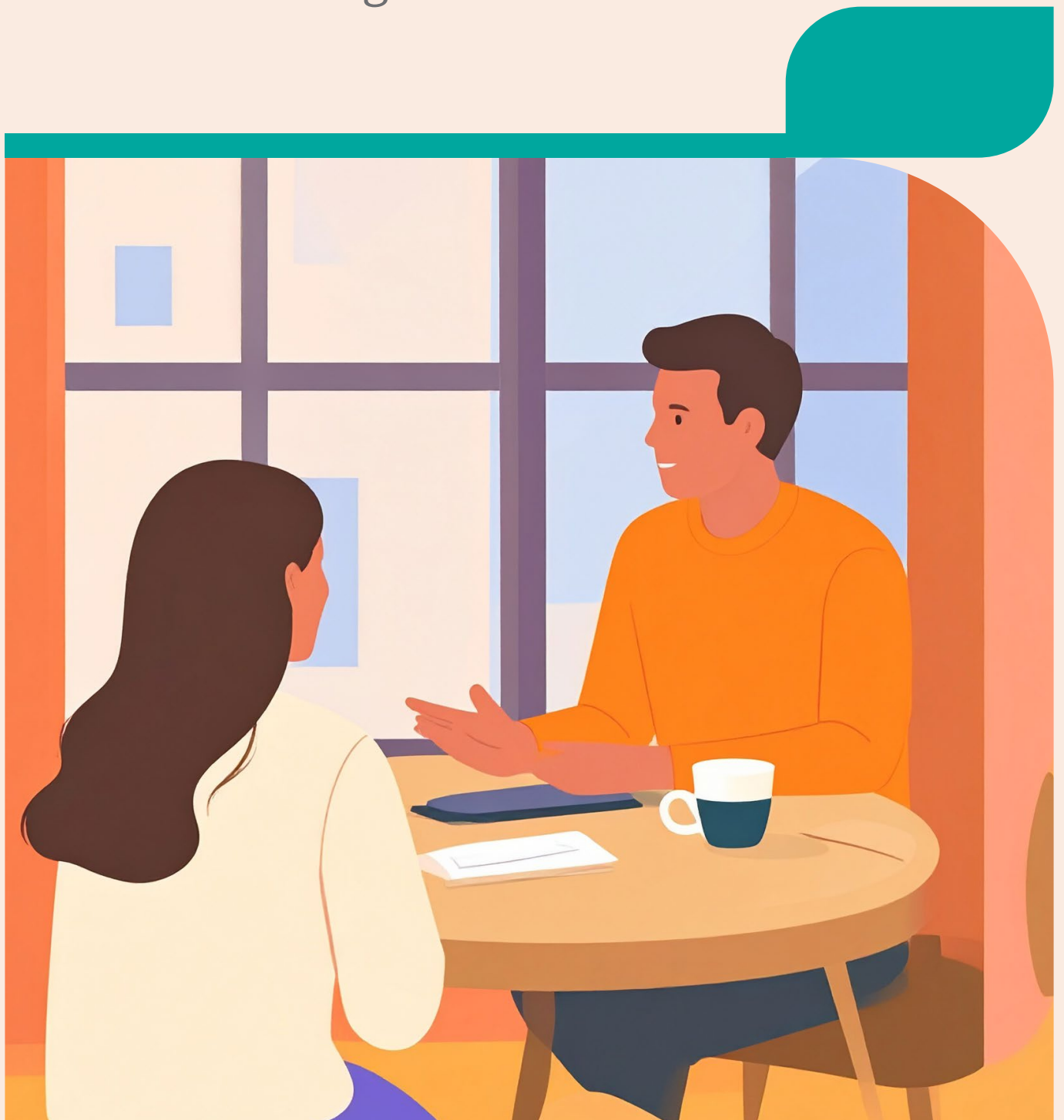




Peer-Led Suicide Prevention and Support Training Program

Facilitator Training Pack





Looking for Change is a suicide prevention program designed to support individuals experiencing financial hardship. It is an initiative of *Prosper (Project Australia)* and has been made possible by funding from *South Western Sydney Primary Health Network*.

For additional resources and detailed information about the program, please visit:

<https://prosperprojectaustralia.org/programs/lookingforchange/>

This Facilitator Manual has been developed to support the delivery of the *Looking for Change* peer-led suicide prevention and support program. Community volunteers interested in running the program within their local areas can use this manual—alongside webinars and other support materials available on the website—to guide program delivery.

Looking for Change is intended to be a free community-based support group. There should be no cost or fee for participants.

For further assistance or guidance on facilitating the group, please contact:

mail@prosperprojectaustralia.org

This service is funded by

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Suicide Prevention Content Warning

This program discusses topics related to suicide, mental health challenges, and personal experiences of distress. Some content may be upsetting, particularly for those with lived experience.

If you feel overwhelmed at any point, please take a break and prioritise your wellbeing. You're not alone, and support is always available.

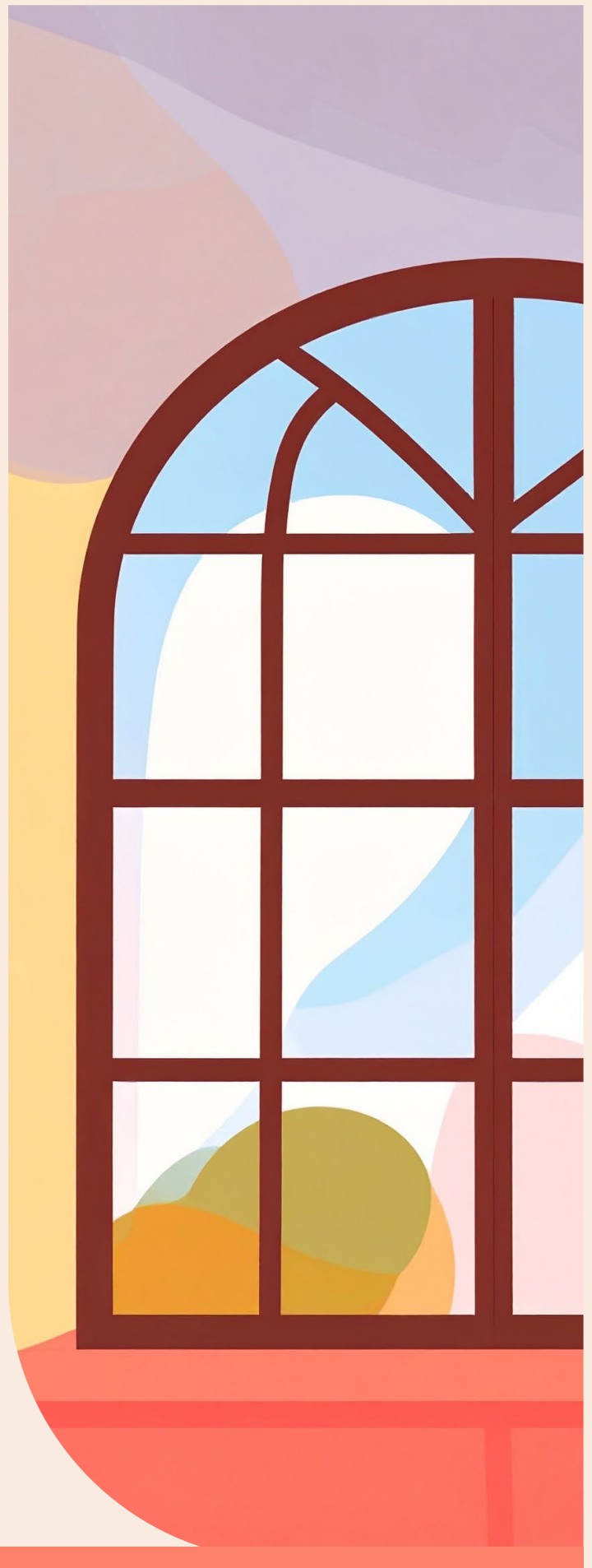
For immediate, confidential help, please contact:

