



# SESSION 1



# SESSION 1

## ESTABLISHING THE LEARNING GROUP

### INTRODUCTION

This first session will introduce students to the course and to each other and create a positive group learning environment.

As a key aspect of this course will focus on storyliving it will be important to discuss how people will share personal information and consider what works for them.

At the end of the session students will have:

- A good understanding of the course and the learning approach being taken
- Developed a group agreement about how they will work together as learners
- Explored how they will support their wellbeing during the course
- Developed a group and/or personal guide to sharing lived experiences

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this session students should be able to:

- Articulate how they can support their own wellbeing during the course
- Understand how they will share lived experience in a way that is safe for them and the group
- Understand how the group can support a positive learning environment



## SUGGESTED LESSON PLAN

| ACTIVITY   | METHOD  | MATERIALS  |
|--|---|--|
| Welcome and introductions  | Trainer led   |  |
| Connecting up  | Group exercise: keeping well                              |  |
| Overview of the course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topics</li> <li>• Learning approach</li> <li>• Outcomes</li> </ul> | Trainer led   | Course folder<br>Overview of course handout<br>(still to be completed) |
| Hopes and fears  | Group exercise  |  |
| Creating our positive learning environment   | Group exercise:<br>creating a Learning Together agreement |  |
| Supporting myself  | Individual exercise:<br>My positive learning environment  | Worksheet  |
| Reflection   | Individual and group exercise                             | Worksheet  |



## INFORMATION

This may be the first time that all the students will be meeting together with the trainer. Even if some or all of the students know each other and/or the trainer it is still the first time that they will be coming together for the Living e-Motions course.

The session is an opportunity for:

- you and the students to introduce yourselves
- students to learn more about the course
- students to work together with you to agree what will make for a positive and supportive learning environment

The Living e-Motions project highlighted the social stigma attached to mental health conditions and challenges and that this stigma can be a barrier to social interaction, social inclusion and recovery. Training activities such as Living e-Motions intending to provide an empowering learning experience for people living with mental health challenges need to take social interactions from the context of interpersonal relations to broader, societal perspective into account.

The Living e-Motions course has been designed to encourage and support social interactions by adopting a facilitated group learning approach where group processes and dynamics are part of the learning process. This group learning process is underpinned by two interconnected objectives:

- establishing an atmosphere of social support and trust (social context)
- enhancing strategies and activities of sharing emotions in social settings (socially orientated procedures)

By participating in the course students should see an improvement in their social skills and competencies in areas such as communication, self-definition, self-esteem, network of support and collaboration.



For some students the Living e-Motions course may be a new or different learning experience. When providing an overview of the course you may want to emphasise:

- The Living e-Motions course focuses on emotional learning and how our lived experience can be harnessed to support ours and others wellbeing and recovery. This means taking a whole person approach rather than focusing on diagnosis and symptoms
- The way the course will be delivered will be facilitative and participative. The course provides an active learning experience where the role of the trainer is not only to share information and introduce concepts but also to encourage and support students to share with each other and learn through discussion and reflection
- It is important that the group take responsibility along with the trainer for managing the learning process and creating a positive and supportive learning environment. The Learning Together agreement is central to this and it is essential that developing it is a mutual process. This agreement can then be referred to, reflected upon and built on as the course progresses
- During the course students will be encouraged to draw on and share their lived experiences. Students should be reminded that they should only share what they are comfortable with and it is their responsibility to keep themselves safe. It is important to reiterate that the Living e-Motions course is a learning rather than a therapeutic experience. You should discuss with students how they can ensure that the group remains a learning experience and doesn't slip into being a support group only



- Living e-Motions is a learning experience and one where the students will build on their own experiences and learning throughout the course to produce a storyliving video at the end and create a learning passport. We suggest that each student is provided with a folder to keep any handouts and exercises they complete as well as any reflections they record at the end of each session.

