

## Important people in my life and my relationships with them

### Instructions for support workers

This activity is to help service users think and talk about people who are important to them, and about their relationships with those people. It provides a 'snapshot' of their relational network. However, it may also help to identify areas for the development of current or future relationships. The activity includes a worksheet for service users to complete with their support worker. The service user, supported by their support worker, can write the names of people who are important to them including friends, family, people from support services and people from health services. A poster provides examples of the types of people who may be important. Service users then place stickers next to the names to indicate the nature of their relationship with that person. The activity is intended to promote discussion as service users are asked to explain their choice of sticker, the stickers therefore do not have any predetermined 'definitions'.

This activity is designed to be completed individually with a support worker providing support to a service user. However, the activity could be completed by several service users at the same time. The poster should be printed and displayed and each service user should use a blank worksheet. The stickers should also be printed.

#### Resources to be printed:

1. Important people in my life poster, printed as at least A3
2. Important people in my life worksheet (print as A3)
3. Relationships stickers (printed on sticker sheets (36 labels per sheet, each label sized 49 x 30 mm) or printed on paper, cut and glued to the worksheet)

#### Instructions:

1. Explain that the activity is to help service users think about the important people in their life and their relationships with them.
2. Show the 'Important people in my life and my relationship with them' video.

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3. Discuss the video: ask whether the service user(s) has any questions, ask whether what was said felt relevant to the service user, ask what it meant to them, and what they felt was important.
4. Explain the activity:
  - a. The activity is for people to work in pairs with their support worker (the service user may need help writing on the worksheet and stickers).
  - b. Direct the service user(s) to the poster and read out some of the examples of people who might be important in each section.
  - c. Each service user completes an A3 worksheet (hand round the sheets).
  - d. Ask the service user(s) to go through each section to write the names of the people who are important to them. Support workers may help the service user to identify people.
  - e. Service users then put a sticker next to each name to describe that relationship. Show the stickers to the service user(s), explain that there are lots of different stickers, they can mean lots of different things. Describe some of the stickers but try not to provide your interpretation of what it means. There are two sheets of stickers, the first sheet contains a more familiar set of images; you and the service user may like to use that sheet only.
  - f. There are also blank stickers so the service user(s) can draw their own picture.
  - g. A word is written on the sticker to further describe the relationship. Discuss this with the service user to identify an appropriate word.
  - h. Multiple stickers can be placed for each person.
  - i. If anyone asks, there are no set definitions of the stickers, they can mean different things to different people.
5. Ask whether anyone has any questions.
6. Start the activity.
7. When writing on the worksheets, ensure enough space is left for the stickers.
8. Encourage discussion and verbal explanations throughout. Ask the service user(s) to explain what the sticker means to them and what it represents in relation to their relationship with each person named on the worksheet. Help the service user(s) to write a word to describe their relationship on each sticker.
9. Group discussion could follow the activity if it has been completed by several service users at the same time.
10. Through completion of the activity, the service user may identify relationships they would like to develop. These could be current or new relationships. For example, a service user might have lots of important relationships with family and supporters but few with friends. You may like

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to use the planning worksheet with the service user to plan how these relationships could be developed.

This activity was developed by Gemma Unwin, Michael Larkin, Biza Stenfert Kroese and John Rose from the University of Birmingham in 2014 to reflect themes from the 'Access to Social Care – Learning Disabilities Project (ASC-LD)'.

Please visit our website: [www.ToolsForTalking.co.uk](http://www.ToolsForTalking.co.uk)

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