→ Lifeline: 13 11 14 – 24/7 crisis support

→ Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800 – for young people aged 5–25

→ Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467 – for ongoing support from professional counsellors

Your safety matters. Please reach out if you need support.





Session 1: Building Connection

Session Title: Understanding Suicidality

Duration: 2 hours

Session Objectives:

- **Establish a safe and supportive group environment.**
- **Build rapport and trust among participants.**
- **Introduce key concepts of suicidality, including risk and protective factors.**
- **Promote self-awareness and emotional regulation skills.**
- **Encourage peer support and sharing in a structured way.**

Session Overview:

1. Welcome and Group Agreements (20 mins)

- Welcome participants and introduce facilitators.
- Read the Suicide Prevention Content Warning statement and contact list (found on page 3 of this manual), to the group.
- Outline the purpose of the program and session structure.
- Establish group agreements (confidentiality, respect, voluntary participation, non-judgmental listening).
- Icebreaker activity: *“Two Truths and a Strength”* – each participant shares two true things about themselves and one personal strength.

2. Understanding Suicidality (30 mins)

- Brief psychoeducation on suicidality: myths vs. facts.

Psychoeducation on Suicidality: Myths vs. Facts

Suicide is a complex issue that affects people of all ages and backgrounds. Understanding the truth about suicidality can help reduce stigma, provide support, and potentially save lives. Below are common myths and the facts that counter them.

Myth 1: People who talk about suicide are just seeking attention.

Fact: Talking about suicide can be a way for someone to ask for help. Many individuals who die by suicide have expressed their feelings beforehand. Taking any mention of suicide seriously can be life-saving.

Myth 2: Asking someone about suicide will put the idea in their head.

Fact: Research shows that asking someone directly about suicide does not increase the risk. In fact, it can open the door to important conversations and provide an opportunity for support.

Myth 3: Suicide happens without warning.

Fact: Many people show warning signs before attempting suicide, such as talking about feeling hopeless, withdrawing from loved ones, or engaging in risky behaviours. Recognizing these signs can help prevent a crisis.

Myth 4: Only people with mental illness think about suicide.

Fact: While mental health conditions can increase risk, suicidal thoughts can affect anyone, including those who do not have a diagnosed mental illness. Factors such as stress, trauma, loss, or financial struggles can contribute to suicidality.

Myth 5: Once someone decides to die by suicide, nothing can stop them.

Fact: Suicidal feelings can be temporary, and with the right support, people can find hope and recovery. Intervention, therapy, social support, and crisis resources can help someone through their darkest moments.

Myth 6: People who survive a suicide attempt won't try again.

Fact: A past suicide attempt increases the risk of future attempts, but with proper intervention and support, people can recover and go on to live meaningful lives.

What Can You Do?

- Listen without judgment if someone talks about suicidal thoughts.
- Ask directly if you're concerned about someone.
- Encourage professional help (e.g., therapist, crisis hotline, support groups).
- Stay connected—social support is a key protective factor.

If you or someone you know is struggling, reach out to a crisis hotline or mental health professional. Support is available, and help can make a difference.

Understanding Suicide Risk and Protective Factors

Suicide is a serious public health concern, but understanding the factors that increase or decrease risk can help prevent it. Suicide risk factors make a person more likely to consider, attempt, or die by suicide. Protective factors, on the other hand, help reduce the likelihood of suicide and promote mental well-being.

Risk Factors for Suicide

1. **Mental Illness** – Conditions such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia can increase suicide risk. These illnesses can lead to feelings of hopelessness, emotional pain, and difficulty coping with daily life.
2. **Trauma and Abuse** – Experiencing physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, as well as exposure to violence or severe loss, can lead to suicidal thoughts. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is also linked to increased suicide risk.
3. **Substance Use** – Alcohol and drug use can impair judgment, increase impulsivity, and worsen mental health conditions, all of which contribute to suicide risk.
4. **Social Isolation and Loneliness** – A lack of close relationships, feelings of being disconnected from others, or social withdrawal can increase a person's vulnerability to suicide.
5. **Previous Suicide Attempts** – A history of suicide attempts is one of the strongest predictors of future suicidal behaviour.
6. **Access to Means** – Easy access to lethal methods, such as firearms or certain medications, increases the likelihood of suicide attempts being fatal.
7. **Chronic Illness and Pain** – Living with a long-term physical illness, especially if it causes significant pain or disability, can contribute to feelings of despair and thoughts of suicide.
8. **Perceived Burdensomeness** - The belief that one is a burden on others or that their death would be worth more than their life.

