer to someone

Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Workbook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Introduction</td>
<td>pp. 4 – 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) A bit about the training</td>
<td>p. 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Setting the culture of the training room</td>
<td>p. 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) What is recovery?</td>
<td>pp. 11 – 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) What does recovery mean to you?</td>
<td>p. 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Different aspects of recovery:</td>
<td>p. 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope, encouragement, empowerment, control and opportunity</td>
<td>pp. 15 – 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Recovery from different perspectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Guardian peer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) Reflection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) Check-out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recovery

(1) Introduction

This is the first time everybody meets, so it is important to invite each person to share something about themselves to gain confidence in speaking in the training room.

Start to learn the names of all participants and get to know a bit about their general personal background, e.g. where people come from. For the trainers, this is a good opportunity to gain an insight into the expectations and challenges expected from the participants. So, start with a round of introductions. There are many ways to do this, here are some examples from the UPSIDES trainers:

**Uganda:** Each person introduces themselves with their name and where they come from and then gives a sign with their thumb up or down to indicate how they are feeling. After finishing the round, you sing a song together that everybody knows and can join in (e.g. from school, “If your happy and you know it, clap your hands…”).

**Tanzania, India, Germany:** Everybody introduces themselves just with their names. The participants then split up in pairs and talk to each other about themselves. For example, they can ask each other why they want to become peer support workers, what they are expecting from the training, and what would be the most important things to know about them. After a few minutes everybody gets back in the group and each participant introduces the other person talked to from their pair.

**United Kingdom:** Everybody introduces themselves with their names. The facilitator then asks some basic questions (e.g. whether the participants have children, where they live) and assigns different corners of the room for different responses (e.g. no children, one child, two children, etc.). Then participants go to their respective corners and can talk with others who share this commonality.

**Optional:** You may find it helpful to provide sticky badges for participants to write their names on so that everyone starts to remember them.

(2) A bit about the training

After the introduction, say a little bit about how this training will run, e.g. how many training days, how many hours per day, break times, and how the training days are structured. Explain how this training might differ from other education that participants. The training is based on the skills and experiences of all participants in the room and it is about sharing them, so that everyone learns from each other.

Introduce the overall course learning aims and learning outcomes and program. Hand out the workbooks and let the participants have a first look at them.

An introduction to the UPSIDES project and the training is provided in the workbook:
Then explain the program for today.

(3) Setting the culture of the training room

Stick the words ‘let’s be…’ on the wall and ask all participants to think about how they would like everyone to relate to one another over the course of the training.

Each participant should take some time to think about what is most important for them regarding cooperation and interaction during the training and to write this down. Afterwards, each participant presents their suggestions. Discuss the collected rules and see where the participants agree and for which aspects you can find compromises.

Once the list is agreed, these sentences can be stuck on the wall to remind everyone of the way we want to interact during the training, and to refer to if these ways of being risk getting lost. Remind participants each day that they can add to the list or change it as they go along.

Additionally, decide together with the participants, how to support each other during the training and which system you would like to apply to ask for support (e.g. leaving messages on the doorknob).

Note: It is important to decide together with the participants how you would like to work together during the upcoming training, so take enough time to reach consensus and make sure that all participants are heard.

(4) What is recovery?

The first topic during the training is recovery.

Ask the group: “What does recovery mean to you?”.

Collect the different responses on a flip chart and discuss them. The trainers can also bring in their own concept of recovery.

Emphasise that recovery is unique to everyone and that recovery can include a wide range of different aspects.
(5) What does recovery mean to you?

After discussing a broad definition of recovery in the group, all participants should have the opportunity to think about their own recovery experience, by thinking back to a situation they recovered from.

Ask the participants to think about something that has happened to them which has been difficult, upsetting or stressful. Once they have thought of a situation or event, ask them to answer five questions about this in their workbook:

- How did you feel when it happened?
- What helped you to recover from it?
- What did you do for it?
- Who helped you to recover?
- How do you deal with the experience today?

After working for themselves, ask the participants to get back in the group and feedback their responses.

Record the responses on a flip chart.

(6) Different aspects of recovery
Hope, encouragement, empowerment, control, and opportunity

Emphasise that recovery is unique to everybody. What we experience during our personal recovery journey varies between people. There is not one perfect way to recovery.

Nevertheless, there are some aspects that are often experienced as helpful in the personal recovery process. Some of them might have already come up during the discussions and exercises in this module.
Some aspects are discussed during this training in more detail below.

**Workbook**

*Pages 11 and 12*

**Different aspects of recovery**

Split up in small groups. Each group gets one of the three aspects with the instruction to discuss in the group their own experience with the topic and how this topic can be addressed and supported in their personal recovery journey.

The three topics include:

i. **Hope and Encouragement** – the importance of being able to believe that things will get better, that it is possible to get through this time, that you can still live a meaningful life.

Questions to be discussed in the small group:

- How did you get back hope when you were hopeless?
- How can you inspire hope?
- What or who encouraged you in hard times?

ii. **Empowerment and Control** – Making sense of it. The need to understand what has happened, to find ways of managing/coping with these experiences, taking back control of your life and the things that are important to you, working out what to do to keep yourself well, or planning what support you want if you do hit a crisis. Be the expert for yourself and take control of the decisions about your life and your mental health support.

Questions to be discussed in the small group:

- How did you gain back control after a crisis?
- Why did this happen and how can you learn from this for the future?
- How did you make decisions for your life and your way of recovery?
- Did other people help you to take back control?

iii. **New Perspectives and Opportunity** – people need to see the possibility of a life ‘beyond illness’ and outside of services, that they are more than their problems and can have goals for their life. For example, engaging in social activities, living independently, getting into some kind of work, and focusing on their personal resources.

Questions to be discussed in the small group:

- What opportunities helped you in your recovery?
- How can we support others to identify and achieve what they are wishing for in life?”

Afterwards, each group will present their thoughts on a flip chart to the whole group.

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After the presentation, ask if the participants would like to add any other aspects to the list which they find key in the process of recovery and collect them on another flip chart.

Note: Alternatively, this exercise could be used by the participants alone at home after the training.

(7) Recovery from different perspectives

The term ‘recovery’ is frequently used in mental health services. During this first module, the participants defined recovery for themselves and what recovery means to them.

To close this topic for this module, the participants are asked to change the perspective on recovery and to think about three questions which demonstrate the difference between a traditional approach to recovery and a user-led approach to recovery:

• How would a doctor/psychiatrist/nurse judge whether you are recovering?
• How would a friend / family member judge whether you are recovering?
• How would you judge whether you are recovering?

Ask for their ideas, write them down on separate flip charts, and pin them on the wall to remind them of the different meanings of recovery during the training.

(8) Guardian Peer

The first training module is closed by assigning each training participant a so-called ‘guardian peer’.

The guardians should look out for each other during the upcoming training modules. How they want to support each other can be decided individually. Some participants might find it helpful if their guardian asks them sometimes how they are feeling and if everything is okay, others might prefer to contact their guardians when they feel like it on their own.

The guardians should be assigned randomly, for example by drawing names or by standing in a circle and being assigned as guardian to the participant standing next to them.

Note: You can decide how you would like to assign the guardians. The examples provided are just suggestions. However, if you are formulating your own method fpr
guardianship, please keep in mind that some people do not want to be touched without permission.

After being assigned, the guardians should have some time to agree on how they want to support each other in future training sessions.

(9) Reflection

At the end of each module the participants are asked to reflect on what they have learned so far and how this adds to their role as a peer support worker. When first introducing the reflection, ask some questions:

- What have you learned so far?
- What was new for you?
- What was challenging for you in this first module?
- What remained unclear / are there some questions left over?
- How does this add to your role as a peer support worker?

There are different options to set up the reflection sessions:

The participants can

1. reflect for themselves
2. exchange in small groups
3. feedback to the big group 3 take-home messages

Optional: You can also combine these options or do all three in a row.

(10) Check-out

After each training module there should be a check-out session to close the day. You can change the seating arrangements before the check-out to get the participants activated again. During the check-out, each participant is asked how they liked the module, how they are feeling, and how they are getting home now.
2nd module: My Tree of Life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overarching aim</th>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To explore their own recovery story using the tree of life and to share the story with other participants.</td>
<td>Discuss ways of using their own experience when supporting another person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognise the need to make decisions about sharing personal story.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Overview

Objectives

(1) Participants reflect on what part of their story they feel safe to share with whom and in which settings.
(2) Participants reflect on their own story: The everyday life and current situation, experiences and influences in the past that shaped their life today.
(3) Participants reflect on the personal strength, talents and values they bring as a peer.
(4) Participants have first-hand experience of sharing their own story in a group.

Themes

<table>
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<td>p. 20</td>
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<td>(3) Introduction to the tree of life</td>
<td>p. 21</td>
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<td>(4) The tree of life:</td>
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<td>The ground, the roots, and the trunk</td>
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<td>(5) Presenting the trees</td>
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<td>(6) Reflection</td>
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<td>(7) Check-out</td>
<td>pp. 22 – 23</td>
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</table>
(1) Check-in

Begin each day with a check-in.

There are different ways to conduct the check-in, e.g. let everybody sit in a circle and go from one to another to hear how everybody feels and how everyone arrived at the training today. You can also include little games, songs or pray together.

The check-in session allows all participants to settle in for the day and hear how everybody feels. It is also a good opportunity to ask if there are any questions left over from the last training module.

Optional: Every participant has the opportunity to lead a check-in or check-out session at a subsequent training module.

(2) The level of confidentiality

The second training module is about starting to share one’s own recovery story.

Before starting to share, it is important to consider what to share with whom and when.

Trainers may give an example here about what they would / would not feel happy to share about their own experiences.

The participants fill in the level of confidentiality in their workbook.

The level of confidentiality helps to organise personal information according to how confident and safe we feel when sharing it. For some information, it might not bother us who knows these things, but for more personal information, we need to feel safe in order to share it with others.

The participants should reflect on the different levels of confidentiality and find their own examples for each category. The aim is to protect oneself to avoid accidentally sharing information that one would have preferred to keep confidential.

If the participants want to include more narrow and specific categories for their own information, they can modify the levels in the workbook as they like.
Note: It is important that each participant has enough privacy to fill out this exercise alone. If there is not enough space in the training room, you could ask participants to go outside the training room for this exercise.

Get back in the group afterwards and share how it felt to do the exercise.

Discuss: Why do we feel safe sharing with some people and not with others? What makes us feel safe?

(3) Introduction to the tree of life

The central principle of peer support is ‘mutuality’, which involves sharing experiences in a way that is helpful and inspiring to those being supported.

Before sharing their story, it is important to think carefully about the story. This can include asking oneself:

- Where do I come from and how does that make me who I am?
- What has happened in my life that has made a difference?
- Who has helped me or made things tricky?
- What have I learned, what are my skills and qualities, what do I bring to this training that will help me support other people?

The tree of life is a tool to share personal stories in a recovery-focused way. In therapy the biography of a person is often told chronologically, starting with childhood and focusing on what went wrong. In contrast, the tree of life focuses on what has influenced a person in the past and what values and strength one relies on in their own life. In the same way that a tree keeps grounded with its roots, it is also growing upward and stretching out toward the sky, offering a symbol of hope and possibility.

Before the participants start to draw their own tree of life, it is important that they get to know the concept, first as a way of reflecting on their own story, and also because this may not be familiar to everybody.

The trainers should present the participants with information about what the tree of life includes, how it will be drawn, and where it comes from.

An overview about the tree is also presented in the workbook.

Note: The trainers can decide how much information about the trees they want to present for participants.
Information about the tree of life can include:

- The history of the tree of life
  The tree of life approach derived from narrative therapy. It was developed in Zimbabwe by Ncazelou Ncube and David Denborough to help young people who had experienced traumatising events to feel safer when talking about their challenges. Since then, it has been used all over the world in many different countries, e.g. in Uganda, the United Kingdom and Germany.

