



# SESSION 3



# EXERCISES

## Connecting up: I am.....

Ask the students to take a couple of moments to think about the statement 'I am.....'. Acknowledge that we are all many things but ask them to pick one answer to 'I am.....' and share it with the group. Ideally it should be something that is important to them now in their recovery journey.



### **TUTOR NOTES**

This connecting up exercise picks up on the theme of identity in CHIME. It also emphasises that much of this session will be focused on the personal. Encourage the students to be creative about this and if required start the sharing yourself. The statements could focus on personal and family relationships, skills, interests etc. If someone uses a diagnosis or something focused on illness, ask them to think of something else that they are.



### Why share our recovery stories?

As a whole group facilitate a discussion around the questions:

- What benefits do we get from sharing our stories?
- What benefits do we get from hearing other people's recovery stories?

Note the key points on a flip chart.

Then ask the students what they feel needs to be considered or in place to make sure that they can share recovery stories in a way that is beneficial and safe for others.

Revisit the group agreement and add anything new to it.



### **TUTOR NOTES**

It is helpful to use this exercise early in the session and then use the information about the benefits of and values underpinning story sharing to validate and inform. It may be useful to introduce the values underpinning story sharing - control, support, respect, wellbeing, responsibility - in the second part of the discussion.



### What is a recovery story?

Share a short recovery story with the group. We suggest Shona's story which you can find at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xcXndZ617iQ>

Facilitate a whole group discussion using the following questions:

- What was the focus of Shona's story?
- What did we learn about her?
- What helped her recovery?
- What challenges did she face?



### **TUTOR NOTES**

The aim of this exercise is to demonstrate that recovery stories can be short. Indeed, they can be snippets or small parts of a person's story but have enough in them to help the person and share their learning and inspire others. Stories can also refer to challenges, problems and distress but do not need to go into great details for others to understand. Finally, lots of different things can help recovery. Shona's story shows how a positive, supportive relationship with a worker (hope); becoming part of a supportive group (connection and belonging) and pursuing her interests (meaning and identity) have helped her find herself and take control of her recovery (empowerment).



### My recovery story

A set of recovery story themes are available. Ask the students to choose one of the following and use it to tell their story:

- Letter to my younger self
- My life my song
- Message from my best friend

If someone finishes quickly then they can choose another theme and use that to develop their story.

At the end of the exercise ask the students for comments on using the themes and how useful they found it.



### TUTOR NOTES

These themes will support the students to look at their story so far but from the viewpoint of what they have learnt and their strengths, skills and qualities. Using the themes takes some of the anxieties out of story sharing and encourages students to think differently about their experiences rather than repeating a story of themselves that they may have previously formed or been told. This will help students to start reframing their story to make sure it is their own.

The My life my song theme provides an opportunity to look forward and imagine what would make the song (i.e. life) better. This is an introduction to another aspect of recovery - taking control of the future. More future focused themes are included in a later session.



# HANDOUTS OVER PAGE



## LETTER TO MY YOUNGER SELF

The wonder of hindsight is a great thing!  
If you could write a letter to your 16-year-old  
self what would you say?



- What words of guidance would you give?
- How would you comfort and encourage yourself?
- What wisdom can you pass on?
- What other messages would you want to share?



## MY LIFE MY SONG

Imagining your life as a song can seem light-hearted but it can reveal truths

Do you have a song that tells your story? What type of song is it and who sings it? Is it yours?

- What story does it tell?
- How do you feel when you sing it or hear it?
- What would make the song better?
- If you could write another verse what would it be?





## MESSAGE FROM MY BEST FRIEND

It is so easy to be your own worst critic.  
What would a good friend say about you?

- What do they value about you and your friendship?
- What strengths and qualities do they admire?
- What message do they have for you?



Other people can help us to see ourselves differently and this opens up new possibilities in life.



# TEMPLATE CONSENT FORM

As are a learner on the Living e-Motions course you have been developing your recovery story and sharing it with other group learners. The intention of the course is to empower people living with mental health challenges to take control of their lives, recognising their emotions and developing ways to express them in a positive way. We also hope that by sharing and living our stories we will open the window to the experience of mental health challenges and the reality of recovery from a positive, inspiring and refreshing perspective.

During the course you will have the opportunity to record your story to share with a wider audience. This form is being used to ensure we have your permission to share your story.

You will have the opportunity to see any written, audio or video produced before it is shared. All information will be held on password-protected computers and stored securely. The information collected will only be used for the purposes of Living e-Motions and recovery story sharing and will not be used by [organisation name] for any other purpose.

Please read the following carefully and indicate your preferences in relation to your story as shared and any audio or film recording made. You will be asked for your preferences for how your story and any audio and film recordings are used in materials created and how you would like to be acknowledged.

I understand that:

- I can withdraw my consent at any time, for any reason by contacting [organisation name]
- The story will not be used for personal profit or commercial gain.
- If I decide that I no longer want my contribution to appear for any reason it will cease to be used by the [organisation name] and partners involved. However, I understand that it will not be possible to recover copies of materials, film and audio already in circulation.



Name of person sharing their story .....

Please consider the following options for sharing your story and agree to those that you consent to:

My story can be reproduced both as an individual story as well as being used in materials along with other people's stories	Yes/No
My story can only be used in materials along with other people's stories and not as an individual story	Yes/No
I am happy for my full name to be given when my story is reproduced or used	Yes/No
I would prefer to remain anonymous when my story is reproduced or used	Yes/No

I give consent for my story, any audio or film recordings made and any pictures taken during this project to be used in the following way(s).

Please delete as appropriate.

In printed publications	Yes/No
In video or audio publications	Yes/No
In press releases, which may subsequently appear in the local or national media	Yes/No
For staff/volunteer learning and development	Yes/No
On the websites of the Living e-Motions project and [organisation name]	Yes/No



**Personal details:**

Name:	
Signature:	
Telephone number:	
Email address:	
Postal address:	
Date:	
Witness name:	
Witness signature:	
Organisation (if applicable)	
Address (email or postal):	
Date:	