Protective Factors Against Suicide

1. Strong Social Support and a sense of belonging – Having close family members, friends, or a supportive community can help people feel connected and valued, reducing feelings of loneliness and despair.
2. Coping Skills and Problem-Solving Abilities – The ability to manage stress, resolve conflicts, and handle difficult emotions in a healthy way can lower suicide risk.
3. Hope and a Sense of Purpose – Feeling hopeful about the future, having personal goals, or engaging in meaningful activities (such as work, hobbies, or volunteering) can help protect against suicidal thoughts.
4. Access to Mental Health Care – Seeking therapy, counselling, or psychiatric treatment can help individuals manage mental health conditions and reduce suicide risk.
5. Cultural and Religious Beliefs – Some cultural and religious beliefs discourage suicide and promote resilience, offering a sense of belonging and support.
6. Limited Access to Lethal Means – Restricting access to firearms, medications, and other lethal methods can prevent impulsive suicide attempts.
7. Physical Health and Well-being – Regular exercise, proper nutrition, and good sleep habits contribute to better mental health and emotional stability.
8. Limiting harmful content – Avoiding depressing or distressing content (such as dark/violent movies, heavy/angry music or toxic online spaces) can support emotional regulation and reduce the risk of negative thinking patterns.

Conclusion

Understanding both risk and protective factors can help individuals, families, and communities take action to prevent suicide. If you or someone you know is struggling, reach out for help – you are not a burden. Support from loved ones, mental health professionals, or crisis services can make a life-saving difference.

Small group activity: *Scenario Discussion* – Participants discuss given scenarios and identify risks and protective factors.

Risk Factor Scenarios (To raise awareness about warning signs and vulnerabilities)

1. Life Transitions & Loss – A person recently lost a close loved one and feels overwhelmed by grief, leading to isolation and despair.
 - *Discussion Points:* How does loss impact mental health? What coping strategies can help?
2. Chronic Stress & Burnout – Someone is experiencing extreme work stress, financial struggles, or academic pressure, feeling like they can't escape their situation.
 - *Discussion Points:* How does stress contribute to suicidal thoughts? What support systems can help?
3. Substance Use & Mental Health – A person turns to alcohol or drugs to cope with depression, making their situation worse – possibly leading to addiction they can't overcome alone.
 - *Discussion Points:* How does substance use increase suicide risk? What healthier alternatives exist or how to seek help for their addiction? (addiction is a big risk factor)

4. Social Isolation & Rejection – A participant feels disconnected from friends or family, leading to thoughts of not belonging.
 - *Discussion Points:* How does social isolation affect mental health? How can we rebuild connections?
5. Trauma & Abuse – Someone with a history of trauma struggles with flashbacks and feelings of hopelessness.
 - *Discussion Points:* What role does past trauma play in suicide risk? What are effective ways to heal?

Protective Factor Scenarios (To promote resilience and positive coping strategies)

6. Reaching Out for Help – A person has been struggling but finally decides to talk to a trusted friend or therapist.
 - *Discussion Points:* How does seeking support make a difference? What are barriers to asking for help?
7. Finding Meaning & Purpose – Someone who once felt lost discovers purpose through volunteering, work, hobbies, a lifestyle change or faith.
 - *Discussion Points:* How does finding purpose help reduce suicidal thoughts? What are different ways to create meaning?
8. Building a Safety Plan – A participant shares their experience of creating a crisis plan and how it helped them during tough times.
 - *Discussion Points:* What should be included in a safety plan? How can we help each other stay accountable?
9. The Power of Connection – Someone finds strength in a support group, realizing they're not alone.
 - *Discussion Points:* How can peer support be a protective factor? How can we encourage connection?
10. Healthy Coping Strategies – A participant describes how mindfulness, sobriety, exercise, counseling or journaling helped them through a crisis.
 - *Discussion Points:* What coping strategies have worked for you? How do we practice self-care daily?

Personal Experiences and Emotional Awareness (30 mins)

- Guided reflection: “*Mapping My Emotional Landscape*” – participants identify their triggers and coping strategies.
- Group discussion: Sharing insights (optional and voluntary).
- Introduce mindfulness and grounding techniques (e.g., deep breathing, 5-4-3-2-1 grounding exercise).



Guided Mindfulness and Grounding Exercise

(Duration: 10-15 minutes)

Introduction (2 min)

“Welcome, everyone. Before we begin, let’s take a moment to settle in. This is a safe space, and we are here together to support one another. Today, we will go through some mindfulness and grounding exercises to help us stay in the present moment and bring a sense of calm. There’s no right or wrong way to do this—just follow along in a way that feels comfortable for you.”

Step 1: Deep Breathing (3 min)

“Let’s begin with deep breathing. You can close your eyes or keep them open—whatever feels best for you.”

1. **Inhale deeply** through your nose for a count of **4...** (1, 2, 3, 4).
2. **Hold** your breath for a count of **4...** (1, 2, 3, 4).
3. **Exhale slowly** through your mouth for a count of **6...** (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6).
4. **Repeat** this process for a few rounds, letting your body relax with each breath.

“If your mind wanders, that’s okay. Just bring your focus back to your breath. Let go of any tension with each exhale.”

Step 2: 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique (5 min)

“Now, let’s use our senses to ground ourselves in the present moment.”

1. 5 things you can see

- Look around you. Notice five things in your environment.
- Pay attention to the colours, shapes, and details.

2. 4 things you can feel

- Bring awareness to four sensations.
- This could be your feet on the ground, your hands in your lap, the texture of your clothing, or the temperature of the air.

3. 3 things you can hear

- Listen carefully. Identify three sounds around you.
- Maybe it’s a clock ticking, the hum of a fan, or distant voices.

4. 2 things you can smell

- If possible, notice two scents in your space.
- It could be fresh air, a cup of tea, or even the smell of your skin.

5. 1 thing you can taste

- If you have a drink or a mint, take a small sip or bite and focus on the taste.
- If not, simply notice the taste in your mouth.

“You are here, in this moment. You are safe. You are present.”

Step 3: Positive Affirmations & Reflection (3 min)

“To close this exercise, let’s take a deep breath together. Inhale... and exhale... Now, I will say a few affirmations. Feel free to repeat them silently or out loud:”

- **I am grounded. I am safe. I am present.**
- **I have survived my hardest days. I am strong.**
- **I am not alone. I am supported and cared for.**
- **I am worthy of love and healing.**

“Take another deep breath in... and exhale. When you’re ready, gently bring your awareness back to the space around you. Open your eyes if they were closed. Notice how you feel in this moment.”

“Thank you for taking this time for yourself. You are not alone.”

Step 4: Wrap-Up and Self-Care (10 mins)

- Summary of key takeaways.
- Check-out round: Participants share one word about how they’re feeling.
- Encourage self-care post-session (hydration, journaling, reaching out to support networks, go for a walk, have a bath).
- Provide crisis resources and contacts – do not be afraid or ashamed to ask for help. You matter. Refer to page 8 of this manual.