- Diversity
  Everyone’s tree of life looks different, as each tree of life represents a personal and unique recovery story. To demonstrate this, the participants are asked to imagine what their favorite tree looks like. Facilitators collect the different images from the group and acknowledge the variety in the room. Afterwards, the group is asked to think of all the different qualities trees can have, e.g. that children can play on them, they bring fruits, they grow over a long time, they offer shade.

- An overview about the different parts of the tree
  the ground = the daily life
  the roots = where you come from
  the trunk = your values, skills and strengths
  the branches = your hopes and dreams
  the leaves = important people in your life

**Note:** Before asking participants to draw their trees, emphasise that the tree is a way to share your story and will be presented to the other participants. Therefore, it is important to decide what personal information should be included in the tree. Remind the participants of the level of confidentiality.

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(4) The tree of life: the ground, the roots, and the trunk

**Draw your tree of life**

After being introduced to the concept of the tree of life, the participants begin to draw their own trees.

Provide flip charts, colorful papers, pens, glue and whatever else you could use to enable creativity.

Ask every participant to draw the outline of the trunk and roots (ca. 3/4 of the paper) on a sheet of flip chart paper. Emphasise that everybody can draw the tree exactly how they like, in whatever shape, color and outline. Each tree will look unique.

When everybody has drawn the outline of their tree, ask everybody to show their outlines and notice the diversity. Emphasise that the trees are always work in progress and that the participants can continue to work on them and amend them as they like.

**Note:** For participants who cannot or do not want to draw, you could prepare some simple, pre-printed tree shapes with enough space to write in. Emphasise that the tree of life exercise is not about drawing a perfect tree but reflecting and visualising their own story.

In this module, the first parts of the tree are drawn, including the ground, the roots, and the trunk. The other parts will follow in later modules.
An overview about the first parts is presented in the workbook:

The trainers can decide if they want to explain the first three parts all at once. This way the participants can start right away and decide on their own where they would like to start. Another way to do it is for the trainers to explain the three parts of the tree one by one, with a break after each explanation for the participants to draw that part of the tree.

**Part 1: The ground – your daily life**
To get started on drawing the ground, participants should think about things they are doing on a regular basis. For example, the places they go regularly and how their daily life looks at the moment.

**Part 2: The roots – where you come from**
The roots of the tree can include anything that has contributed to who you are today. For example, your heritage, what was important to you when you were a child, big influences on your life such as a favorite sports team, political movements, music, literature, or education, etc.

**Note:** For a lot of participants, the roots can be challenging, especially for those who have negative experiences or experiences of trauma in their past, e.g. experience of violence, stigmatisation or discrimination. You may find it helpful to address upfront that some people have difficult experiences in their past and they should decide for themselves whether they want to include those in their tree. If they do, they may choose to represent these experiences by coloring in the roots differently, separating these roots from others, or even adding special symbols - though they are under no obligation to do this.

**Part 3: The trunk – your values, skills & abilities**
After having thought about where one comes from and where one is now, the tree will start to grow. Talking about personal skills and what we are good at can be difficult for a lot of people, especially if some participants normally think more about what they can’t do. It is important to create an atmosphere in which it is possible to say positive things about oneself, and you can give examples from your own perspective. It could be good to start this part of the tree with a short ice breaker, e.g. a mindfulness exercise, or collecting ideas of general values and strengths from participants.

The participants are asked to reflect on how they want to be in this world, what things they are good at, and what somebody who really likes them would say about them.

**Note:** While the participants fill in their trees, it is recommended that facilitators work with everybody individually and go around the room to see if someone is struggling with this part or needs help with it.
(5) Presenting the trees

The trees can be presented at the end of the day, or there can be presentations about the different parts in between. If participants are having trouble filling in some parts of the tree, it could be helpful to have some conversations about these specific parts with other participants and/or the trainers as you go along.

Optional: There are different ways to present the trees. It is important to give the participants the chance to speak about their trees, as the aim of this exercise is to present and get to know all of the recovery stories. The trainers can choose how they would like this to work:

i. Poster presentation
   Hanging all trees on the wall and going from one tree to another as a group. The participant presents his/her tree in front of the group, and afterwards others can ask questions about the tree.

ii. Building one big tree together
   The group can also build a big tree on the wall that begins to show what sorts of experiences the participants are bringing to the training. Ask for suggestions to begin filling in one large tree on the wall, starting with the roots and ground and moving up to the trunk.

iii. Interviewing someone
   The participants ask their neighbor questions about his/her tree. Emphasise that participants should try to ask open-ended questions. Afterwards, ask each pair: What in your neighbor’s tree catches your interest? What did you notice?

iv. Get together in small groups
   The trees can also be presented in small groups. This could be helpful if participants do not feel confident or safe enough to present their tree in front of the whole group.

v. Feedback
   All participants should have a look at the other trees and name one thing they find interesting about them.

(6) Reflection

At the end of each module the participants are asked to reflect on what they have learned so far and how this relates to their role as a peer support worker.

(7) Check-out

End the module with a check-out session, in which each participant can say how they feel after the module, and how they experienced it.
3rd module: Peer Support

**Overarching aim**
To introduce and discuss the meaning of peer support, the principles underpinning peer support and to reflect and draw from personal experience of feeling successfully supported in recovery.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Learning outcomes</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop an understanding of peer support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Define principles of peer support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss ways of using their own experience when supporting another person.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overview**

**Objectives**

1. Participants explore their own experience with peer support.
2. Participants discuss how peer support can be defined.
3. Participants discuss the principles and values underlying peer support.
4. Participants visualise important characteristics in their work as a peer support worker.

**Themes**

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<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Workbook</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>(2) What is peer support?</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) Your personal peer</td>
<td>p. 27</td>
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<tr>
<td>(4) What does peer support mean to you?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Important characteristics of peer support</td>
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<tr>
<td>(6) The UPSIDES principles of peer support</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(7) Creating a superhero peer support worker</td>
<td>p. 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>(8) Reflection</td>
<td>pp. 29 – 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>(9) Check-out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Peer Support

(1) Check-in

Begin the module with a check-in session to hear how everybody feels, how they arrived at the training today, and if there are any questions left over from the last training module.

(2) What is peer support?

The 3rd module is all about the concept of peer support, what working as a peer support worker means, and what a peer support worker does. This is all informed by an understanding of recovery.

To start this topic the trainers can give a short introduction and describe what they understand of peer support and give their own examples.

Note: This introduction should be short, as the aim of this module is to give participants time to develop their own understanding of peer support.

(3) Your personal peer

After being introduced to the peer concept, the participants should think about their own experience with peer support. This does not necessarily need to have taken place in a mental health context. Often someone close to us has supported us when we were in need.

Workbook
Page 25
Your personal peer

This exercise is about a person who was particularly supportive in their own recovery journey.

At first all participants take time to reflect, thinking about who was a ‘peer’ for them in the past and who supported them during difficult times. They are asked to write down in their workbook who this person is/was, why this person was/is important to them, what the person did to support them, and what changed for them because of the other person.

If they like, some participants can present on who they have identified as their personal peer.
Afterwards, the participants should exchange what they have collected either in small groups or with their neighbor and discuss what they find helpful and supportive for people who experience difficult times or a crisis.

Each small group / pair should feedback some of the important aspects to the whole group.

(4) What does peer support mean to you?

Discuss with the whole group: What is a peer support worker?

Write the definitions on a flip chart.

Note: As this is an early point in the training, participants might not have a clear picture of peer work. This is absolutely fine, as they will have more time to develop their own understanding in the next training modules, which will culminate in participants developing their own role description (module 9).

To reflect on peer work in more detail, ask participants to split up into small groups and discuss the following questions, which are presented in the workbook:

Workbook
Page 26
What does peer support mean to you?

- What defines peer support for you?
- What is specific about the way of working in peer support?
- What is different from other work roles in mental health services?
- In which ways can peer support workers initiate organisational change?

Each small group writes their answers on a flip chart and presents them to the whole group.

(5) Important characteristics of peer support

Being a peer worker is more about the way you do your work than about what role you are in.

After having thought of a person who supported them in the past, the participants should now think about a time when they have supported someone else, and write down this experience in their workbook:

- What did you do?
- How did you know if you were helpful to the other person?
Afterwards, they are asked to discuss in small groups:

What are important characteristics of peer support?

Each small group should collect their answer on a flip chart and present their characteristics to the whole group afterwards.

(6) The UPSIDES principles of peer support

After the participants have developed an initial idea of peer support and principles for themselves, introduce the nine principles that underpin peer support in the UPSIDES conceptual framework.

The UPSIDES principles of peer support should guide the peers in their work, e.g. in what the interaction with a recipient should be like, how support can be offered and shaped, and how new perspectives can be discovered during peer support.

It is important that all participants start to develop their own understanding of the principles and how they can be used in their peer work. Take some time to discuss the principles in detail and find examples of how the principles can be used in this work.

The principles are only recorded in this manual and not in the workbook, as the workbook should be used by the participants for their own reflection and to develop principles for themselves. It is suggested that the trainers print the principles out and hand them to each participant for this exercise.

Note: You can discuss these principles in different ways, e.g. with the whole group by writing them on flip charts and going through them one by one. Alternatively, this could also be designed as a group exercise, with each group working through a worksheet with three of the principles on it. Ask them to discuss what each of these mean and then ask them to work in their small groups to write the meaning of each of these principles in a way that makes sense to them, and to think of what they will do that will demonstrate each of these principles.

Optional: If you want to reflect on the principles in more detail, they can be practiced in role play. Ask the participants to get together in small groups and develop a short scene which demonstrates one (or maybe more) principles. This way, the participants have the opportunity to try out the principles and how they can be brought to life in an interaction.
The UPSIDES conceptual framework

The UPSIDES project builds on nine core principles which describe how UPSIDES peer support is conceptualised.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> Mutual Peer support opens a space to share experiences of personal crisis and recovery.</td>
<td>Peer support workers have similar experiences to peer support users. The experiences of peers who give support will never be identical to those of the peers receiving support. However, peer workers in mental health settings do share some experiences with the people they work with. They have an understanding of the experience of mental health challenges, the meaning of being defined as a ‘mental patient’ in society and the confusion, loneliness, fear, and hopelessness that can ensue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> Reciprocal All contribute to and gain from the relationship in a shared process of growing.</td>
<td>Traditional relationships between mental health professionals and the people they support are founded on the assumption of an expert (professional) and a non-expert (patient/recipient) hierarchy. Peer relationships are non-hierarchical and involve no claims to such specialist expertise but involve a sharing and exploration of different world views and the generation of solutions together. Peer support is a mutual support in a shared journey of discovery, where both people inspire and learn from each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> Non-directive Acknowledging that everybody is the expert for his/herself.</td>
<td>Peer support workers develop solutions together with the peers receiving support, instead of presenting solutions. In mental health services, professionals often prescribe the ‘best’ course of action for those whom they serve. Peer support is not about introducing another set of experts who offer prescriptions based on their own experience - ‘you should try this because it worked for me’. Instead, they endure difficult situations together with the peer and help people to recognise their own resources and seek their own solutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong> Recovery-focused The relationship focuses on helping people to grow within and beyond what has happened</td>
<td>Peer support workers support the person on his/her path towards recovery, by supporting, encouraging and empowering a person to build on their personal resources and strengths, gaining hope for the future, and thinking about their personal wishes and dreams. Recovery also means focusing on more than being a patient and starting to move beyond a crisis. At the same time, peers acknowledge that recovery is a personal process and looks different for everybody.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Trialogues</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Safe</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
(7) Creating a superhero peer support worker

To close the 3rd module, everything the participants discussed about peer support and work as a peer support worker should be brought together – with fun and creativity!

The participants work together in small groups to create a super-hero peer support worker. These should include all sorts of skills and powers that are important for a peer support worker.

Each group needs a large roll of paper or a flip chart along with different colored pens.

Encourage the participants to be as imaginative, creative, and wild as they like! The superheroes do not have to be human and they can be equipped with superpowers.

Some examples of superhero peer support worker from the train-the-trainer workshop are presented in the workbook.

When the groups have finished their superheroes, stick them on the wall. Each group then presents their superhero peer support worker.

