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# MNingful Life

## A Training Activity for Understanding Multiple Needs

This resource has been designed to provide opportunities for learners to explore the issues and barriers faced by people experiencing multiple and complex needs. It was originally developed as a training aid for the Peer Mentor training programme provided by WY-FI (West Yorkshire – Finding Independence), part of The National Lottery Community Fund’s Fulfilling Lives Programme.

Designed as a board game, it is accessible and naturally differentiated to suit all learning styles. However, it is not “played” to be won. The board and cards demonstrate a hypothetical person’s life journey from needing very intensive support to total independence. The journey is not linear and reflects Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. The cards represent the details of that journey: areas of need; support and guidance; as well as setbacks and opportunities.



# Guidelines for Using this Resource in your Training

## When and where?

MNingful Life is a tool to promote discussion, share and learn about good practice and consolidate and enhance the learning in your training. By promoting discussion and highlighting real issues faced by people seeking help and support, this resource helps learners to apply the concepts they have learned. As such, it is most beneficial when included in training on the following subjects:

- Trauma Informed Practice
- Understanding Personality and Personality Disorders
- Dual Diagnosis
- Strength and Asset Based Approaches
- Person Centred Practice
- Psychologically Informed Environments
- And other training topics focussing on supporting service user progression or journey

It is also useful as an activity for new staff and volunteers, as it raises awareness of the obstacles faced by people experiencing multiple needs. It can form part of your induction or volunteer training programmes and be used to stimulate discussion during reflective practice groups. For extended training programmes it could be used as a formative assessment tool with learners to check understanding and highlight areas where further development would be helpful.

## How to use MNingful Life

Ideally, MNingful Life is used in small groups of up to six people (or teams of people for larger groups) plus a trainer acting as the facilitator. To provide as much variety as possible, the facilitator should set a time limit of around five minutes for each discussion and aim to use MNingful Life for no more than 90 minutes in one session. However, there exists a great deal of flexibility and trainers can use MNingful Life to suit the course they are running. To be clear though, MNingful Life is at its best when used to enhance and consolidate learning within a training programme rather than used as a standalone resource.



There is no expectation that the facilitator should supply all the answers but should ensure they are able to field questions around safeguarding and legal issues and signpost learners to appropriate information sources.

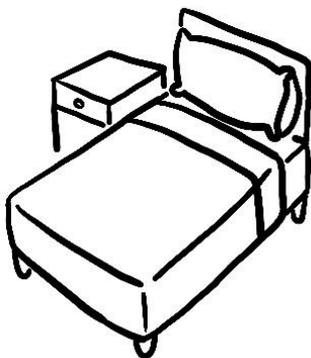
It is the facilitator's role to promote and guide useful discussions by identifying and reinforcing the learning that is taking place during the conversations and how it fits with the concepts and ideas covered during the training. Facilitators should encourage good practice ideas, challenge poor practice ideas and aim to enable reflection among the participants.

*For examples of good practice, the Competency Framework for Multiple Needs Workers provides a useful reference tool. This framework has been produced in partnership with Fulfilling Lives Newcastle Gateshead and is based on the learning from both projects.*

## Ground Rules

Facilitators should be aware of any adverse effect the subjects raised could have on individual participants and manage disclosure and issues around lived experience effectively. It is crucial to set ground rules which provide a safe learning environment. The following may be helpful as a foundation:

- “
- People may discuss personal issues today. Please keep this confidential so we can trust one another and learn together.
  - Some of what is discussed may be distressing. Feel free to take some time away from the group.
  - Don't hesitate to contact me after the session if you feel you need to.
- ”
- Anything else you'd like to agree?



## Contents

- One board
- 23 Opportunity Cards
- 23 Setback Cards
- 46 Discussion Cards

*You will also need dice and participant tokens or counters*

## Using Mningful Life

1. Set up the board.
2. Place Opportunity and Setback Cards where indicated on the board
3. Sort the Discussion Cards into the different colours and place around the outside of the board.
4. Each participant selects a token and rolls two dice to begin.
5. The first participant to throw a double starts. *This is to demonstrate that taking that first step on the journey can be difficult.*
6. Roll two dice again and move the number of spaces indicated by the dice.
7. If a participant lands on a Discussion Square (squares with a coloured border), they should take a Discussion Card of the same colour and read it out to everyone. Please discuss the contents of the card with the other participants. As a team discuss what actions you would take to support that person. Share different approaches to the scenario.
8. Squares with a black border that are not Opportunity or Setback Squares are neutral and no cards are drawn if a participant lands on these.
9. If a participant lands on an Opportunities or Setback square, they should take an Opportunities or Setback card, read it to the other participants in the group and follow the instructions on the card. *If a participant is asked to go back or forward a number of spaces, they should not take a card from the next square they land on.*
10. Each participant takes their turn clockwise from the first participant.

*The different colours represent different levels of need based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs:*

- 1) Aspirations
- 2) Progression
- 3) Building Relationships
- 4) Engagement Services
- 5) Recovery Services
- 6) Vital Services
- 7) Further Basic Needs
- 8) Immediate Basic Needs

