

HAND OUT A – Choices in Recovery

This session is best started after having completed the session 'Exploring Recovery'. Before watching the video, it is important to note, that you may be under a guardianship, power of attorney, disability and/or limited in your decision-making capability. As a result, this session and its content may not be entirely applicable to your situation. What you can take away from this however is that choice is empowering and can take on many different forms. Everyone's journey is different, ultimately knowing and understanding *your* rights in your situation is what's important.

Watching the video, Choices in Recovery up until **4 mins, 20 seconds**. We have followed the story of River. Just like River, you yourself may be going through a journey that feels challenging and you would like to understand your rights to choice. Although there are many areas of *choice* to explore in mental health we are going to focus on the following key areas:

- Discovering areas in your life that require you to start making decisions so that it aligns with your recovery (often these are unmet needs).
- Explore supported decision making and what this looks like.
- Choosing the right services for you.
- Develop a plan around who can help you find the right services.
- Determine how choice makes you feel in your recovery path.

Choice is a big part of your recovery because choice is empowering. Choice requires competence, autonomy, and relatedness.

The recovery path is all about making choices and making the best choices based on all the options in front of you. For some, this can feel overwhelming. Trusting our decision-making capabilities can be hard when we are sitting in the middle of our problems. So how do we overcome this? Let's break things down.

Here are some examples of the different types of decisions you may be faced with. People with or without a disability have the right to make the following decisions:

- What to wear
- When and what to eat or drink
- What to do during the day
- Who to spend time with such as friends and family
- When to shower
- Where they live
- How their finances are managed
- Consenting to dental or medical treatment

These are just some of decisions you may be faced with but having said that, some people may find it harder to make decisions than others. Your right to decide might also mean that

you need support to help you make the right decision. In other words, make *informed decisions*.

HAND OUT B Choices in Recovery

You might be wondering what types of support can be provided. When the people and services that support you understand the difficulties you may be facing, they can help to:





















- Provide information about the range of available options
- Be there as a peer who has already made a similar decision
- Help you weigh up the pros and cons of each decision
- Understand that you may need some time to sit with the information you have been provided with before you make a decision.

The charts on the next page can help you practice and pinpoint areas in your life that you consider to be 'unmet needs'. These may be areas that you need to make decisions in. Feel free to tick and comment in the spaces provided.

Choosing Your Goals

This chart can help you to identify how satisfied or happy you are in life areas. Then you can decide in which areas you want to make changes and set some new goals.

How Satisfied or Happy Am I?











LIFE AREAS				LIFE AREAS			
	 Not Satisfied	 Satisfied	 Very Satisfied		 Not Satisfied	 Satisfied	 Very Satisfied
 Housing				 Relationships with friends			
 Doctor/treatment team				 Romantic relationships			
 Medication				 Belonging to a community			
 Education				 Overall health			
 Work (paid or volunteer)				 Fun/hobbies/enjoyment			
 Money/finances				 Spirituality			
 Relationships with family				 Other			

These are three life areas in which I would like to improve or set a new goal:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Choosing the Right Services for You

Below is a list of programs and services to support your mental health recovery journey. Mark off the ones you have tried.

Services and Supports	Have Used	Using	Services and Supports	Have Used	Using
 Psychiatrist/Doctor			 Support Groups		
 Therapy (psychologist, counselor, social worker)			 Supported Employment/ Job Training		
 Medication			 Supported Housing		
 Case Management			 Social Skills Training		
 Assertive Community Treatment			 Other		
 Peer Support/ Counseling			 Other		

Write down the services and supports you would like to know more about and which person on your treatment team or in your support network can help you find these types of services.

Support or Service

Who Can Help

1	
2	
3	

HAND OUT C Choices in Recovery

Putting it all together

Continue to watch the video from 4 mins, 20 seconds.

With the information you gathered in handout A and B now it's time to apply what you have learnt and adapt it to your own situation.

You have an option to read the example below on page 6 to help prompt you before answering these questions:

- 1. What is the decision/dilemma you are faced with?**
- 2. Consider your values. What matters in your life? Do your values align with your decisions?**
- 3. If you feel you need support, who/what services can you approach to help you make your own informed decisions?**
- 4. Who can help you discover and approach these services?**
- 5. Do you feel comfortable with this process or making choices in general? If not, why?**
- 6. Do you feel that having a right to choice is empowering? How does this make you feel?**

Below is an example:

Dilemma:

Sarah: "I don't know if I should move back in with my family. I would save on rent, but I would miss the friends and social life I have in my current house".

Here Sarah needs to find out what really matters to her. Positive social connections or avoiding running out of money?

Sarah decides that "Friends and social connection is more important". She feels without this, her "depression may spiral down".

If Sarah decides not to move in with the parents and stay where she is, she is now faced with a new dilemma. Sarah asks, "Are there any ways I can continue to afford the expense of renting and paying my bills?"

For Sarah, it may be time to reach out to services or supports that she may or may not already have in place. Here Sarah asks questions around how she can earn extra income. Are there any further payments, work, or government pensions she is not aware of?

Now head back up to question 1, 2 and 3. If you can't think of any real examples in your life, you can leave this and come back to it at another time.