(8) Reflection

At the end of each module the participants are asked to reflect on what they have learned so far and how this relates to their role as a peer support worker.

(9) Check-out

End the module with a check-out session, in which each participant can say how they feel after the module, and how they experienced it.
4th module: Communication

**Overarching aim**
To reflect on the way we communicate and discuss, and try out listening to someone.

**Learning outcomes**
To get an understanding of recovery-oriented language.
To reflect on their own communication.

### Overview

#### Objectives

1. The participants reflect on how communication can be supportive.
2. The participants develop an awareness of how they talk and listen, and how important recovery-focused language is.
3. The participants experience effects of good and bad listening.
4. The participants reflect on how they want to communicate as peer support workers.

#### Themes | Workbook
---|---
(1) Check-in | p. 32
(2) How do we communicate do be supportive? | p. 33
(3) Recovery-focused language | p. 34
(4) How to have a conversation? | p. 35
(5) Practice listening | pp. 36 – 37
(6) Reflection |  
(7) Check-out |  

Overarching aim

To reflect on the way we communicate and discuss, and try out listening to someone.
Communication

(1) Check-in
Begin the module with a check-in session to hear how everybody feels and how they arrived at the training today, and if there are any questions left over from the last training module.

(2) How do we communicate to be supportive?
Open the module with a short look back to what you did in the previous module. Supporting the recipients moving forward in their lives and bridging to others, is achieved through communication, and this module focuses on how we communicate to be supportive.

Collect on a flip chart:

- What aspects of communication have you experienced as useful in the past?
- How can we communicate to be supportive?

Optional: This exercise can also be done by the participants working alone with the workbook or in small groups.

(3) Recovery-focused language

Positive reframing
In the mental health system, people are often confronted with negative beliefs about the possibilities for their future because of their diagnosis. In peer support, the focus of recovery is about hope for the future and encouraging and empowering people.

In this exercise the participants should reflect on how this can be communicated.

As a first step, collect sentences that the participants have heard from mental health staff or others about themselves or about other service users, and write them down on a flip chart. Ask for sentences that the participants did not perceive as helpful and use as examples of problem-oriented language.
Afterwards, these sentences are translated into recovery-focused language.

**Optional**: For this part of the exercise the participants can either work individually, in pairs, in small groups, or with the whole group.

The aim is to rephrase the sentences you collected in a way that is recovery-focused. It can be helpful to think about what the original intention of the sentence was and how this can be expressed in a more positive and encouraging manner.

**Note**: There might be some sentences that include stigmatising or even insulting messages. Not all sentences need to be translated. In these cases, the sentences can be discussed, and it may be agreed that they cannot be translated as there is no way of expressing them in a recovery-focused way.

---

**Workbook**

Page 33

Recovery-focused language

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4) **How to have a conversation?**

In peer support it is crucial to listen to the other person and be interested in what the other person has to say. Therefore, this training particularly focuses on listening.

Collect on a flip chart:

- *How do we know if someone is listening?*
- *How can we signal that we are interested in what the other person is saying?*

---

**Workbook**

Page 34

How to have a conversation

---

**Note**: This exercise can also be used by the participants to revise at home.

---

5) **Practice listening**

After having discussed different aspects of communication the participants should get active and try it out in practice. This includes two role plays focusing on bad and good listening.
Role play: Bad listening

Split up into two groups. One group receives the secret instruction to show really bad listening skills, and the other group receives the instruction to tell a short story e.g. the journey to the training location, or what they did on the previous weekend or evening.

The two groups should get into pairs and talk for approximately 5 minutes. Afterwards, the instructions given to the bad listeners should be revealed to the whole group to prevent misunderstandings.

Discuss the effects of the role play for the teller and for the listeners and collect the experiences on a flip chart.

Role play: Good listening

Split up in pairs by drawing names from a bag.

- One is a teller and one is a listener
- The teller is asked to think about a positive event in his/her life, e.g. a moment of celebration, achievement, a vacation, or a good time.
- The task of the listener is to listen carefully and to signal that they are listening.
- The pair should talk for approximately 10 minutes.
- Afterwards, each pair have time for a quick debriefing and then change roles, so each can have a chance at being a listener.

Discuss how the participants experienced this second role play, what they found to be helpful in expressing that they were listening.

Note: If the participants need more guidance on communication, some suggestions that are helpful to consider in a conversation are collected in the workbook. However, this module is less about practicing certain skills or phrases. The participants should reflect on their own communication and develop their own ideas of what they find helpful while staying authentic in their interactions at the same time.

Workbook
Page 35
Practice listening

(6) Reflection

At the end of each module the participants are asked to reflect on what they have learned so far and how this relates to their role as a peer support worker.
(7) Check-out

End the module with a check-out session, in which each participant can say how they feel after the module, and how they experienced it.
5th module: Supporting Recovery

Overarching aim
To further practice listening and sharing their own story when supporting someone to develop a personal recovery plan.

Learning outcomes
Discuss ways of using own experience when supporting another person.
Develop ideas how to support another person in their personal recovery.

Overview

Objectives
(1) The participants discuss their personal experience with diagnoses.
(2) The participants develop ideas of how to support recovery in peer support.
(3) The participants experience giving and receiving peer support and recovery planning.
(4) The participants reflect on their own needs.
(5) The participants develop a personal recovery plan.
(6) The participants collect strategies for handling crises.

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Supporting Recovery

(1) Check-in

Begin the module with a check-in session to hear how everybody feels, how they arrived at the training today, and if there are any questions from the last training module.

(2) Personal experience with diagnoses

Open the discussion to talk about participants' personal experience of receiving a mental health diagnosis.

Ask the participants if they have a diagnosis, if they know their diagnosis, and how it felt for them when they received a diagnosis. They do not have to share what the diagnosis is, if they do not want to.

Note: Some participants may have found it quite helpful to receive a diagnosis because it helped them understand themselves better. For others this might have been a shock, as a diagnosis can feel very stigmatising. It is important to emphasise that both experiences are okay, and that it is important to open the discussion and exchange their personal experiences.

(3) How can we support recovery?

The 5th module is about supporting others in their personal recovery. The participants should have the chance to reflect on what is helpful for them in their own recovery, practice supporting others to reflect on their recovery, and develop ideas on how to support others in their personal recovery.

Workbook
Page 39
Your personal experience with diagnoses

Workbook
Page 40
How can we support recovery?
The participants come together in small groups to develop ideas of how recovery can be supported and how to approach recovery planning. Encourage participants to exchange their personal experiences on what strategies they have found helpful and what strategies were not helpful or did not work for them when managing their personal recovery and wellbeing in the past.

Each small group then presents their ideas on a flip chart afterward to the whole group.

**(4) Introduction to recovery planning**

Setting up recovery plans is one option to reflect on the personal recovery process. This includes thinking about what keeps oneself well, how to include this in daily life, and what can be done in the face of an upcoming crisis.

Before the participants start setting up their own recovery plans, the trainers give a short introduction to the topic, highlighting advantages and potential strategies for recovery plans.

Recovery plans can vary in how they look and what they contain. Some examples of what a recovery plan can include are outlined in the workbook:

Additionally, the trainers can present examples from their own recovery planning, things they do on a regular basis that keep them well, and how they include these in their daily life, to model that recovery planning is a common topic for everyone.

**Note:** Similar plans are often set up in mental health systems too, e.g. crisis plans. A recovery plan used in peer support should always include the personal views, opinions, and wishes from the person to whom the recovery plan belongs, and not just what is generally viewed to be “healthy”. Personal recovery is unique for everyone and the personal recovery plans should reflect this.

**(5) Recovery planning**

The workbook covers some ideas about what could be helpful when planning for personal recovery. This includes thinking about how to notice when one is feeling well, what keeps oneself stable, and when one feels unwell.
First, the participants should think about the different questions. If they would like, they can take some notes in the workbook.

**Workbook**
Pages 42 – 44
How can you tell that you feel good?
What keeps you stable?
When do you feel worse?

Role play:

After having thought about the different questions for a while, the participants should get together in pairs and exchange what ideas they have collected. This should be a normal conversation where participants can further practice listening and exchanging their experiences.

Afterwards, the participants are asked to feedback to the group about how they experienced the role play.

(6) The UPSIDES sun

To bring together all the discussions from before, paint a sun on a flip chart or large piece of paper and collect what the participants need in order to feel well in their daily life. Try to include a variety of different things.

Note: The participants can use the collection after the training together with the person who receives support as a source of inspiration to develop new ideas of how to support recovery.

(7) Protecting the tree of life

As well as reflecting on what can be helpful for personal recovery, it is also important to think about how this can be applied to daily life. We bring together the aspects that participants identified as helpful - which are included in the UPSIDES sun - and also consider how to minimise the things that make participants feel worse.

Metaphorically, they are trying to minimise the stormy weather and maximise the sunny weather to protect their tree of life.
Role play:

The participants get together in the same pairs as before to discuss:
- How do I do more of what keeps me well, and less of what makes me feel worse?

Afterwards, the participants are asked to give feedback to the group on how they experienced the role play.

**Workbook**
Pages 45 – 47
Protect your tree of life
Ideas: How to protect your tree
How can you implement this in your daily life?

(8) What to do if it does not work?

Sometimes, no matter how carefully the recovery plan was set up, there can be setbacks. They are a normal part of the recovery process. It is therefore important to prepare for these times and to think about what to do after noticing that one is struggling.

Discuss in the group ideas on how the participants have handled setbacks in the past and what they do when they notice that they are feeling worse.

Collect the ideas on a flip chart.

**Workbook**
Page 48
What can you do if it doesn’t work out?

(9) Reflection

At the end of each module the participants are asked to reflect on what they have learned so far and how this relates to their role as a peer support worker.
(10) Check-out

End the module with a check-out session, in which each participant can say how they feel after the module, and how they experienced it.
6th module: Building on Strength

Overarching aim

To explore their own wishes and goals and to understand the meaning of supporting people to access opportunities and resources and to believe in and build on personal strength.

Learning outcomes

To be able to support exploring ambitions and planning first steps.
To generate ideas on how to build on people’s strengths.

Overview

Objectives

(1) The participants reflect on what gives them hope in their life.
(2) The participants discuss how hopefulness can be promoted as a peer support worker.
(3) The participants share their own wishes, dreams and goals with each other.
(4) The participants reflect how to support people to move ahead as peer support workers.
(5) The participants discuss how goals can be put into practice.
(6) The participants practice a peer support situation in a role play.

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Building on Strength

(1) Check-in

Begin the module with a check-in session to hear how everybody feels and how they arrived at the training today, and if there are any questions leftover from the last training module.

(2) How to encourage hopefulness?

The 6th module is about exploring participants’ dreams and building on their own strengths to approach their dreams.

At first, the participants are asked to think back to a difficult time in their life. What gave them hope to get through this, and what made them believe they can get past this? Collect the different answers on a flip chart.

(3) My hopes, dreams, goals and ambitions

Afterwards, participants have time to reflect on their own wishes, dreams, goals, and plans for their life.

They will work with their tree of life again and include their own wishes in the branches. An overview of the branches is presented in the workbook:

The branches of the tree of life represent the person’s hopes, dreams and goals for the future. These can include short- and long-term goals, which do not have to be realistic, reachable or specific.

The participants can use their own recovery plans and the trunk of their tree as a source
of inspiration for this task, as they include information about what makes them feel good, personal strengths, and what is important in their life.

To continue with the branches, you can ask different questions:

- What do you dream of?
- If you could have one wish for free, what would that be?
- What would you like to do more?
- Are there things you would like to change?

The participants paint the branches of their tree and write their hopes, dreams, goals, what keeps them well and what makes them happy in the branches.

Afterwards, the participants present their branches to each other.

Note: For some people it might be difficult to think about dreams, especially if they have experienced hopelessness in the past and could not see a future for themselves. In this case, it could be helpful to think back to when you were a child and remember what you wanted to do when you grew up, what plans you had for the future, and what you were interested in back then.

(4) Supporting people to achieve their goals and ambitions

After having shared personal dreams and goals, the participants should discuss how they achieve the things they want to do. Do they have any specific strategies? What worked well for them in the past and what did not?