Facilitator Notes:

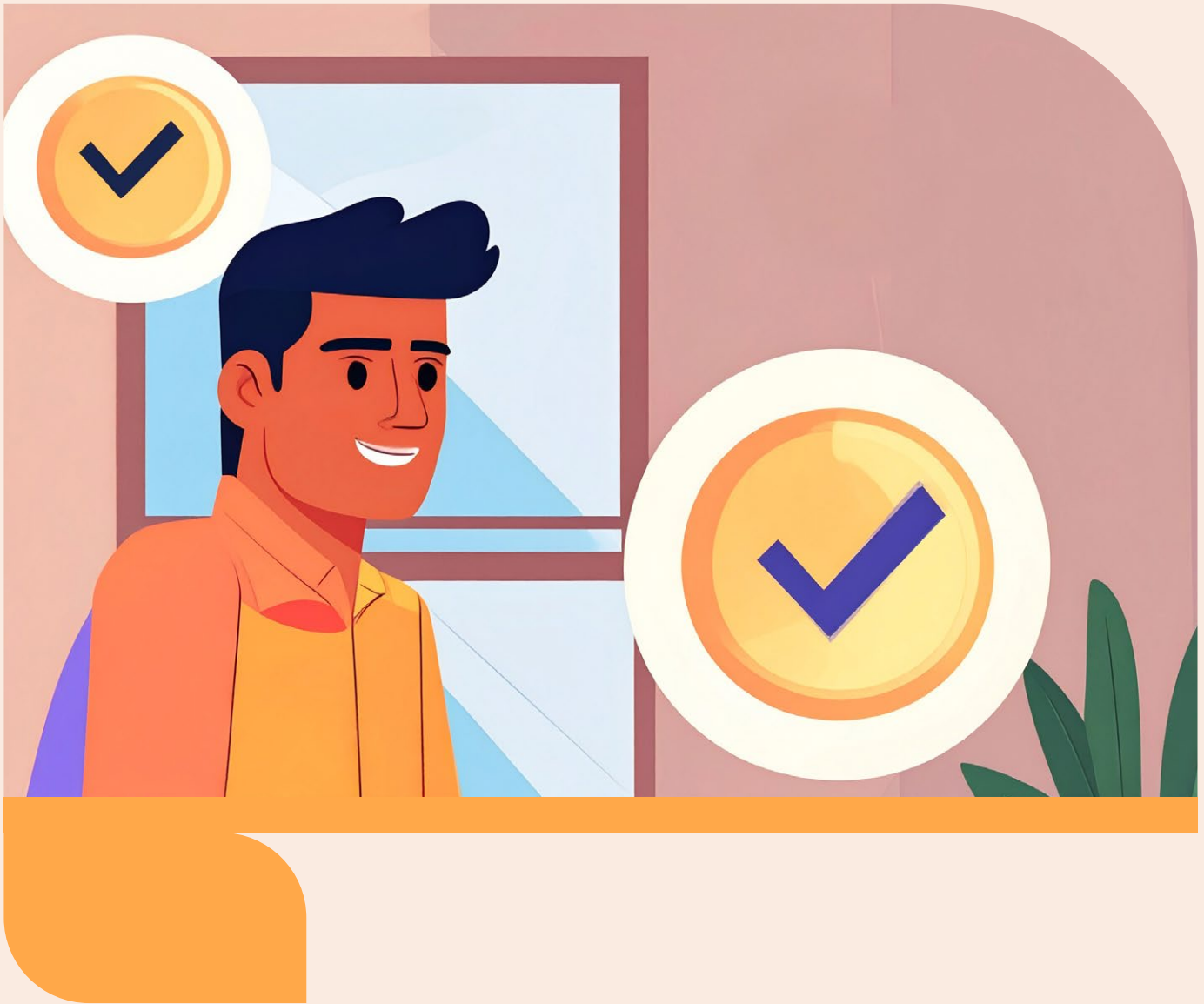
- Model vulnerability while maintaining professional boundaries.
- Be aware of participants' emotional states and check in if needed.
- Emphasize that it's okay to step out of the discussion if it becomes overwhelming.
- Encourage peer support but remind participants they are not responsible (or qualified) for "fixing" each other.

Crisis Protocol:

- Ensure all participants have access to crisis resources.
- If a participant is in distress, facilitate a one-on-one check-in.

End of Session 1

Preparation for Session 2: Participants will be encouraged to reflect on their personal support systems and coping strategies.



Session 2: Identifying Strengths and Building Coping Strategies

Session Title: Strengthening Resilience and Support Networks

Duration: 2 hours

Session Objectives:

- Identify personal strengths and coping mechanisms.
- Explore sources of resilience and personal growth.
- Develop personalized safety and coping plans.
- Strengthen peer support/trust and group cohesion.

Session Overview:

1. Check-in and Reflection on Session 1 (20 mins)

- Read the Suicide Prevention Content Warning statement and contact list (found on page 3 of this manual), to the group.
- Brief individual reflection: What resonated from Session 1?
- Group sharing (voluntary).
- Review group agreements.

2. Identifying Strengths (30 mins)

- Strength-based activity: *“Personal Strengths Map”* – participants list strengths and how they’ve used them in difficult times.
- Small group discussion: Sharing insights.

3. Building Coping Strategies (30 mins)

- **Introduce different coping strategies (distraction, emotional regulation, self-soothing, problem-solving).**

Coping Strategies for Suicidality

When experiencing suicidal thoughts, it can be helpful to have different coping strategies to manage distress. Here are four effective ways to cope: **distraction, emotional regulation, self-soothing, and problem-solving.**

1. Distraction

Distraction helps shift your focus away from painful thoughts. Engaging in activities can give your mind a break and help reduce emotional intensity. Some examples include:

- Watching a favourite movie or TV show
- Reading a book or listening to music
- Doing puzzles, colouring, or playing a game
- Going for a walk or exercising to release tension
- Talking to a friend about something unrelated to your distress
- Walking a dog or playing with a pet you have a connection with
- Doing something for someone else who needs a hand

2. Emotional Regulation

Emotional regulation involves recognizing and managing strong feelings in a healthy way. Some strategies include:

- Practicing deep breathing (inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, exhale for 4 seconds)
- Naming your emotions out loud or writing them down
- Using grounding techniques (like the 5-4-3-2-1 method: naming five things you see, four things you touch, three things you hear, two things you smell, and one thing you taste)
- Reframing negative thoughts by challenging them and finding alternative perspectives
- Listening to uplifting content that resonates or reminds you of what to do

3. Self-Soothing

Self-soothing techniques involve using your senses to create comfort and relaxation. Some examples include:

- Wrapping yourself in a warm blanket or wearing comfortable clothes
- Drinking a warm beverage like tea or hot cocoa
- Listening to calming music or nature sounds
- Taking a warm bath or shower
- Using pleasant scents, such as lavender or vanilla, to help relax
- Walking in nature being present

4. Problem-Solving

Problem-solving can help address the underlying issues that may be contributing to distress. Some steps to take include:

- Identifying the specific problem that is causing distress
- Breaking the problem into smaller, manageable parts
- Listing possible solutions and evaluating their pros and cons
- Reaching out to a trusted friend, therapist, or support group for guidance
- Setting small, realistic goals and taking steps toward solving the problem
- Using ChatGPT to explore solutions/scenarios linked to your struggles

If you are struggling with suicidal thoughts, reach out to someone who can help. You are not alone, and support is available.

