Tools for Talking

Moving on – my journey to independence

Instructions for support workers

This activity is to help service users think and talk about what is important to them in relation to independence. It involves a card sort whereby various cards are placed on a target to indicate how important each aspect is to the person. Service users have expressed varying ideas of what independence means to them, their journey towards independence and how they work towards increased independence. The activity is therefore designed to explore how the service user defines independence and how they may be supported to achieve their independence.

This activity is designed to be completed by individual service users in discussion with a support worker. However, it could be completed by groups of up to five people. Each service user should have a set of cards.

The poster should be printed as large as possible. If the activity is completed by a group, the poster could be printed as A0 and then each service user has a section of the poster where they can place their cards. Alternatively, each service user could have a smaller version of the poster to work on.

Resources to be printed:

1. Set of cards per person (cut into cards)
2. Target poster, printed at least A3.

Instructions:

1. Explain that the activity is to help the service user(s) think about independence and about what it means to them.
2. Ask "what do you think independence means?"
3. Explain that independence can mean different things to different people, it could be being able to decide what you want to do and when you want to do it, it could be being able to go out on your own or it could be living on your own.
4. Show the 'Moving on – my journey to independence' video.
5. 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.
6. Explain the activity:
    a. Direct the service user(s) to the target poster and give each service user a set of cards.

b. The activity is for each service user to work on their own to place their own cards. They may need support to do this.

c. Each service user places each card in their set on the target. In groups with a large poster, each service user can use the space in front of them. Alternatively, they can use their own copy of the target.

d. The closer the cards are placed towards the middle, red section (where it is 'hot'), the more important what is on the card is to the service user so place the most important cards nearest the middle. Cards that are not important can go towards the outside where it is 'cooler'. You can even put cards in the white if they do not matter to the person.

e. Ask the service user(s) to look through their stack of cards. Read some of them out together.

f. Explain that there are blank cards in case there is something missing; these can be written on.

g. The cards can be placed in any order.

7. Ask whether anyone has any questions.

8. Ask the service user(s) to start placing the cards, going through them one-by-one. Offer support if needed, especially with reading and writing additional cards.

9. Encourage discussion throughout the activity. Ask the service user(s) to explain their card placement. For example, in groups, after around 20 minutes, ask the group to start the discussion and then go round each member and ask them to explain one card placed in the centre, one on the outside and possibly another one. Encourage discussion amongst all members of the group and explore what independence means to each service user, where they feel they are in their journey, and what might help them to achieve their own independence.

10. After the activity, you may want to stick the cards on the poster or photograph the poster to capture the allocation of the cards.

11. During the activity, the service user may identify some areas for development. You and the service user might like to use the planning tool to develop a plan to implement these activities.