Collect the different strategies on a flip chart.

Afterwards, the participants get together in small groups to discuss how they can support someone to achieve or get closer to their goals. It is all about finding out what interests a person has that can be built upon.

Emphasise that peer support in general is not goal-directed, as discussed in the principles of peer support in module three. The peer support should enable people to think about what they personally would wish for themselves, regardless of common societal standards.

Each group discusses the following questions:

- How can you as peer support worker encourage people to think about their dreams and goals and what they want in life?
- What do you build on to support people moving on?
- How can you encourage hopefulness?

The questions are also presented in the workbook:
(5) How to make a plan and put it into practice

One way to move closer toward achieving a specific goal is to make a plan on how it can be reached. For some goals, this is not easy, as they can be rather big and may include small goals that need to be reached in order to achieve the big goal.

As all participants have included goals in their branches, ask them to pick one and think about how they can get closer to reaching this specific goal.

The participants should get together in pairs and each present the goal they want to make a plan for. Together, they will think through whether the goal can be broken down into small steps, what would be the first step to get there, what is stopping them, and what might be tricky for them to follow.

If they wish, they can make some notes in the workbook.

Note: For some participants it might be helpful to work out a structured step-by-step plan. For others this can be stressful, as it’s easy to feel overwhelmed when faced with a big plan. In this task, participants can decide for themselves what they find helpful and how they can get closer to achieving their personal goal. Remind participants that there is no one or perfect way to do this. Making a useful plan requires some experience, as people need to try out different things to find out what works for them.

(6) Practicing a peer support situation

To close the module, the participants are asked to practice supporting someone who is facing a crisis and has lost hope in a role play.

Role play:

One participant plays a person in a crisis who feels hopeless at the moment. The other participant plays the role of a peer support worker and offers a conversation to try out different strategies discussed earlier in the module.

After the role play, ask the two participants about how they felt in their roles. Afterwards, all observers are asked to give feedback.
(7) Reflection

At the end of each module the participants are asked to reflect on what they have learned so far and how this relates to their role as a peer support worker.

(8) Check-out

End the module with a check-out session, in which each participant can say how they feel after the module, and how they experienced it.
7th module: Community and New Perspectives

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<th>Overarching aim</th>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To understand the meaning of supporting people to access community opportunities, to explore their own network using the tree of life and to recognise the resources in the network and community.</td>
<td>To develop ideas on how to connect the recipient and set up a network within the community.</td>
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<td>To have an overview about potential resources in the community.</td>
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**Overview**

**Objectives**

1. The participants reflect on which resources they use in their daily life.
2. The participants share with each other who is important to them.
3. The participants develop ideas of how to support someone to (re-)engage with the community.
4. The participants discuss how to grow a resource network in the community.
5. The participants practice promoting social inclusion and linking to the community.

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<td>(6) Resource network</td>
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<td>(7) Reflection</td>
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<tr>
<td>(8) Check-out</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
(1) Check-in

Begin the module with a check-in session to hear how everybody is feeling, how they arrived at the training today, and if there are any questions leftover from the last training module.

(2) The personal resources

The 7th module focuses on what resources are available and can be accessed in order to receive support during hard times.

Peer support workers can be a bridge for the recipients to their families, their communities and to other institutions, organisations or facilities. Linking with other resources helps to keep a person well and to move forward in achieving their own dreams and ambitions.

The discussion should be opened up on what personal resources the participants are using frequently or have used in the past. This can include all sorts of different resources, e.g. institutions, activities, hobbies, people, pets, etc.

Collect the different resources on a flip chart.

Note: What and how many resources are available depends highly on the context a person is living in. Sometimes people are not aware of what is available, of the potential their resources have, and sometimes resources are limited. In these cases, it can be helpful to support the person and to think together about what is available and what can be used.

(3) The important people in your life

One important resource is the people who surround and support us. Ask participants to consider these people when adding leaves to their tree of life.

The leaves include all people whom the participants see as important in their lives. They are asked to reflect on the people who surround them and consider which of these people have had a significant influence on them. This can include, family, friends, as well as characters from books or movies, or artists. Additionally, pets or spiritual animals or the like can also be included here.
The participants can use a variety of different materials for this. For example, they can draw the leaves, use real dried leaves, or cut them out of coloured paper or cardboard, and write in each leaf the name of an important person in their life.

An overview about the leaves is presented in the workbook:

Workbook
Page 62
Let your tree flourish

**Note:** For some participants this task can be difficult. Work with the participants to see if they are having trouble with this task and remind them of the wide range of potential sources they might consider - including books, movies, music, etc., as these may be important influences. If some participants feel they have no one, this task may bring up feelings of loneliness or sadness. Address these topics with the participants alone. At the end, every participant should have added at least one leaf to their tree of life.

Afterwards, all participants should present their leaves to each other.

(4) **Linking with the community**

The participants split up into small groups to discuss how they would support others to form links with their community and access resources.

- *What resources and connections are there to help people pursue their goals?*
- *What might be difficult?*
- *What are the opportunities and resources available to cover basic needs, connect with others, be active, learn and give?*
- *How can you learn about and connect with new resources?*

They can also think back to experiences of support in the past, and if so, what they have found helpful, or what they have wished for.

These questions are also presented in the workbook:

Workbook
Page 63
Linking with the community

Each group then collects their ideas on a flip chart and presents them to the group.
(5) Practice linking with the community

After discussing how people can be supported to discover new resources, access them, or connect to their community, the participants should try this out in a role play.

Role play

The role play includes two participants: one in the role of a recipient and the other in the role of a peer support worker.

The task of the peer support worker is to talk with the recipient about their resources, and how they can support them to link with the community.

Afterwards, ask the two participants how they felt in their roles, what worked well and what they found difficult, before asking the other participants to give feedback.

Note: The aim of the role play is to experience how people can be supported to develop new ideas for themselves about the resources they may already have, the resources they may have had in the past, and what else they would like to try. It is not about giving advice but rather helping the other person to reflect on this.

(6) Resource network

To close the module, ask participants to reflect on a resource network they have used or heard of including services, organisations and other locations, and collect these on a flip chart. Other networks such as blogs, websites, low-budget activities, self-help groups, inspiring books, songs, etc. are also important in order to create a rich resource network.

Ask each participant to reflect and then write their resources on a piece of paper. If they wish, they can also take notes in the workbook.
Afterwards, ask all participants to stick their examples onto the flip chart and present these resources to the group. Take some time again to discuss as a group regarding resources available in local region which people can access, attend and use.

After the training, the resource network should be regularly updated and made accessible for all peer support workers and their recipients.

**Note:** As it might be difficult for participants to recall all of the services, institutions, organisations, etc. that they know, it can be helpful to inform participants of this task in advance, so that everybody has some time to reflect and maybe look up names, addresses, or contact information if possible.

(7) **Reflection**

At the end of each module the participants are asked to reflect on what they have learned so far and how this relates to their role as a peer support worker.

(8) **Check-out**

End the module with a check-out session, in which each participant can say how they feel after the module, and how they experienced it.
8th module: Trialogue

Overarching aim
To open up the discussion to talk about the personal expectations associated with peer work, to get a sense of self efficacy for challenging situations, and to explore the connecting and bridging role of a peer support worker.

Learning outcomes
To reflect on personal problem-solving.
To verbalise personal expectations regarding peer support.
To reflect on how to bridge between different perspectives.

Overview

Objectives
(1) The participants share their experiences of dealing with problems.
(2) The participants develop ideas on how problems can be solved and who needs to be involved.
(3) The participants reflect on how and where they want to work as a peer support worker.
(4) The participants discuss what opportunities they expect in peer support.
(5) The participants practice bridging between different perspectives.

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Trialogue

(1) Check-in
Begin the module with a check-in session to hear how everybody is feeling, how they arrived at the training today, and if there are any questions leftover from the last training module.

(2) How did you deal with problems in the past?
The 8th module focuses on how to deal with problems, expectations regarding work as a peer support worker, and how to practice bridging between different perspectives when including different stakeholders in conversation. We use the term ‘trialogue’ here to highlight the different perspectives of service users, mental health workers, family members, friends, and peer support workers. To aim working community-focused in peer support it is crucial to include these different perspectives and stakeholders in conversation.

We all face challenges throughout our lives, for example, when coping with problems that get in the way of us doing the things we want to do or the relationships we want to have. We must make decisions deciding what we want to do and where we want to go in life, how we want to do it, and who we want to include. Everyone needs to work out ways of addressing the challenges they face by planning a course of action to either confront them or find a way around them.

To start the module, open up the discussion and ask how the participants deal with problems or have dealt with problems in the past. The trainers can also include their own examples if they wish.

Collect the different strategies on a flip chart.

Note: As always, there is no right or wrong, and everybody deals with problems in their own way. Sometimes it might be helpful to ignore a problem for some time, until one feels able to tackle it or ask for help. Emphasise that the discussion is not about finding one perfect way to deal with problems, but to collect a wide range of different strategies. Although it may affect you the most, you are often not alone in your problems. Questions to thinks about can be who needs to understand your struggle or understand it better, and who you need to involve in order to move forward.
(3) A personal problem-solving approach

After participants have shared their personal strategies when facing problems, present the participants one way of dealing with problems.

This includes different steps that can help us to understand what the problem actually is and who to involve when tackling the problem (family, friends, social worker, medical staff), to generate ideas about how to tackle the problem, and to try them out to see if they are useful.

Afterwards, each participant picks one personal problem and the participants work together in small groups to develop ideas on how to approach the problem, who to involve, and how.

Participants can take notes in the workbook:

Optional: This exercise can also be approached from a different direction, one with more humor. Participants can come up with ideas of what they would do to ensure that they fail to sort out their problem. This version of the exercise might open a new perspective on the problem and can be more fun and less serious.

Afterwards, review with the group how they found the exercise and if it was helpful for their own personal problem.

(4) The personal idea of peer support

At this point in the training, participants have discussed a lot about what peer support means and how it works.

Now, they are asked to reflect on how and where they would like to work as a peer support worker in the future.

First, each participant considers for themselves: Do they already have an idea of where they would prefer to work as a peer support worker and what tasks they would like to take on? For example, working on a ward, in the community, in one-to-one or group settings, etc.

If they wish, they can take notes in the workbook:
Afterwards, the participants get together in pairs to share where they see themselves as peer support workers. Additionally, they can exchange ideas of where they would expect to see their partner, and what they think this person would be good at.

Ask the participants how the exercise was and if they have an idea now of how and where they would like to work.

(5) Opportunities in peer support

Ask the participants split up into small groups to discuss what opportunities they see in peer support.

- Why did they want to work as a peer support worker?
- What do they find exciting?
- What are they looking forward to?
- What do they like about this work?

An overview of the task is presented in the workbook:

Each group collects their ideas on a flip chart and presents them to the group.

(6) Bridging between different perspectives

To close the module, the participants practice including different perspectives in peer work. First, gather them all around one table, to explain:

Usually, there are many different people involved in the mental health system, e.g. peer support workers, family members, friends, mental health workers, and the user. Including all these people and their unique perspectives can help to craft the best possible care and selfcare for the recipient. Every perspective on a situation can provide you with helpful information to improve your understanding.

Having the people who are involved in the recipient’s mental health care together is a powerful situation that may reveal conflicts. Make sure that everybody is heard, understood and focused on how the recipient wants to move on from here. By having
all the information necessary, the group can come to a decision and if possible agree with all the other members involved. It is important to translate between their different perspectives, and this is particularly important for the recipient.

**Role play**

Split up into small groups and decide which people will be included in the role play, e.g. a recipient, a mental health worker, a family or community member, and the peer support worker.

The small group can discuss what conflict they want to talk about in the role play and decide which position in this conflict each person will take.

Then they role play a session.

A description of the role play is presented in the workbook:

Afterwards, review the role play. First, the protagonists of the role play share their experiences with the group, and then the observers give their feedback.

**Reflection**

At the end of each module the participants are asked to reflect on what they have learned so far and how this relates to their role as a peer support worker.