Group activity: *Coping Toolbox* - participants write down and share their top 3 coping techniques.

Creating a Safety Plan (30 mins)

How to Develop a Safety Plan for Suicidality

A safety plan is a personalized, practical plan that helps someone stay safe when experiencing suicidal thoughts. It includes steps to manage crises and identify sources of support.

Here's how to create one:

1. Recognize Warning Signs

List the thoughts, feelings, and situations that signal a crisis. These could include intense sadness, hopelessness, withdrawing from others, or harmful thoughts.

Use the personal safety plan worksheet provided.

2. Use Healthy Coping Strategies

Identify activities that help reduce distress without needing outside help. Examples include deep breathing, listening to music, exercising, or engaging in a hobby.

3. Connect with Supportive People

Write down the names and contact details of trusted friends, family members, or support groups who can offer encouragement and help during difficult times.

4. Seek Professional Help

List mental health professionals, crisis hotlines, or community resources available for immediate support. Examples include therapists, doctors, or crisis helplines like the Lifeline.

5. Make Your Environment Safe

Remove or secure items that could be used for self-harm, such as medications, weapons, substances or sharp objects. Ask a trusted person to help with this step if necessary.

6. Identify Reasons for Living

Write down personal reasons to keep going, such as family, friends, pets, future goals, the odds that happy/positive times are in your future, or activities that bring joy.

7. Commit to the Plan

Keep the plan easily accessible, such as in a wallet or phone. Review it regularly and update it as needed. Share it with a trusted person who can help during a crisis.

A safety plan is an important tool for managing suicidal thoughts. If you or someone you know is struggling, seek help from a professional or crisis support service. You are not alone, you are not a burden and help is available.

Discussion: Sharing one helpful aspect of their safety plan.

Wrap-Up and Self-Care (10 mins)

- Summary of key takeaways.
- Check-out round: Participants share one positive realization.



Session 3: Meaning, Purpose, and Hope

Session Title: Reconnecting with Values and Goals

Duration: 2 hours

Session Objectives:

- Explore personal values and life goals.
- Identify sources of hope and motivation.
- Foster meaning-making and self-compassion.

Session Overview:

1. Check-in (20 mins)

- Read the Suicide Prevention Content Warning statement and contact list (found on page 3 of this manual), to the group.
- Reflect on safety plans and coping tools from Session 2.
- Group sharing (voluntary).

2. Exploring Personal Values (30 mins)

- Group discussion: How values shape decisions and recovery.

How Values Shape Decisions and Recovery in the Context of Suicidality

Values play a crucial role in shaping our decisions and guiding us through difficult times, including struggles with suicidality. When someone is experiencing deep emotional pain, their ability to make decisions can feel clouded by hopelessness or distress. However, personal values—such as family, love, purpose, and faith—can provide a foundation for making choices that support healing and recovery.

Values influence decisions by offering a sense of direction. Even when someone feels lost, reflecting on what is truly important to them can create small but meaningful reasons to keep going. For example, a person who values their relationships may find strength in the love they share with friends or family. Another individual might hold onto their commitment to helping others or pursuing a long-term goal, even when life feels overwhelming. These values act as anchors, preventing impulsive decisions based on temporary emotions or circumstances.

In the recovery process, values can also serve as motivation. Healing from suicidality often involves professional support, personal reflection, and lifestyle changes. When someone connects their recovery to their values—whether it's wanting to be there for their children, achieving a lifelong dream, or making a difference in their community—they are more likely to stay engaged in the process. Therapy, support groups, and self-care strategies become more meaningful when they are tied to deeply held beliefs.

Values can also help reframe negative thoughts. Suicidality often involves feelings of worthlessness or despair. By focusing on personal values, individuals can shift their perspective. Instead of seeing themselves as a burden, they may recognize their unique contributions to the world. Instead of believing the future is hopeless, they may acknowledge that their values give them reasons to persist.

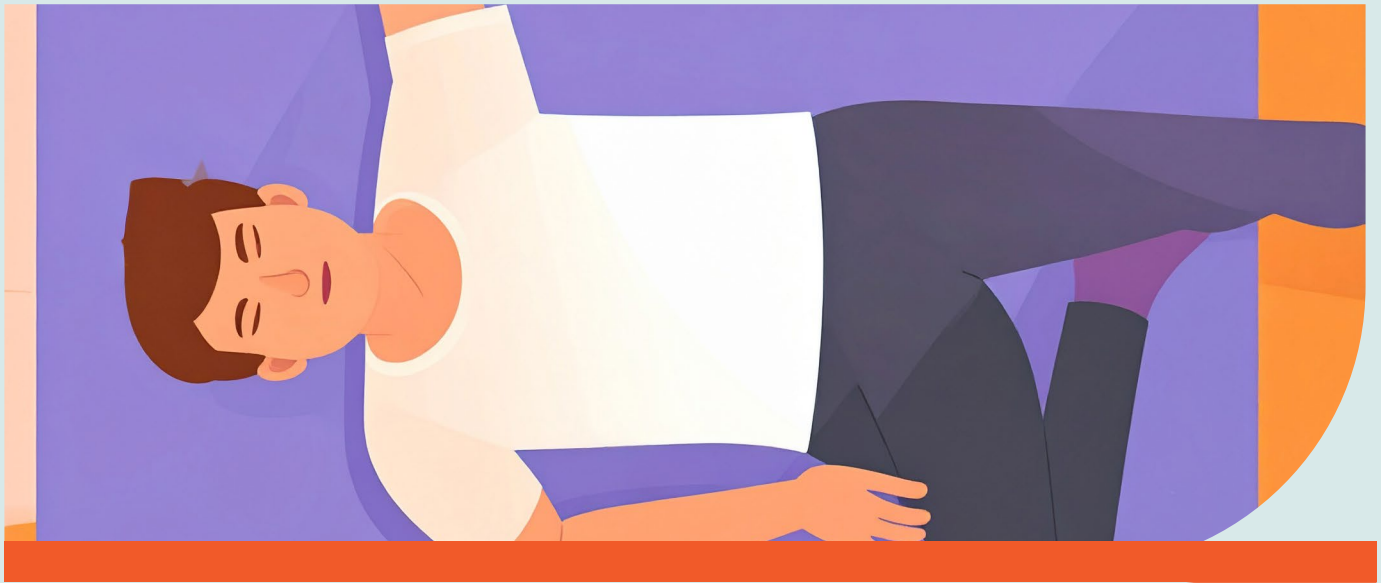
Ultimately, values provide a sense of purpose that can guide both decision-making and the path to recovery. By identifying what truly matters, individuals struggling with suicidality can find hope, build resilience, and take steps toward a more fulfilling life.

3. Finding Meaning and Purpose (40 mins)

- Activity: *Letter to My Future Self* or *Letter to my Ten Year Old Self*. (Inner child compassion)
- Discussion on meaning-making and self-compassion.
- Pick one of the letter options above and take the time to prepare the letter, sharing your feelings and insights with your future or younger self.

4. Building Hope and Future Planning (20 mins)

- Group visualisation exercise: *Imagining a Hopeful Future*.



Group Visualization Exercise: Imagining a Hopeful Future

Objective:

This exercise aims to help participants envision a hopeful and positive future, reinforcing a sense of purpose, resilience and connection. It encourages them to reflect on their strengths, values and the possibilities and different paths that lie ahead.

Materials Needed:

- Comfortable seating or mats for relaxation
- Soft instrumental music (optional)
- A script for guided visualization (provided below)
- Journals or paper and pens for reflection

Duration:

30-40 minutes (including discussion)

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. Setting the Atmosphere (5 minutes)

- Arrange seating in a quiet, comfortable space.
- Dim the lights or create a calming environment.
- Play soft instrumental music (optional).
- Encourage participants to sit or lie down in a comfortable position.

2. Grounding and Relaxation (5 minutes)

- Begin with deep breathing exercises:
 - “Breathe in deeply through your nose, hold for a moment, and exhale slowly through your mouth. Repeat this three times.”

- Guide a brief body scan to help participants relax:
 - “Start by noticing your feet on the ground, your legs, your hands resting, and your shoulders softening. Allow yourself to settle into this moment.”

3. Guided Visualization (10 minutes) *Read the following script slowly and calmly:*

“Imagine yourself five years from now. You have moved forward in your journey, and you are in a place where you feel safe, happy, and fulfilled. Picture yourself waking up in a space that brings you comfort and peace. What does it look like? What sounds do you hear? What scents are in the air?”

As you step into your day, imagine what brings you joy. Who are the people surrounding you? What meaningful activities fill your time? How do you contribute to the world around you?

Reflect on the strengths and qualities that have helped you reach this place. What have you learned about yourself along the way? How do you feel in this moment? Hold onto this feeling of hope and possibility.”

4. Reflection and Sharing (15 minutes)

- Allow participants a few moments to transition back and open their eyes.
- Provide journals or paper and ask:
 - “What did you see in your hopeful future?”
 - “What strengths and values helped you get there?”
 - “How can you take small steps toward this future starting today?”
- Invite volunteers to share (if comfortable), emphasizing a supportive, non-judgmental space.

5. Closing the Exercise (5 minutes)

- Thank participants for their openness.
- Remind them that hope is a process, and small steps matter.
- Encourage ongoing reflection and connection outside the session.
- Provide crisis resources if needed.

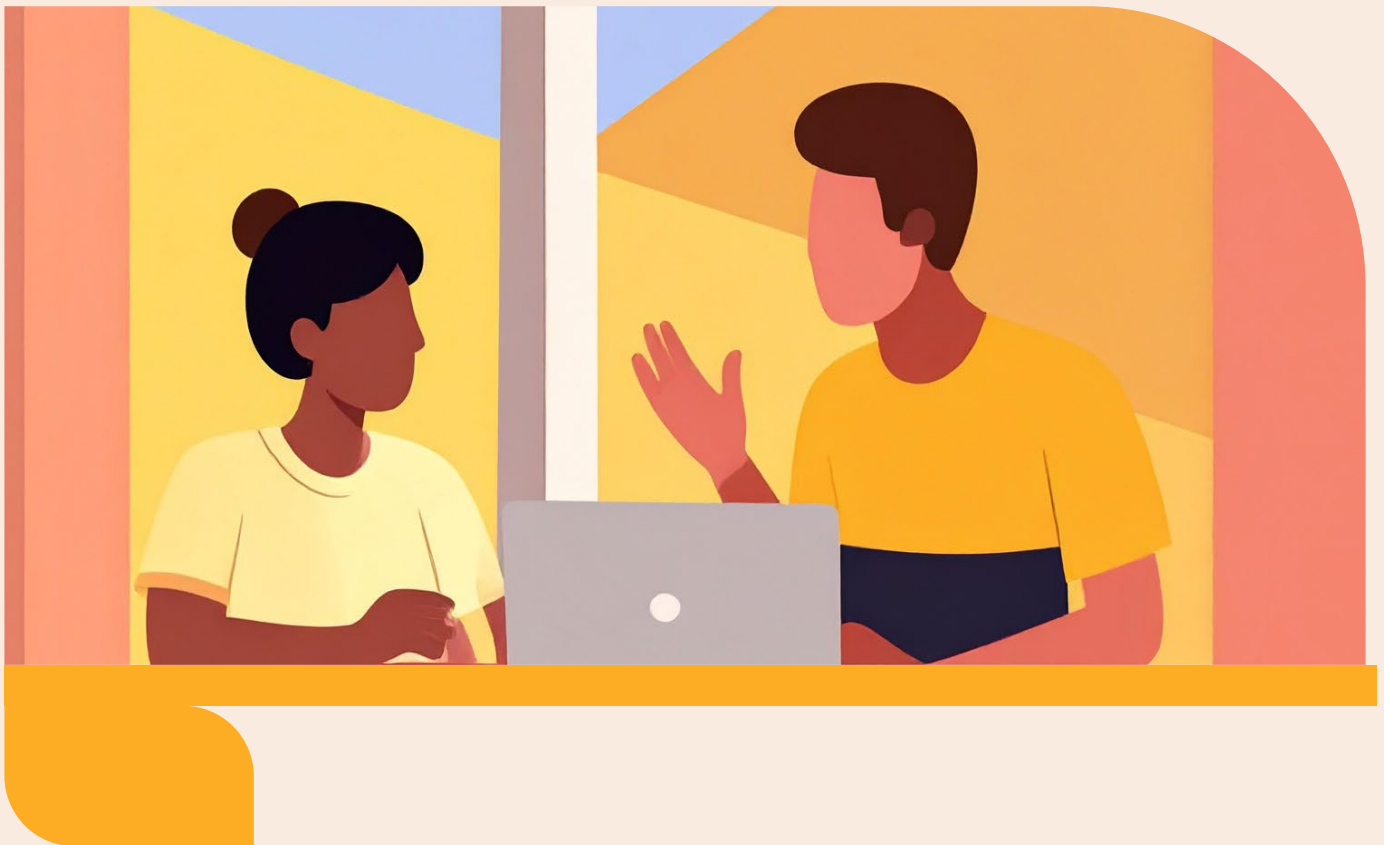
Facilitator Tips:

- Maintain a calm and reassuring tone.
- If a participant becomes distressed, gently guide them back to the present moment.
- Normalize different experiences—everyone’s hopeful future will look unique.
- Reinforce that no step forward is too small.

Note: This exercise is designed to be supportive but is not a substitute for professional therapy. If participants need additional support, encourage them to seek professional help.

Wrap-Up (10 mins)

Check-out and self-care reminders.



Session 4: Moving Forward Together

Session Title: Sustaining Recovery and Community Connection

Duration: 2 hours

Session Objectives:

- **Reflect on progress and growth throughout the program.**
- **Strengthen ongoing support networks.**
- **Develop a plan for continued well-being.**

Session Overview:

1. Check-in (20 mins)

- Read the Suicide Prevention Content Warning statement and contact list (found on page 3 of this manual), to the group.
- Reflection on key takeaways from previous sessions.
- Group discussion on challenges and successes.

2. Sustaining Recovery (30 mins)

- **Activity: *Relapse Prevention Plan.***

Group Activity: Relapse Prevention Plan

This activity is part of a peer-led suicide prevention support program. It helps individuals think ahead and plan for staying safe if they're feeling overwhelmed or at risk.

Here's how you can run the activity:

1. Create a Safe Space

- Make sure the group is in a quiet, private, and comfortable space where everyone feels safe and can talk openly.
- Let everyone know they can choose to share only what they feel comfortable with. They don't have to share everything.

2. Explain the Goal

- Tell the group that the goal of this activity is to help them make a detailed and realistic plan for staying safe if they ever feel at risk again.
- Emphasize that a relapse doesn't mean they've failed. It's a chance to be more prepared and better supported in the future. Progress not perfection.

3. Discuss Triggers and Warning Signs

- Ask the group to think about what situations, thoughts, triggers, people, habits, temptations or other feelings have led them to struggle in the past.
- How can we respond to media stories, social media triggers.
- Encourage everyone to identify their own "warning signs or red flags" (like feeling sad, overwhelmed, or having negative thoughts).
- Share examples to make it easier: "For me, I know I feel down and withdraw from people when I'm struggling and that isolation makes it worse."
- Using the flashback protocol.

4. Identify Support System

- Ask the group to think about they can turn to for help. This might be a friend, family member, counsellor, faith leader or support group.
- Encourage everyone to write down at least three people they can contact when they need support.

5. Create Coping Strategies

- Talk about different ways people can cope when they're feeling low. This might include things like deep breathing, exercising, journaling, or calling a friend.
- Ask the group to think about what has helped them in the past or what they think could help them in the future.

6. Develop a Safety Plan

- Help everyone create a safety plan. This should include:
 - Who to contact for immediate help (a crisis hotline, a supportive friend, a therapist).
 - What actions to take if they start feeling overwhelmed (like going for a walk, using a grounding technique, or reaching out to someone).
 - A list of reasons to stay alive—this can be a list of personal goals, pets or loved ones, aligning with their core values and beliefs, or remembering things they enjoy.
 - Emergency steps—if they ever feel like they might act on suicidal thoughts, what's the first thing they can do (e.g., call a crisis hotline, go to the hospital, or reach out to someone)?

7. Write it Down

- Give everyone time to write out their plan. It's important to keep it somewhere easy to access, like on their phone or in a notebook.
- Encourage them to keep it updated as their needs or supports change.

8. Share (Optional)

- Let group members share their plan with others if they feel comfortable. They can get feedback or suggestions, but it's not required to share.
- Sharing can help people feel less alone and find common strategies that work. Sharing can also normalise their struggle and reduce feelings of shame or guilt.

9. Encourage Regular Check-ins

- Encourage group members to check in with their plan regularly—at least once a month—to see how they're doing and make any necessary changes.

10. Wrap-Up and Offer Support

- At the end of the activity, remind everyone that it's okay to feel down sometimes and that asking for help is a sign of strength.
- Let the group know that support is always available, whether through the group or other resources. Normalise asking for help or seeking support – you are not a burden and there are people who would willingly want to be a part of your recovery. Know n to us or professionals.

By helping everyone develop a Relapse Prevention Plan, you're creating a supportive environment where they feel more empowered to manage tough moments and stay connected to their safety network.

Discussion: Where to now?

1. Building a Support Network (30 mins)

- Group activity: *Creating a Peer Support Map*.
- Who can help when you have a problem? Refer to support list.
- Roleplay: Asking for and receiving support.