End the module with a check-out session, in which each participant can say how they feel after the module, and how they experienced it.
9th module: Role Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overarching aim</th>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To identify the challenges that might be faced by peer support workers, discuss Do’s and Don’ts, and build on experiences to develop own role description.</td>
<td>To understand how to deal with challenges in peer support work. To be able to describe own role as a peer support worker.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overview

Objectives

(1) The participants discuss what challenges they expect in peer support.
(2) The participants gain confidence that the expected challenges can be addressed and develop ideas on how they can be tackled.
(3) The participants reflect on ethical practice in their work role and develop their own code of conduct to prepare themselves for their new role.
(4) The participants get an overview about the different roles in peer support.
(5) The participants reflect on their own role description.

Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Workbook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Check-in</td>
<td>pp. 78 – 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Challenges in peer support</td>
<td>p. 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Practice dealing with difficult situations in peer support</td>
<td>p. 81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) The code of conduct</td>
<td>p. 82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Different roles of a peer support worker</td>
<td>p. 83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) A peer support worker role description</td>
<td>pp. 84 – 85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Reflection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Check-out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Role Description

(1) Check-in
Begin the module with a check-in session to hear how everybody is feeling, how they arrived at the training today, and if there are any questions leftover from the last training module.

(2) Challenges in peer support
After discussing positive expectations of peer work in previous modules, ask each participant to now think for themselves about their worries and negative expectations.
- What challenges do they know or expect as a peer support worker?
- What is worrying them about being a peer support worker?
- What could be difficult?

If they want, they can take notes in the workbook.

Everybody notes down their personal challenges and pins them up on a flip chart.

Afterwards, develop ideas on how the challenges can be addressed in their daily work and note the ideas on a flip chart.

Note: There might not be a quick solution for all the challenges. Some of them perhaps need to be addressed on a more structural, societal, or political level. Nevertheless, it is important to talk about how to deal with the challenges that might occur in order to feel prepared to work as a peer support worker.
(3) Practice dealing with difficult situations in peer support

After having developed different solutions and ideas on how to deal with the expected challenges, the participants will then practice a difficult situation in a role play.

Ask them to get together with two or three other participants and discuss what difficulty they would like to include in their role play. Of course, this should not include violent or aggressive behaviour.

Then they role play a peer support situation including the expected challenge.

Afterwards, review the role play. First, the protagonists of the role play share their experiences with the group.

- How did they feel in this situation?
- How did they handle the situation?

Then, the observers give their feedback.

(4) The code of conduct

Providing safe peer support for the peer support worker and the recipients requires reflection on ethical behaviour in the work role.

Ask the participants how they want to work as a peer support worker.

- What ethics, or codes of conduct might be important for them during their work?
- What do they think needs to be part of good practice?
- What topics are important to reflect on?

Hang up two flip charts, one with “Do’s”, and one with “Don’ts” written on them. Collect examples for both with the group and discuss them.

An overview of the exercise is presented in the workbook:

Optional: This exercise can also be conducted in small groups or as individual work.
(5) Different roles of a peer support worker

Drawing from experience and research, we know how important it is to have a clear role description for peer support workers within an organisation. In this module, we want to work out a clear role description for the local UPSIDES peer support workers.

Open up the discussion about why it is important as a peer support worker to have a role description. How could the role description support their own work?

Additionally, there are a lot of different tasks that a peer support worker can do, different places they can work, and this comes with a variety of different role expectations.

Collect examples with the group on a flip chart.

(6) A peer support worker role description

To close the module, ask the participants to get together in small groups and write their own role description.

How would they explain their work as a peer support worker to others, for example on a flyer?

If they want, they can take notes in the workbook:

Each group presents their role description on a flip chart.

(7) Reflection

At the end of each module the participants are asked to reflect on what they have learned so far and how this relates to their role as a peer support worker.
(8) Check-out

End the module with a check-out session, in which each participant can say how they feel after the module, and how they experienced it.
10th module: Group Facilitating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overarching aim</th>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To practice how to set up and deliver a recovery group.</td>
<td>To develop ideas on how to set up peer support in a group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To discuss what topics and exercises can be delivered in a group setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To practice delivering peer support in a group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overview

Objectives

(1) The participants share their personal experience with groups in the past.
(2) The participants develop ideas about the content of a recovery group.
(3) The participants reflect on how they would like to set up the recovery group.
(4) The participants reflect on their personal role as a group moderator.
(5) The participants develop an exercise for the group.
(6) The participants gain confidence in moderating skills.
(7) The participants practice moderating a group.

Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Workbook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Check-in</td>
<td>p. 87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Personal experience with groups</td>
<td>p. 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) The content of a recovery group</td>
<td>p. 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) How to set up a group</td>
<td>p. 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Develop your own exercises for the group</td>
<td>p. 91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Practice group moderating</td>
<td>pp. 92 – 93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Reflection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Check-out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Group Facilitating

(1) Check-in

Begin the module with a check-in session to hear how everybody is feeling, how they arrived at the training today, and if there are any questions leftover from the last training module.

(2) Personal experience with groups

Most people with experience of the mental health system have participated in groups, including therapeutic groups, art groups, self-help groups, etc.

Before talking about recovery groups and how they can be set up as part of UPSIDES peer support, we want to open the discussion for participants to talk about their previous experience with groups.

- What did they experience as helpful in the groups?
- What was difficult or challenging?
- What would they include in their own group?
- What do they want to avoid or change?
- Do they have worries or fears when thinking about being the moderator of a group?

Collect the key messages on a flip chart.

(3) The content of a recovery group

Participants may already understand that a recovery group delivered by a peer support worker - perhaps in contrast to other types of groups - will focus on personal recovery and recovery planning. However, they might need some time to reflect on what exactly will happen in the group sessions.

Ask the participants to develop their own ideas of what a recovery group can include. For example, what topics would they like to discuss during the group sessions? What would they find interesting? Are there any topics they would rather not discuss in a group?

If they wish, they can take notes in their workbook.
Afterwards, collect the different ideas and topics on a flip chart.

(4) How to set up a group

After having thought about what they would like to discuss during the group meetings, the participants should reflect on how they would like to set up their own group.

Participants split up into small groups and discuss how they would like to design their recovery group:

- How would they start the first session?
- How would they facilitate getting to know each other?
- How would they discuss the group rules?
- Who can participate in the group?
- How many participants can be a part of the group?
- How often will the group sessions take place?
- In what setting will the group sessions take place?
- Is there a room they can use for the group sessions?

The different questions to consider are also presented in the workbook:

Each small group summarises their ideas on a flip chart and presents them to the larger group.

(5) Develop your own exercises for the group

After having discussed what to include in a recovery group and how the group can be set up, the participants should develop an exercise for a group setting.
Ask participants to get into pairs. Each pair can discuss what topic they would like to address, and how they would do this. Participants can be as creative as they like, and can use an exercise they already know from the UPSIDES training, exercises from other groups or trainings, or develop a new exercise.

The exercises will not be presented to the group but tried out with the group. Ask the participants how the exercise was and if they had any difficulties.

**Note:** To develop a new exercise is no easy task and might put some participants under pressure. Work together with the pairs to see if they are having trouble and if you can support them in any way. Emphasise that it is not about creating a perfect exercise but rather gathering ideas that can be tried out with the group.

**Practice group moderating**

To close the module, the participants should practice moderating a group. The pairs will be asked to instruct the group and try out the exercise they have developed in the previous task.

**Optional:** Depending on the time, it is possible that not all pairs will have the opportunity to try out their exercises.

Afterwards, take some time to review how the participants felt when moderating the group, what worked well, and what was challenging. The other participants can provide their feedback.

**Note:** This role play should allow the participants to improve their confidence and see how they feel when standing in front of a group whilst giving instructions. For people who might have never done this before, this task can be quite challenging. Emphasise that it takes experience and practice to feel confident in front of a group. Additionally, the trainers can share their own experiences.
(7) Reflection
At the end of each module the participants are asked to reflect on what they have learned so far and how this relates to their role as a peer support worker.

Workbook
Pages 92 and 93
Reflection

(8) Check-out
End the module with a check-out session, in which each participant can say how they feel after the module, and how they experienced it.
## 11th module: Work Preparation

### Overarching aim

To prepare for the application process and start work as a peer support worker.

### Learning outcomes

To begin thinking about where to work as a peer support worker.
To feel prepared for a job interview as a peer.
To feel confident about the personal CV.

### Overview

#### Objectives

1. The participants share their personal experience with application procedures and job interviews in the past.
2. The participants develop ideas about which organisations they would like to work in.
3. The participants reflect on what they would like to know from a possible employer and how they can address this.
4. The participants develop a short introduction about UPSIDES.
5. The participants discuss what questions they would find difficult in a job interview and develop ideas of how to handle them.
6. The participants practice a job interview.
7. The participants write their peer CV.
8. The participants introduce themselves as peer support workers.
9. The participants have the opportunity to address any questions about starting work as a peer support worker.

### Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Workbook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Check-in</td>
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<tr>
<td>(2) Personal experience with applications</td>
<td>p. 96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Preparation for the application process</td>
<td>p. 97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Presenting UPSIDES</td>
<td>p. 98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Practicing a job interview</td>
<td>p. 99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) FAQs</td>
<td>p. 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Elevator pitch</td>
<td>pp. 101 – 102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Reflection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) Check-out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Work Preparation

(1) Check-in

Begin the module with a check-in session to hear how everybody is feeling, how they arrived at the training today, and if there are any questions leftover from the last training module.

(2) Personal experience with applications

Many people have had negative experiences with job application procedures and interviews in the past. Open up the room and encourage discussion about these experiences. Allow participants to share potential worries by asking the group what they think of applications, job interviews, and any past experiences.

At first, ask everybody to think for themselves. If they wish, they can take notes in the workbook:

Workbook
Page 95
Your experience with work applications

Afterwards, collect the answers on a flip chart.

(3) Preparation for the application process

To prepare for the application process, ask participants to get together in pairs and share where they would like to apply, how they would decide whether they wanted to work in a certain place, and what they would want to know from the organisation.

If they wish, they can take notes in the workbook:

Workbook
Page 96
Preparation for the application process

Afterwards, ask them to share their thoughts with the group.
Note: Many people worry that they will not be good enough for a certain job or cannot present themselves well during the application process. Emphasise that it is important to also have personal expectations of the job and the organisation and to ask about them the application process, for example during the job interview. It is okay to check if a potential job meets their personal expectations.

(4) Presenting UPSIDES

In preparation for the application process, it could be useful to think about how to introduce UPSIDES to potential employers, in order to feel ready to answer questions about the project.

Ask participants to split up into small groups and discuss how they would explain UPSIDES and UPSIDES peer support in an application and a job interview.

The different questions to consider are also presented in the workbook:

Each group summarises their ideas on a flip chart to present them to the group.

(5) Practicing a job interview

After having discussed the application process and their worries about it, ask the participants to prepare a potential job interview, and to practice what they prepared for in a role play.

Role play

One participant is asked to play the employer, the other plays the part of someone who has applied for a job in this organisation. The employer should ask some of the questions that the participants have identified as difficult for them during the interview, including questions about UPSIDES.
Afterwards, take some time to review how the participants felt in their roles, and what was challenging for them. Additionally, other participants can provide their feedback.

(6) FAQs

At this point, the participants are given the opportunity to raise any questions before they start to apply for positions.

Discuss all the questions that are raised with the group. Emphasise that some things will get clearer when participants begin their role and work.

(7) Elevator pitch

To close the module, all participants will hold a very short presentation, in which they introduce themselves as peer support workers. This presentation should take about a minute. To visualise the length, you can use an elevator ride as a comparison. Because it should take no longer than an elevator ride, this exercise is called the ‘elevator pitch’.

Give participants some time to prepare themselves for their elevator pitch.
- How would they introduce themselves now as a peer support worker?
- What would they say about themselves?

Next, each participant presents their elevator pitch to the whole group.
(8) Reflection
At the end of each module the participants are asked to reflect on what they have learned so far and how this relates to their role as a peer support worker.

Workbook
Pages 101 and 102
Reflection

(9) Check-out
End the module with a check-out session, in which each participant can say how they feel after the module, and how they experienced it.
12th module: Peer Network

**Overarching aim**
To reflect on the possibilities of a peer network, to set up an UPSIDES peer network, and to present a personal reflection to complete the training.

**Learning outcomes**
To develop ideas on how to get support at work as a peer support worker.
To reflect on personal development during the training.

---

**Overview**

**Objectives**

1. The participants discuss the importance of support during their work as a peer support worker.
2. The participants decide how they can stay in contact after the training.
3. The participants present themselves in their role as a peer support worker.
4. The participants share what they have learned during the training.
5. The participants reflect on their own development during the training.
6. The participants acknowledge and encourage each other.
7. To celebrate the end of the UPSIDES core training together.

**Themes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Workbook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Check-in</td>
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<td>(2) How to get support as a peer support worker</td>
<td>pp. 105 – 106</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) The UPSIDES peer network</td>
<td>p. 107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Crop your bountiful harvest</td>
<td>p. 108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) A personal reflection about the training</td>
<td>p. 109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) The UPSIDES forest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Celebrating the end of the core training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Peer Network

(1) Check-in

Begin the module with a check-in session to hear how everybody is feeling, how they arrived at the training today, and if there are any questions leftover from the last training module.

(2) How to get support as a peer support worker

To end the core training, the last training module starts by planning how the participants can be supported as they start their new work role.

Open the discussion by asking what kind of support the participants would find useful in their upcoming work as a peer support worker.

Collect the ideas on a flip chart.

Present to the participants what support is part of the UPSIDES project:

- regular supervision meetings
- additional training
- organisational readiness workshops

Note: For some participants, the end of the core training can be challenging. Therefore, it may be helpful to set a date for the first supervision meeting and additional training modules and discuss which topics the participants would like to discuss in upcoming training modules.

(3) The UPSIDES peer network

Connecting and sharing personal experiences as peer support workers is a helpful way to learn from each other. This can help peer support workers to focus on the key elements of peer support, such as the importance of knowledge gained through experience and recovery, even while adapting to the everyday routines of mental health services.

As this is the last module of the core training, the participants will build on their own peer network and decide on how they want to stay in touch with each other after the training ends. They can discuss:

- Do they want to name their peer network?
• Who would host or lead it?
• Who will be invited?
• How to keep in touch and keep the network going?
• What activities do they want to plan for their network?
• Who is taking on which tasks to keep the network active?

If they wish, they can take notes in the workbook:

(4) Crop your bountiful harvest

At the end of the core training, participants have the opportunity to reflect on how they experienced it, what they learned and discovered during this time, and on their personal role as a peer support worker.

Participants can work on their tree of life for the last time.

Ask everybody to take out their trees again. Next to their trees they can include fruits of all kinds. They may prefer to draw them, print them out, cut them out of cardboard, etc.

In the fruits, participants can write …

• Where do they see themselves now as a peer support worker?
• How can they use this training?
• What are they taking home from the training?
• What strengths did they discover about themselves during the training?
• How can they use the training to support others in the future?

Collect participants’ feedback about the training.
(5) A personal reflection about the training

This exercise should give every participant the opportunity to reflect on their time during the training and to present their experiences to the group. The participants can decide how they want to do their presentation. For example, they can use their tree of life for this if they like.

Note: It can be difficult for some participants to present spontaneously. So make sure participants have enough time to prepare their presentations. For example, inform participants (i.e. end of the previous module) in advance that the training will end with participants presenting their personal reflections.

Optional: Depending on the trainers’ and participants’ preferences, you can make the final presentation about the trees of life or alternatively combine parts 5 and 6.

(6) The UPSIDES forest

The final celebration of the trees

Every participant presents their tree again.

Again, there are different ways to present the trees. You can use the same method you used throughout the training or try out one of the other suggestions listed in module two.

Alternatively, participants can also describe an energy line from the roots, through to the trunk, the branches and to the fruits. If they like, the participants could perform a poem or a song about the things written in their tree.

 Afterwards, ask everybody to go around and put notes on each tree with a short positive message including words of inspiration and encouragement.

If the participants wish, they can collect the notes from their own trees and put them in their workbooks:
Finally, remind the participants that they are part of the tree of life community now and if they want to find out more about this, give them the link to the related Facebook group:
https://www.facebook.com/groups/TreeofLifeNarrativeApproach/
and the UPSIDES Facebook group:
https://www.facebook.com/groups/1318747944982065/

(7) Celebrating the end of the core training
You as trainers can decide how you would like the training to end. You can hand out certificates, prepare little presents for all, get together to have a meal together, or whatever you like.

Just make it festive and fun…
IV Implementation in UPSIDES Study

The following table shows how the elements of the training manual will translate into the intervention as it is implemented in the current UPSIDES RCT (Moran et al., 2020). Further details on the delivery of the intervention will be described in the UPSIDES implementation manual. The intervention will be delivered by peer support workers who participated in the UPSIDES training and in line with the UPSIDES peer support training manual and workbook. For an overview see Table 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr</th>
<th>Training Module</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>UPSIDES key principles and values of recovery</td>
<td><strong>VALUES &amp; PRINCIPLES</strong> Recovery values and principles that are underlying the delivered peer support like promoting hope and encouragement, focusing on the individual resources for gaining back autonomy and empowerment and open up new opportunities. These values and principles define the communication style and language used in the support and orienting the pace on the recipient.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Peer Support</td>
<td>UPSIDES key principles and values of Peer Support</td>
<td>Values and principles that shape the delivered peer support. They define how the support is provided: non-directive, non-hierarchical on eye level. The peer supporter is a role model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Role Description</td>
<td>Code of conduct for PSW PSW Role descriptions</td>
<td>Clear work ethics for peer support workers to provide save services with their recipients: e.g. boundaries, suicidality...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Communication skills: active listening, using a recovery-oriented language</td>
<td><strong>SKILLS</strong> Communication and listening styles that reflect values of recovery and peer support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Group Facilitating</td>
<td>How to organise, prepare and deliver PS group settings</td>
<td>Enabling peer support group settings, to deliver a recovery group with ongoing reflection of recovery planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Work Preparation</td>
<td>Describe own PSW role, application processes and prepare for work roles</td>
<td>Enabling peer support workers to write own CV, handle application for employment, job interviews, and prepare for the own peer role at the place of action</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2  | My Tree of Life          | Explore own recovery journey and reflect those of others                 | **TASKS** **Tasks:** At the beginning of the support: Assessment and deeper understanding of the recipient’s current situation, strengths and resources to build on, perspectives and social connections.  
**Materials:** Tree of Life worksheets  
**Tasks:** Recovery planning: Explore with the recipient what keeps them well, what worsens the situation, what can be next steps they want to take to recover, how do they deal with setbacks, supporting them being the expert of themselves and practical support to get back on track  
**Materials:** Recovery Plan worksheets, countries adaptions can be used with the recipient  
**Tasks:** Activating resources: encourage moving forward by activating own resources and make a plan, revisit former connections, activities, roles, or explore and try new ones  
**Materials:** UPSIDES materials for activating resources, e.g. action plan or adaptations from the different countries can be used with the recipient  
**Tasks:** Support recipient to (re-)connect with the community: build on former connections, explore opportunities in the community, accompany recipient if wished to activities  
**Materials:** Worksheets from the Tree of Life and Linking with the community can be used.  
**Tasks:** Support the recipient to identify their problem-solving tactics, foster their strengths and sense of self-efficacy in tackling problems and explore further strategies. Bridge between different, conflicting perspectives: Family, mental health worker, recipient. In treatment planning session or family or community meetings: in case of conflicts/misunderstandings try to validate and translate all positions in the room, while standing by the recipients site making their own informed decisions  
**Materials:** UPSIDES problem-solving worksheets can be used, or countries adaptations.  
**Tasks:** Build up and share their own expertise by updating information relevant to networking and useful to promote recovery and social connections for the recipients. Connect the recipient with a wider peer support network, exploring the community and opportunities to participate, get involved or initiate. (e.g. book or movie club, free recreational activities, self-help groups) |
| 5  | Supporting Recovery      | Translate own experience and values into practice to support recovery planning |                                                                                     |
| 6  | Building on Strength     | Translate own experience and values into practice to encourage moving forward by activating own resources and make a plan |                                                                                     |
| 7  | Community and New        | Open up new perspectives, support social inclusion and network, linking with other resources in the community |                                                                                     |
| 8  | Trialogue                | Approaches to solve a problem Challenges as a Peer Support Worker Trialogue: Bridging between different perspectives with the family and mental health treatment settings |                                                                                     |
| 12 | Peer Network             | Build a Peer Support Network                                             |                                                                                     |
VII References


Appendix A: Further reading

Suggestions for additional reading

(1) Recovery and the Conspiracy of Hope by Patricia E. Deegan
available under: http://d20wqiibvy9b23.cloudfront.net/resources/resources/000/000/6
/Deegan_Recovery_and_the_Conspiracy_of_Hope.pdf?1468370243

(2) Peer Support: What is it and does it work? by Nesta
available under: https://www.nationalvoices.org.uk/sites/default/files/public/publications/peer_s
upport_-_what_is_it_and_does_it_work.pdf

Appendix B: Exercises

Suggestions for short games to get to know each other
Use the room to position yourself in order to answer questions

- Where do you come from?
  → the room is a map
- Sort the group by height (without speaking)
  → in a line
- Do you prefer coffee or tea?
  Do you prefer sweet or salty food?
  Do you have a pet?
  ...
  → one side of the room represents one answer

List of suggestions for activity in the training room

- Ask someone to perform a little dance and ask the group to join
- Sing a song together
- Stand up in a circle and count together from 1 to 10, replace the numbers one by one with different sounds or gestures
- Mindfulness based exercises
  Stand up, close your eyes and feel the different parts of your body
  Walk around the room in silence and notice the details (sounds, textures) around you
- Clap a rhythm together
- Paint a picture in pairs, holding only one pen between the pairs without speaking
- Do some stretching together

...
Appendix C: UPSIDES Workbook for peer support workers

The following section includes the UPSIDES workbook ready to be printed out for the training participants to complete during the different training modules.

After the training some of the worksheets e.g. "My recovery plan" can be used by the peer support worker and the recipient when delivering the peer support intervention.
This workbook belongs to:

www.upsides.org

All icons and pictograms shown in this workbook were created by Freepic at www.flaticon.com.
The workbook contains:

How to use the workbook  page 3
Introduction                 page 4
Overview of the training modules  page 5
The UPSIDES Project           page 6
Training module 1             page 8
Training module 2             page 17
Training module 3             page 24
Training module 4             page 31
Training module 5             page 38
Training module 6             page 51
Training module 7             page 60
Training module 8             page 69
Training module 9             page 77
Training module 10            page 86
Training module 11            page 94
Training module 12            page 103
How to use the workbook

This workbook belongs to you. It is a personal record of your history and should help you in your journey to becoming a peer support worker.

You can use it however you like and fill it in however you want. It should help you to reflect on your experiences, and recognize your skills and strengths.

This can be helpful when helping other people in crises.

Each person has unique experiences, skills, challenges and goals. This book is specifically about you, your life, and your story.

Let’s get started:

This workbook accompanies the UPSIDES training. Throughout the training, we will do exercises from the workbook. You can use the workbook to take notes for the different training modules. Other exercises are well suited as a follow-up to the training. When you work as a peer support after the training, you can use the exercises from the workbook with the person you are supporting.

Please note:

This workbook should be used in a situation where the person using it, has support available when needed. Thinking about and reflect on past experiences and difficult or dark moments in life, is for most individuals very important on their path to recovery, but it can although trigger adverse reactions and distress.
In the UPSIDES project, people who have lived experience of mental health conditions can be trained as peer support workers.

The aim of this training is not to impart knowledge, but to focus on the different experiences, skills and knowledge of the participants.

As you will see, there are no lectures or PowerPoint presentations in our training. Instead, each topic starts with a discussion or group work to explore the experiences and ideas of all participants to develop a shared knowledge on the topic.