2. Closing and Celebration (40 mins)

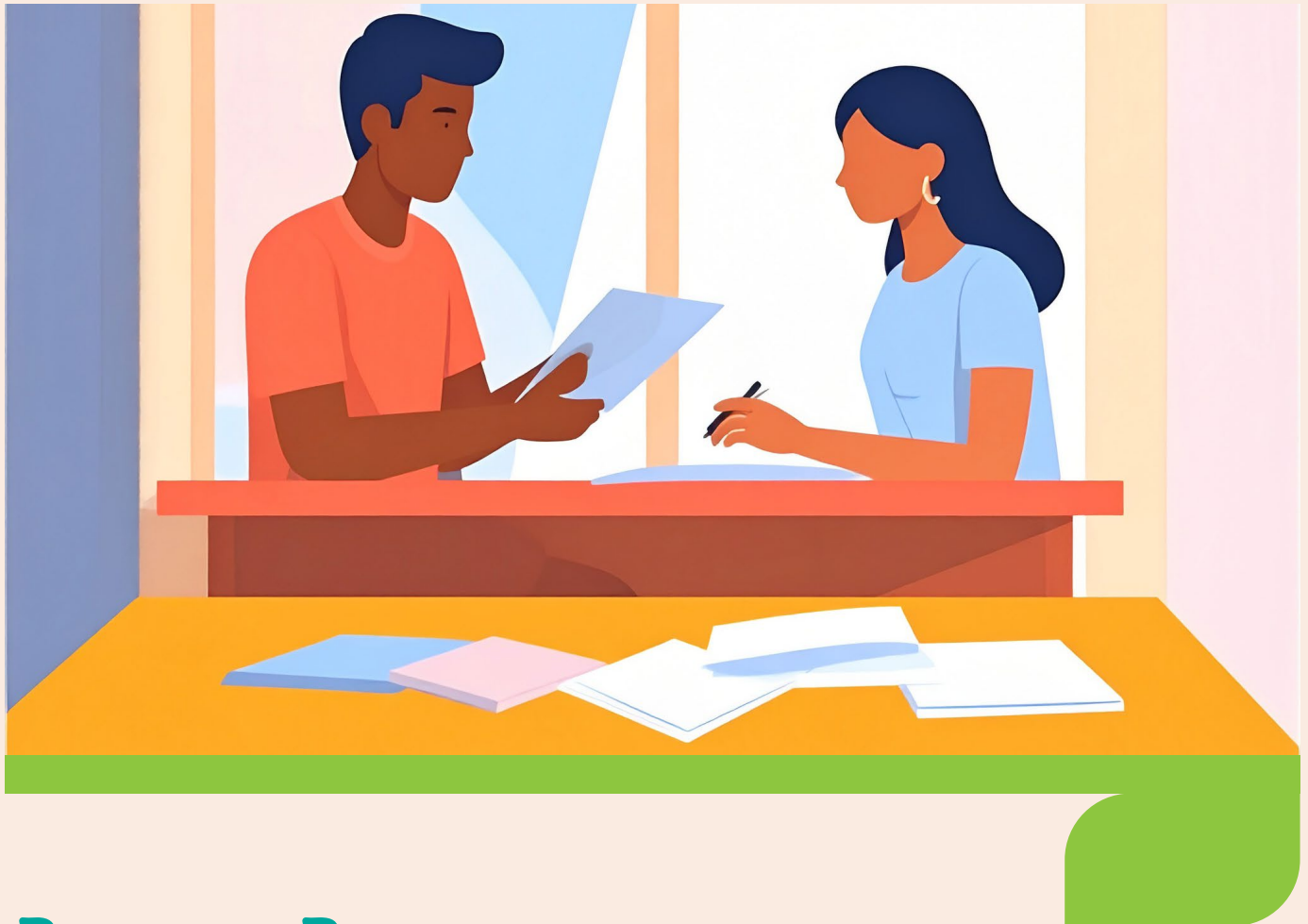
- Reflection: Top 5 takeaways. Refer to 'Top 5 takeaways' handout.
- Group affirmation: Sharing strengths and encouragement.
- Acknowledging their full participation in the program as a nod to their future

3. Wrap-Up (10 mins)

- Final check-out and resource sharing.
- Encouragement to stay connected.

End of Session 4 – Program Completion

Additional program resources and handouts can be found over the page.



Program Resources

The following is a list of resources provided as additional individual pdf files to be used as handouts or distributed online to participants to support program delivery.

These materials can be found at the website:

<https://prosperprojectaustralia.org/programs/lookingforchange/>

Session 1

No additional handouts

Session 2

Personal safety plan worksheet

Session 3

No additional handouts

Session 4

Support List

Top 5 Takeaways

Flashback Protocol

PERSONAL SAFETY PLAN WORKSHEET

What are the warning signs I need to look out for?

What coping strategies reduce my stress?

Who can I contact to help distract me?

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Which professionals can I get help from?

Agency or service contact name _____ Phone Number _____

Agency or service contact name _____ Phone Number _____

Agency or service contact name _____ Phone Number _____

How can I make my environment safer?



SUPPORT LIST

In an emergency, always dial 000

For translated tip sheets, conversation starters, podcast episodes and other resources, visit - <https://prosperprojectaustralia.org/programs/lookingforchange/>

For immediate, confidential help

Lifeline – 13 11 14 (crisis support 24/7)

Kids Helpline – 1800 55 1800

Suicide Call Back Service – 1300 659 467

For help when you are in financial hardship

National Debt Helpline – 1800 007 007

Gamble Aware – 1800 858 858

Use the 'Find a financial counsellor' search on the website -

<https://moneysmart.gov.au/managing-debt/financial-counselling>

Find emergency help with food, housing, bills and other essentials here -

<https://askizzy.org.au/>

Get useful information and resources here –

<https://moneysmart.gov.au/>

Other useful supports

[QLife](#) (LGBTIQA+ support) 1800 184 527

1800 RESPECT (support with abuse, harmful relationships or violence-related issues)

[1800 737 732](https://1800737732.org.au/) or 1800Respect.org.au

Headspace (mental health support for young people) [1800 650 890](https://1800650890.org.au/) or headspace.org.au

Raising Children (the Australian parenting website) raisingchildren.net.au

Tresillian (early parenting support) tresillian.org.au

Think U Know (online safety) thinkuknow.org.au

Reach Out (mental health support for young people and their parents) au.reachout.com

Bullying No Way (support and resources on bullying) bullyingnoway.gov.au



TOP 5 TAKEAWAYS

Reflect on the things that have been most meaningful to you as part of this group; new knowledge gained, an additional strategy you can use to support your wellbeing, a connection made. What are your top 5 takeaways....

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



FLASHBACK PROTOCOL

Rothschild, B. (2000). *The Body Remembers: The Psychophysiology of Trauma and Trauma Treatment*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Flashback protocol may help to manage traumatic flashbacks.

Say the following sentences filling in the blanks, following the instructions:

Right now I am feeling _____, (name the current emotion, usually fear)

and I am sensing in my body _____, (describe current bodily sensations in detail),

because I am remembering _____. (name the trauma by title, only — no details).

And, at the same time, I am looking around where I am now in _____ (say the year),

here _____, (name the place where you are)

and I can see _____, (describe some of the things that you see right now, in this place),

and so I know _____, (name the trauma again) is not happening now/anymore.”