In order for all participants to feel that they can speak freely, the training room should represent a safe place. This means we will handle the experiences of the others carefully and not talk about them outside the group.

The aim of this training is to strengthen, empower, and support people with lived experience of mental health conditions and recovery.
After the core training, we will plan further training sessions together in order to support you in your work as peer support workers and to address further topics.

The UPSIDES training consists of **12 training modules**. The core content covers recovery, peer support, communication and much more.

The 12 training modules:

- **Personal Recovery**
- **My Tree of Life**
- **Peer Support**
- **Communication**
- **Supporting Recovery**
- **Building on Strength**
- **Community and New Perspectives**
- **Trialogue**
- **Role Description**
- **Group Facilitating**
- **Work Preparation**
- **Peer Network**
UPSIDES is a cooperation of eight study partners in Africa, Asia and Europe with the aim of implementing peer support in different contexts to improve the care of people with mental health conditions.

Despite different locations and cultural backgrounds, we believe that all people experience similar things when overcoming mental health conditions.

At its core, it is about being human and finding your own path in life.
Our UPSIDES partners

These are our UPSIDES Peer Support Trainers from Tanzania, India, Uganda, Israel, the United Kingdom, and Germany:

We all came together in February 2019 for a one-week trainer workshop in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

This is the UPSIDES consortium and international advisory board at our study meeting in Tanzania.
What is recovery?
What does recovery mean to you personally?
Different aspects of recovery
Recovery from different perspectives
The guardian peer
What is recovery?

Everyone knows what it feels like to be struggling or in distress and to experience that certain things shake your life. It's hard to cope when it feels like things are slipping away.

Recovery is about overcoming crises, getting back on your feet, and making your life your own again.

Everyone experiences crises.
For some people it may be helpful:

1. To try to understand how the crisis came about.
2. To reorder your daily life.
3. To rediscover your own strengths.
4. To grow beyond what has happened and to take control of your own life again.
5. To try and accept your own limits.
6. Discover your own opportunities.
...
How about you?
What does recovery mean to you?

Think about what worked for you:

Think about something that really shook your life:
A sickness, bereavement, failing an exam, a relationship breakup ...
- How did you feel when it happened?
- What helped you recover from it?
- What did you do?
- Who helped you to recover?
- How do you deal with the experience today?
Different aspects of recovery:

Hope & Encouragement

Everyone can find their own path to recovery. The belief that things can get better, that it is possible to get through this time, that one can live a meaningful life, is very important. Sometimes it seems almost impossible to overcome your own problems, and to have hope again. Having courage or being encouraged can be an important first step.

Empowerment & Control

To understand what has happened and why it can be helpful in finding ways to deal with the experience in order to regain control over your personal life and be empowered in your own role in your community and society.

Opportunity

UPSIDES aims to help people to (re-)connect with their community, access different roles, relationships, activities, and strengths that enable them to live the life that they feel is right for them.
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<td>What gave you hope? What or who has encouraged you during hard times?</td>
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<td>How did you regain control after a crisis? What or who gave you courage? Why?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What opportunities helped you in your recovery? Which strengths can you rely on?</td>
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Recovery from different perspectives

As the term recovery is frequently used in the mental health system, change the perspective now and try to define, how ...

... you would judge whether you are recovering?

... would a friend or family member judge whether you are recovering?

... would a doctor, physician, or nurse judge whether you are recovering?
The guardian peer

As a first step to try out your new role as a peer support worker, guardian peers will be randomly assigned. Guardian peers will support each other during the upcoming training.

Take some time to think about how your guardian can support you.

Decide together how you will support each other throughout the training modules:
Reflection

You have now completed the first training module about personal recovery.

During this module we discussed the following topics:

- What is recovery and what does recovery mean to you?
- What do the aspects of hope, control and opportunity in terms of recovery mean to you?
- How can recovery be approached from different perspectives?
- The guardian peer

Your take home messages:
Think back to the first training module:

- What have you learned so far?
- What was new or surprising for you?
- Have you learned anything new about yourself?
- What is still unclear to you? Are there any questions left unanswered?
- What was challenging for you?
Module 2

My Tree of Life

The level of confidentiality
Telling your own story:
The tree of life
Presentation of the trees of life
Tell your own story

The level of confidentiality

When telling your own story, it is important to think about what personal information you feel comfortable sharing with others.

Why do you sometimes feel more comfortable or uncomfortable sharing personal information?

Fill your levels of confidentiality with your own examples.

This exercise is only for you. You do not have to share your examples with the group!

Think about ...

- Things you feel comfortable sharing with almost everyone
- Things you only want to share with people close to you
- Things you may not want to share with anyone

AND

- Examples of people with whom you would or would not share this information
What are you telling to who?

What only few or nobody should know:

What you only tell in confidence (e.g. friends ...)

What everybody can know about you:

Are there any other categories of confidentiality you would include?
The tree of life is a way to make your personal story visible to other people. You can design your tree of life as you like and fill it with information you choose. The tree should reflect you and should help you present your own recovery story to others.

For example, the recovery story may include:

- How you got through your crisis(es)
- Your lived experience
- What you wish for the future
- How you deal with your own ups and downs
- What you and your environment can do when you have a crisis
- What supports you need to move on afterwards
- How can you support others in their personal recovery ...

Tell your own story:

The tree of life

Your everyday life

The important people in your life

Your strengths, skills, and values

Where you are from; What's your story? Influences in your life

Your hopes and dreams for the future

Your everyday life

Your strengths, skills, and values

Where you are from; What's your story? Influences in your life

Your everyday life

Your strengths, skills, and values

Where you are from; What's your story? Influences in your life

Your hopes and dreams for the future

Your everyday life

Your strengths, skills, and values

Where you are from; What's your story? Influences in your life
Step by step...

(1) Draw your own tree
Imagine what your favourite tree would look like.
Draw the outline of your tree.

(2) Your ground:
The ground on which your tree stands contains information about:
What your life is like right now, where you live,
a typical day in your life, and places you visit regularly.

(3) Your roots:
The roots of your tree contain information from your past:
How you grew up, where you come from, your family history, people
who are important to you, influences on your life (spirituality, work,
political movements, music, books ...), and important events in your
life.

(4) Your trunk:
The trunk of your tree contains your strengths and values:
What you like about yourself, what you are good at, your values,
what other people have told you what you are good at, and
what is important to you in life.
You have now completed the second training module about your tree of life.

During this module we discussed the following topics:

- The level of confidentiality
- Tell your own story:
  - The tree of life
  - The ground, the roots, and the trunk
- All participants presented the first parts of their trees

Your take home messages:
Think back to the second training module:

- What have you learned so far?
- What was new or surprising for you?
- Have you learned anything new about yourself?
- What is still unclear to you? Are there any questions left unanswered?
- What was challenging for you?
Module 3

Peer support

Your personal peer
What does peer support mean to you?
Important characteristics of peer support
A superhero peer support worker
Your personal peer

Think of one person who has been especially important to you and supportive in your recovery journey.
This could be a friend, family member, a peer support worker, a colleague or fellow student ...

Who is your personal peer?

Why is this person important to you?
What did he or she do or say that was helpful for you?
What did the person in you do or say that was helpful for you?
What has changed for you?
What could you do differently?

Get together in small groups and discuss:

What's similar about your peers?
Generally, what do you think is helpful in supporting people in crisis?
What does peer support mean to you?

Discuss in small groups:

What defines peer support for you?
What is specific about the way a peer support worker works?
How does peer support differ from the work of other mental health workers?
How can a peer support worker help an organization to work differently?
Important characteristics of peer support

Think of a time when you have supported and stood by someone:

What did you do?
How could you tell if you have been helpful for the person?
A superhero peer support worker

Get together in small groups to create a superhero peer support worker.

Think about:
- What would the perfect peer support worker look like?
- What abilities and superpowers should the peer support worker have?

Use your imagination!
Be as creative, imaginative, and wild as you want!

Example:
Superhero peer support worker from the UPSIDES workshop for trainers
You have now completed the third training module about peer support.

During this module we discussed the following topics:

- Your personal peer
- What does peer support mean to you?
- Important characteristics of peer support
- A superhero peer support worker

Your take home messages:
Think back to the third training module:
- What have you learned so far?
- What was new or surprising for you?
- Have you learned anything new about yourself?
- What is still unclear to you? Are there any questions left unanswered?
- What was challenging for you?
How do we communicate to be supportive?
Recovery-focused language
How to make a conversation?
Practice listening
How do we communicate to be supportive?

What aspects of communication have you experienced as helpful in the past?
Recovery-focused language

Find examples of words, sentences or expressions that you are familiar with from your experiences using mental health services i.e. with staff or other people, that you have found unpleasant, hurtful, even stigmatizing or discriminating.

Afterwards, try to rephrase them.

Examples of problem-oriented language:

Translation into recovery-focused language:
How to have a conversation?

How do you show that you listen to someone and that you are interested in what the other person is saying?

Here are a few more ideas:

- If you are not sure if you understood what a person has said, it can be helpful to repeat what you think you understood and ask if it is really what the person wanted to say.
- Asking cautious questions of understanding, or further questions, will let the other person know that you are interested in them and that you want to understand them.
- In order to support another person, it is important not to judge them and to not tell them what to do. Developing sympathy and expressing that you understand how difficult the situation is.
Really listening means that you are interested in what a person is saying.

When you start a conversation it can be helpful...

- show interest
- listen
- to consider how the other person and yourself feel
- ask questions of understanding and reflect on what was said
- ask encouraging and further questions
- use appreciative language
- be direct, respectful and honest
- to stay with somebody even in silence
...

Role playing: Practice Listening

- Think of a nice experience, such as a holiday, a party, a book or movie you like. Tell your role play partner about it.
- As the listening role play partner try to signal that you are listening, repeat what you hear, and try to understand the feelings behind it.
You have now completed the fourth training module about communication.

During this module we have discussed the following topics:

- How do we communicate to be supportive?
- Recovery-focused language
- How to make a conversation?
- Practice listening

Your take home messages:
Think back to the fourth training module:
- What have you learned so far?
- What was new or surprising for you?
- Have you learned anything new about yourself?
- What is still unclear to you? Are there any questions left unanswered?
- What was challenging for you?
Your personal experience with diagnosis
How can we support recovery?
Your personal recovery plan
Helping someone to create their own recovery plan
Your personal experience with diagnoses

Diagnoses are frequently used in the mental health system. Think about your own experience with them ...

Do you have a diagnosis? If yes, do you know which?

How did you feel when you got the diagnosis?
How can we support recovery?

There are many different ways and strategies to support the person in their recovery.

What strategies did you find helpful to manage your own recovery in the past?

Which strategies did not work for you in the past when managing your own recovery?
Your personal recovery plan

Recovery is about doing the things that you value in order to live your life as self-determined and happy as possible.

We know the times when we have been successful in achieving this.

A personal recovery plan can be a tool to support people in dealing with their own crises and to help them on their way to recovery.

You can try it out yourself.

Role play:
Help each other create personal recovery plans.

Your personal recovery plans may include ...

- How can you tell that you feel good?
- What do you need to feel good?
- What keeps you stable?
- When do you feel worse?
- How do you protect your tree of life?
- How can you take more care of yourself?
- What do you want to do if it doesn't work out?
...
How can you tell that you feel good?

The trunk of the tree of life:

Take another look at your own tree of life. What have you written in your trunk?

When confronted with a diagnosis - or other challenging events – you can lose the sense of who you are. But, diagnoses and problems are only a part of you. You are a lot more than this!

How do you know when you feel good:
What keeps you stable?

Think about:
What make you feel stable? What do you like to do? Who do you like to spend time with? What makes you feel good?
When do you feel worse?

Think about:

What are the situations, things, and activities, that make you feel worse?
When do you feel shaky or insecure? What things can cause you stress or harm? What are the difficult situations for you? What stresses or frightens you? How can you tell?
Protect your tree of life

Recovery includes taking care of yourself and others, to think about what is good for me, and how I can connect with people and get support when I need it.
Ideas: How to protect your tree

Think about how you can protect your tree. Use your own examples of the sunny and rainy weather on the previous pages.

What is good for you? What could you do more of? What would you like to avoid?
How can you implement this in your everyday life?

After you have thought about how to protect your tree and how to keep it stable, it is important to think about how to put these ideas into practice. There are many practical ways that can help you organize and implement your plans.

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What do you use? Do you have any other ideas?
What can you do if it doesn't work out?

Then what? What could help you if you notice signs that you are feeling worse:
During this module we have discussed the following topics:

- Your personal experience with diagnoses
- How can we support recovery?
- Your personal recovery plan
- Helping someone to create their own recovery plan

Your take home messages:
Think back to the fifth training module:
- What have you learned so far?
- What was new or surprising for you?
- Have you learned anything new about yourself?
- What is still unclear to you? Are there any questions left unanswered?
- What was challenging for you?
How to encourage hopefulness

Let your tree grow:
Your personal wishes and dreams
Supporting people to achieve their goals and ambitions
Let’s make a plan
What is stopping you?
How to encourage hopefulness?

Think back to a difficult time in your life.
What gave you hope to get through this? What made you believe you can get past this?
Let your tree grow:

Recovery is about discovering and using your own strengths, talents, and opportunities.

This part of the recovery plan is about identifying your wishes and goals in life, things you want to be aiming for, or new perspectives you want to explore. It can be helpful to plan in small steps, to move in the right direction or to achieve them.
Your personal wishes and dreams

The branches of your tree
Take another look at your own tree of life. Add the branches and fill them with your wishes, dreams, goals, and hopes.

Your wishes & goals:

Choose one goal that you would like to approach now:

Ideas to identify your wishes and goals:

- Think about what is important to you - for example have a look at the trunk of your tree
- Think of things you enjoy
- Are there things you wanted to do before your problems started?
Supporting people to achieve their goals and ambitions

Think about:
How do you achieve the things you want to do?
Do you have any specific strategies?
What worked well for you in the past and what did not?

How can you as peer support worker encourage people to think about their dreams and goals and what they want in life?
What can you build on to support people moving on?
How can you encourage hopefulness?
Let’s make a plan

Think about:
How long could it take to achieve this goal?

For some, it is helpful to find a goal that is:
- specific
- measurable
- achievable
- reasonable
- and is available within a certain time frame.

The goal that I want to achieve first

How long could it take to achieve this goal?

Now think very small:
What would be the first step towards your goal?

What are the next steps?

What does your tree need in order to grow?
What is stopping you?

Think about the steps you want to take to achieve your goal:

What could be difficult or tricky in doing these steps?

What can you do if obstacles occur?
During this module we have discussed the following topics:

- How to encourage hopefulness?
- Let your tree grow:
  Your personal wishes and dreams
- Supporting people to achieve their goals and ambitions
- Let’s make a plan
- What is stopping you?

Your take home messages:
Think back to the sixth training module:

- What have you learned so far?
- What was new or surprising for you?
- Have you learned anything new about yourself?
- What is still unclear to you? Are there any questions left unanswered?
- What was challenging for you?
Module 7

Community and New Perspectives

Your resources
Let your tree blossom
Linking with the community
Practice linking with the community
Resource network
Your resources

Resources can be very different things that let you replenish your own reserves of strength.

These can be people, places, hobbies, books or activities...

What are your resources?
Let your tree flourish

The leaves of your tree:

Think of all the people that surround you.

Which people have had an impact on your life? These could be friends, musicians, teachers, actors, pets, characters from a movie, a book, etc...
Linking with the community

Think back to a time when you experienced support in the past.

What did you find helpful and what would you have wished for?
Practice linking with the community

Role play

The role play includes two participants:

One in the role of a client and the other in the role of a peer support worker.

The task of the peer support worker is to talk with the client about his/her resources, and how he/she can support him/her to link with the community.

How did you feel in your role?
What did you observe?
Resource network

We want to collect what resource networks you have used or heard of including services and organizations that are available for different crisis situations.

Where have you received help or support in the past? What would you recommend to others? What have you heard of that might be helpful?
Networks such as blogs, social media, apps, websites, activities, self-help groups, inspiring books, songs etc. are also an important part of our resource network.

What are your own resources from these networks?
During this module we have discussed the following topics:

- Your resources
- Let your tree blossom
- Linking with the community
- Practice linking with the community
- Resource network

Your take home messages:
Think back to the seventh training module:
- What have you learned so far?
- What was new or surprising for you?
- Have you learned anything new about yourself?
- What is still unclear to you? Are there any questions left unanswered?
- What was challenging for you?
How did you deal with problems in the past?
Your own problem solving approach
Your idea of peer work
Opportunities in peer support
Bridging between different perspectives
How did you deal with problems in the past?

Sometimes problems are big and you don't know how to approach them. In this case it can be helpful to...

1. Describe the problem as precisely as possible.
2. Try it out.
3. Decide which idea should be tried out first.
4. Find as many different ideas for solutions as possible.
5. Review: Has the problem been solved? If not: try another idea.

...
Your own problem-solving approach

Try it out:

Your problem:

How would you approach the problem?
Your personal idea of peer support

Do you already have an idea where you would like to work as a peer support worker?

For example, in individual one-to-one sessions, in groups, in a café or meeting place, at a ward, when accompanying people to appointments, in advocacy ...

Get some feedback:
What do others think you will be good at?

I can imagine you as a peer support worker in these activities:
Opportunities

Think about:

What opportunities does working as a peer support worker open up for you?
What are you looking forward to?
What do you like about peer work?
Bridging

Get around one table: Peer support worker, family or other significant persons, mental health worker, and the person in crisis. Get together to explore the best possible way of support. Each perspective is different and is helpful to understand the overall situation and the perspective of each person involved. The peer support workers role is to be the bridge between the different perspectives.

Role play

1. Put together a scenario in which one of you plays the client, one of you plays a mental health worker, one of you plays a family member, and one of you plays a peer support worker.
2. Think of a problem that you want to discuss at your meeting.
3. Role-play a possible scene.
4. Afterwards, share your experiences with the group.

How did you feel in your role?
What did you observe?
During this module we have discussed the following topics:

- How did you deal with problems in the past?
- Your own problem solving approach
- Your idea of peer work
- Opportunities in peer support
- Bridging between different perspectives

Your take home messages:
Think back to the eighth training module:
- What have you learned so far?
- What was new or surprising for you?
- Have you learned anything new about yourself?
- What is still unclear to you? Are there any questions left unanswered?
- What was challenging for you?
Module 9

Challenges in peer support
Dealing with the challenges
Practice dealing with difficult situations in peer support
The code of conduct
Different roles of a peer support worker
Your role as a peer support worker
Challenges

Is something bothering you about the idea of being a peer support worker?

If so, what's bothering you?

What challenges do you know or expect as a peer support worker? What could be difficult?
Dealing with the challenges

How can challenges be approached in your daily work? How can you tackle some of the challenges?

Challenge:

Challenge:

Challenge:
Practice dealing with the challenges

1. Get together with 2 or 3 other participants
2. Discuss what difficulty you would like to include in your role play
3. Decide, who will play which role
4. Try out your ideas on how to deal with the difficult situation in your role play

Role play

How did you feel in your role?
What did you observe?
The code of conduct

How would you like to work as a peer support worker?

Which values are important to you in your work as a peer support worker?

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Different roles of a peer support worker

Why is it important to have a role description as a peer support worker?
How could a role description support you in your work?

Collect different tasks that a peer support worker can do:

What places can a peer support worker work?
Your role as a peer support worker

What is the role of a peer support worker?

Imagine presenting your peer work on a flyer. How would you describe your work to others?

Write your role description for peer support:
During this module we have discussed the following topics:

- Challenges in peer support
- Dealing with the challenges
- Practice dealing with difficult situations in peer support
- The code of conduct
- Different roles of a peer support worker

Your take home messages:
Think back to the ninth training module:
- What have you learned so far?
- What was new or surprising for you?
- Have you learned anything new about yourself?
- What is still unclear to you? Are there any questions left unanswered?
- What was challenging for you?
Your personal experience with groups
The content of a recovery group
How to set up a group
Develop your own exercises for the group
Practice group moderating
Your personal experience with groups

Think back to all the groups you may have been part of in the mental health system:

- What did you experience as helpful in the groups?
- What was difficult or challenging?
- What would you include in your own group?
- What do you want to avoid or change?
- Do you have any worries or fears when thinking about being the moderator of a group?
The content of a recovery group

What can a recovery group include?
What topics would you like to discuss during the group?
What would you find interesting?
Are there any topics you would rather not discuss in a group?
How to set up a group

How would you like to design your recovery group?

How would you start the first session?

How would you address getting to know each other?

How often will the group get together?

How would you discuss the group rules?

How many participants will be in the group?

Who can participate in the group?

In which setting will the group take place?

Is there a room you can use for the group?
Develop your own exercises for your group

After having discussed what to include in a recovery group and how the group can be set up, develop an exercise for your own recovery group.

What topic they would like to address?
How would you do this.

Be as creative as you like!
Practice group moderating

Instruct the group to try out the exercise you have developed

How did you feel in your role as a group moderator?
You have now finished the tenth training module about group facilitating.

During this training module we have discussed the following topics:

- Your personal experience with groups
- The content of a recovery group
- How to set up a group
- Develop your own exercises for the group
- Practice group moderating

Your take home messages:
Think back to the tenth training module:

- What have you learned so far?
- What was new or surprising for you?
- Have you learned anything new about yourself?
- What is still unclear to you? Are there any questions left unanswered?
- What was challenging for you?
Module 11

Your experience with applications
Preparation for the application process
Presenting UPSIDES
The job interview
FAQs
Elevator pitch
Your experience with applications

What do you think about job applications?
Do you have any fears when you think about applying for a peer support worker role?
What experiences do you have of applications in the past?
Preparation for the application process

Where would you like to apply?

What do you want to know about a possible job?  
What is important to you?  
How do you decide where you want to work?
Presenting UPSIDES

How would you explain in a job interview what UPSIDES peer work is about?
Develop a short description.
The job interview

Which questions would you find difficult to answer during a job interview? How could you answer them?

What questions must not be asked? (Discretion, labour law ... )

Practice a possible job interview in a role play.
Take a moment to think about any unanswered questions regarding the work of a peer support worker.
Elevator pitch

Present to the other participants a short elevator pitch: Introduce yourself as a peer support worker. This should take about a minute (no longer than an usual elevator ride).
You have now finished the eleventh training module about work preparation.

During this training module we have discussed the following topics:

- Your experience with applications
- Preparation for the application process
- Presenting UPSIDES
- The job interview
- FAQs
- Elevator pitch

Your take home messages:
Think back to the eleventh training module:

- What have you learned so far?
- What was new or surprising for you?
- Have you learned anything new about yourself?
- What is still unclear to you? Are there any questions left unanswered?
- What was challenging for you?
How to get support as a peer support worker
The UPSIDES peer network
Crop your bountiful harvest
Your personal reflection about the training
The UPSIDES forest
For you to remember

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How to get support as a peer support worker

What kind of support would you find useful in your upcoming role as a peer support worker?
The UPSIDES peer network

When working in organizations, it is important to exchange information with other peer support workers and learn from each other in order to strengthen the peer role and assert it within teams.

How can you build a peer network?

The members of your network:

The name of the peer network:
How should the network be organized?

Planned activities:

Who takes on which task?

How will you keep in touch?
Crop your bountiful harvest

Your fruit basket

What did you learn during the training?

What skills have you (re)discovered through training?

What new skills have you learned?

Write your skills in different types of fruits and stick them around your tree of life.
Your personal reflection about the training:

Prepare a short presentation and tell the group how you now see yourself as a peer support worker after finishing the UPSIDES training.
The UPSDIES forest

We want to create a forest with all the trees that were created during the training.

Hang your tree on the wall next to the trees of the other participants.

Stick post-it notes on each tree with encouraging messages for each other.

On this page you can keep any messages from your tree that you would like to save.
For you to remember

Write down the most important things you want to remember when you think back to this training: