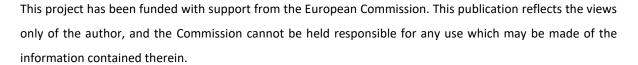




# **CURRICULUM**

**Lesson Plans** 

# MODULE 1 - Introduction to RECOMMIT Course and Values



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### **Lesson 1: Introduction to RECOMMIT Course**

Lesson title	Introduction to RECOMMIT Course
Objectives	From an Acceptance and Commitment Therapy perspective, the function of problematic interpersonal behaviours is experiential avoidance. In other words, people engage in unhelpful interpersonal behaviours with the intention of regulating, changing, increasing, controlling, or avoiding unwanted private experiences, encompassing thoughts, emotions, urges, sensations, and memories.  By means of reactivity, passivity, impulsivity, and various other behaviours, individuals may initially succeed in attaining short-term emotional relief. However, such strategies have the capacity to detrimentally impact all aspects of an individual's life in the long term. Across extended timeframes, avoidance of undesired thoughts and emotions typically serves to amplify difficulties within interpersonal relationships.  The first session aims to establish a group dynamic based on shared values and to foster a sense of shared experience in the path of reintegration. Emphasizing the impracticality of avoiding thoughts and emotions serves to underscore the foundational premise for the continuation of this course.  The objectives of Lesson 1 are to:  • Introduce the participants to the goals of the RECOMMIT Course.  • Complete the 1st evaluation questionnaires.  • Develop Shared Group Values to guide the course.  • Present and discuss Acceptance and Commitment model through the 'Bus of Life' metaphor.  • Learn what it means to pay attention to their experience in the here and now.  • Familiarise with VR.
Week	Week 1
Duration	1.5 hours

	Goals of RECOMMIT Course
	Mindfulness (grounding in the moment)
Key terms	Shared Group Values
	ACT Model (Bus of Life)
	Familiarisation with VR
	With the completion of Lesson 1 participants will be able to:
	✓ Apply a short 'present moment' grounding 5-minute exercise.
	✓ Evaluate their own interpersonal skills on evaluation questionnaires.
	✓ Discuss the goals of the RECOMMIT Course.
Learning	✓ Develop and explain the shared values of the group.
outcomes	✓ Critically reflect on the 'Bus of Life' metaphor.
	✓ Identify some of their personally significant values (bus routes).
	✓ Recognise some of their personal barriers (thoughts, feelings, behaviours).
	✓ Practise the VR Environment.
	✓ Decide whether to commit to the RECOMMIT course.
	Group work
Looming	Brainstorming activities
Learning methods	Use of metaphors
methous	Reflective exercise (individual work)
	Individual work (questionnaire completion)
Evaluation	Continuous performance evaluation
	Woodward, L. (2017). ACT on your recovery manual. Retrieved from
	https://contextualscience.org/files/ACT%20on%20Your%20Recovery%20Manu
Reference	<u>al%202017.pdf</u>
	Hayes, S.C, Strosahl, K.D., & Wilson, K.G. (2012). Acceptance and commitment
	therapy: The process and practice of mindful change (2nd edition). New York, NY:
	The Guilford Press.

Resources, activities & materials

#### **Duration Description**

#### **MODULE 1. Lesson 1: Activity 1**

**Ice-breaking** 

activity

**Steps** 

5 min

**Purpose:** To form a group and feel comfortable.

#### **Procedure:**

The facilitator commences by providing a brief introduction of themselves. Following this, participants are instructed to pair up and share a personal strength or skill with their partner (5 min). To facilitate the process, a list of potential strengths or skills is displayed on the board. Subsequently, each participant is invited to present themselves to the entire group and introduce their partner's identified strength or skill.

Interviews
Interaction in
pairs and in
group

#### **Summary:**

This activity serves as an icebreaker for the group.

#### **MODULE 1. Lesson 1: Activity 2**

# +

RECOMMIT
Goals,
Participant
expectations

10 min **Purpose:** To establish shared goals for the RECOMMIT program.

#### **Procedure:**

The facilitator will introduce the purpose of the RECOMMIT course to the participants. The facilitator explains that the acronym of the program RECOMMIT stands for woRksitE COMMunIcaTion. The facilitator elaborates that this course aims to address the communicational challenges encountered in the workplace, while also delving into aspects that contribute to finding meaning in both work and life. Participants are then prompted to reflect on their

Questions, discussion

Resources, activities & materials

Once participants have taken their turns, facilitators should introduce the following aims of the Group presented on Appendix 1.

- 1. To provide an opportunity to explore the role of your personal values within your life.
- 2. To explore communication barriers to getting back into a working life that you appreciate.
- 3. To find workable ways to respond to barriers that may show up at work and beyond after release.
- 4. To provide a space in life where we can consider actions, both significant and small, that will move us toward a work life that we desire.

Where possible, facilitators should draw links between the aim of the group, as described above, and the participants' learning expectations as mentioned before.

Facilitators should additionally provide commentary on the group's style. Clarity regarding participants' expectations enables them to make informed decisions regarding their participation. This, in turn, is anticipated to enhance their willingness to engage in more unconventional and challenging exercises.

- The lesson is a mixture of structured exercises, group discussion, experiential and exploration exercises, and skills practice.
- 2. Our aim is not to teach you what to do. Instead, we encourage you to practise the skills and exercises

			Resources,
Steps D	uration	Description	activities &
			materials
		presented in this group and trust your applied	
		experience of what works or doesn't work to move	
		you forward in your life.	
		3. There is a strong focus on what is happening in the	
		here and now and how we can move forward in the	
		future with a solid base on our values.	
		4. The group will try to be fun and engaging with some	
		exercises taking place in a VR environment. You can	
		always communicate to us whether an exercise was	
		useful, interesting, or even not suitable for you	
		(including the VR experience).	
		Summary:	
		Participants should be well-informed about the objectives	
		and structure of this group program.	
MODULE 1. Le	esson 1: A	Activity 3	
		<b>Purpose:</b> To focus on the group activity, to learn to pause and observe.	
		Procedure:	
Short		The facilitator states the following:	
mindfulness	10	"It is quite normal to come to a group with things on our	Grounding
practice	min	mind. Sometimes, that mental clutter can pull our attention	exercise
		to life outside this room, perhaps away from the reasons you	
		have chosen to be here today. So, I'd like to suggest beginning	
		our group today with a brief centring exercise. The aim of	
		this exercise is not to get rid of the concerns you may have,	
		<u> </u>	

but simply to focus on the here and now to make the best use of the next two and a half hours together."

Facilitators should then invite participants to settle into a relaxed but alert posture, allowing their eyes to rest on the palms of their hands facing upwards.

They should guide participants to bring their awareness to the visual details of their palms as well as any sensations in this region and to follow the flow of these sensations. Advise them that it is common for the mind to wander into thought or distraction during this exercise, and that this is entirely normal. In fact, the aim of this exercise is to notice when the mind wanders and gently turn their attention back to their palms. Invite them to view their palms as if this is the first time, getting to know their hand size, linings, colours, etc. Observing our hands can bring thoughts and when this happens, we divert our attention back to the experience of noticing this region of the body. The exercise should last approximately five min.

Facilitators should then debrief participants' experience of the exercise by inquiring what was noticed during the exercise. Facilitators should keep a curious and not instructive stance.

#### **Example dialogue:**

"What was noticed during this short exercise?"

"I never noticed how many lines my hands have..."

"Hmm. Yes, sometimes we can fail to notice things around us".

Steps D	uration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
		"It was a bit boring".  "That's a great observation of an emotion!"  Summary:  Sometimes our minds take us away from what is happening in the here and now. In these situations, focusing can help us find both inner peace and be more observant of our present experience.	
MODULE 1. Le	sson 1: A	Activity 4  Purpose: To clarify what is important to participants in their	
→ Values Based Group Agreement	10 min	group interactions and encourage commitment.  Procedure:  Many group agreements comprise of a list of rules to follow and behaviours to avoid. In the RECOMMIT program, the group agreement will be value-based. Facilitators should guide participants to acknowledge what is important to them in the way they interact with each other in the group. This is also a good starting point for the interpersonal skills curriculum. The facilitator will ask the group: "What is important to you in terms of how we will interact in this group?" (Answers are written on the board).  Facilitators should elicit examples of behaviours which are consistent with what is important to them (e.g., if the value 'being respectful of others' is offered, participants can be asked to consider how that might be identified in the actions	Question and discussion

Resources, activities & materials

#### Steps Duration

**Duration Description** 

of ourselves and others). If specific behaviours are offered, list these, but also explore what makes them important (e.g., if 'maintaining confidentiality' is suggested, facilitators might ask the group to consider what maintaining confidentiality aims to achieve in our interactions. If this is in the context of trust, other behaviours that enhance this value in interactions can be explored.

#### **Questions to use:**

"What would be necessary for you to feel comfortable to participate in the group?"

"What kind of interpersonal behaviours (i.e., listening to each other) would you like to see in our group?"

"In what way is this (i.e., confidentiality) important to you when you interact with others in the group?"

"What behaviours would indicate that trust, safety, etc. are present in this group?"

#### **Prompts to Consider:**

- > Participation in group activities
- ➤ How to approach different points of view
- > Issues of confidentiality
- > Attendance
- How we respond to our feelings of discomfort (e.g., not leaving the room, making room for discomfort)
- ➤ How we respond when others experience discomfort (e.g., no criticising, no pushing, no rescuing, be mindful of our urge to solve other's problems)
- ➤ Attending after a Missed Session

It can be useful to be mindful of how the group agreement will be phrased; stating what participants will do as opposed to what they won't do. The group agreement should be written up on the flipchart and kept in a visible place during each session for the remainder of this module.

Facilitators should encourage commitment from participants; it should be noted to the group that, as a facilitator, your aim is to advocate for the group's working agreement. Group facilitators should consider themselves a part of the group, too. Not only should they model the group agreement in their actions (and call out their own actions when discrepant), but also play an active role in its formation. Facilitators can suggest points that are meaningful to them personally.

#### **Summary:**

A group value-based agreement is developed and written on a flipchart to be visible for the remainder of the course.

#### **MODULE 1. Lesson 1: Activity 5**

**Purpose:** To introduce the idea of choice, values and being present using a metaphor. To identify what is important to Group **Driving my** 10 brainstorming life - Part min activity, participants in a range of life areas. To increase awareness of one: metaphor the internal barriers and struggles that may interfere with **Choosing the** effective behaviour. route

#### **Procedure:**

After exploring what is important to participants in their



interactions in the group, facilitators will transition to what is important in life generally using the 'Bus of Life' metaphor.

Prior to the session, facilitators should have a 'Bus of Life' drawn on a large piece of paper and place it in the middle of the room to allow for collaborative work. Participants can write or draw their ideas on the sheet.

First introduce the 'Bus of Life' metaphor to the group:

"Imagine you are driving a bus to a destination of your choice, somewhere you want to go. On the journey with you are several passengers. These passengers have their own ideas about where the bus is going. When they are not happy about the direction, they shout up and try to persuade you to do things their way. These passengers represent your thoughts, memories, emotions, and physical sensations."

Invite the group to an open discussion about what is an important 'route' for the bus of life for them. Use a different

pen colour for the important 'route'. Write this in the 'destination' space on the bus.

In discussing 'values' at this stage we should be careful to direct the discussion away from specific goals. For example, finding a job is a useful goal but it is not a value. When people mention goals, we could ask "What makes finding a job important to you?". We can then add responses such as "security", "safety", "independence" etc.

#### **Example routes for the bus of life:**

Safety, freedom, security, independence, love, honesty, friendship etc.

The facilitator will remain cautious to avoid judging any goals that may come up, but, rather stick to exploring the underlying values. For example, a participant might say "lots of money". Although the temptation is to talk abut this choice, here we will simply ask "What is important about having money to you?" Responses like, "respect", and "acceptance" may then be added on the diagram.

#### **Summary:**

Using this metaphor, we have visualised our path in life like the route of a bus. We have discussed important directions as the destination of this bus.

#### **MODULE 1. Lesson 1: Activity 6**

Resources, **Duration Description** Steps activities & materials **Purpose:** To orient participants to the impact of unhelpful thinking or behaviours (e.g., avoidance, impulsivity, reactivity etc). Procedure: The facilitator reminds the group that the bus passengers have their own ideas about where the bus should be going, and they represent our thoughts and feelings. Sometimes they do not agree with our chosen bus route, sometimes they encourage us to do things that are impulsive, reactive, or even to avoid useful experiences. The participants are invited to identify such 'barrier' passengers related to the routes that were identified before. Group **Driving my 10** They can be written using a different colour in the passenger brainstorming life - Part min speech bubbles. activity, Two: metaphor **Examples can be: Noticing the barriers** Anger, impatience, fear, sadness, thoughts such as 'you can't do this', 'you are not good enough', or even bodily sensations like clenched fists, or flashed cheeks etc. Examples can also be seemingly positive experiences which can sometimes distract us: thoughts like 'I am better than others', 'I am stronger than others' 'you can handle another drink' etc. The goal of the facilitator here is to note that these internal experiences are normal and that our task is to learn how to skilfully handle them. 'But how do we do this?' The facilitator moves to the next part of the exercise by discussing our reactions to the passengers.

Steps Du	ıration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
		Question: Who are your passengers? Summary: In this section of the metaphor participants are invited to identify internal experience like thoughts and feelings and to acknowledge the normality of these states.	
MODULE 1. Les	sson 1: A	Activity 7	
→ Driving my life – Part Three: Noticing the struggle	10 min	Purpose:  To understand the negative impact of struggling with thoughts and feelings.  Procedure:  The facilitator asks participants to consider what they do when their passengers show up. Do they stick to the value (bus route), or do they deviate based on the passengers' desires? On the big paper the facilitator marks a direction deviating from the chosen bus route and writes down these 'moving away' behaviours.  Move away from the bus route (giving in to the passengers) fighting the passengers)	Group brainstorming activity, metaphor

			Resources,
Steps	Duration	Description	activities &
			materials
		The facilitator is careful to listen for responses to the	
		passengers that include either 'giving in' (for example, 'I was	
		angry so I shouted!') or fighting/avoiding the passengers	
		(for example, I drunk some alcohol and felt better again, or	
		drugs can make me feel better). Specific examples of moving	
		away from the bus route can be substance use to avoid	
		emotions, reacting to strong emotions (giving in), or	
		completely denying the importance of a route/goal (for	
		example, I struggled to find a job and I convinced myself that	
		finding a job is not important to me).	
		Question:	
		Which of your passengers do you give in to?	
		What can be a long-term consequence of that? (financial	
		struggles, loneliness, trouble with the law)	
		The facilitator will again normalise this process by	
		recognising that passengers can trick all of us but our goal	
		here is to make the route much clearer so that it is harder for	
		them to blindsight us.	
		Summary:	
		This section illustrates that in our effort to get rid of	
		emotions and thoughts we might stop staying close to our	
		values/goals in life.	
MODULE 1	. Lesson 1: A	Activity 8	
	10	D	Group
	min	Purpose:	brainstorming

Resources, Steps **Duration Description** activities & materials This section emphasizes the importance of committing to the activity, chosen path of life in spite of interfering thoughts and metaphor **Driving my** feelings. life - Part Four: Keep **Procedure:** your hands The facilitator reflects that losing sight of the path is easy on the with all these passengers as well as with the challenges of the steering outside world. They introduce the idea of keeping a tighter wheel of life hold of the steering wheel even when the bus is very busy. The passengers can shout but you can choose to carry on. Question: What happens to the passengers when you acknowledge them and then continue to focus on your chosen route of life? Participants may suggest that the passengers will leave or retaliate. The facilitator will not state any expectations here as we can never predict our emotions. However, they can state that becoming more skilled at noticing the passengers and knowing our chosen route can be very helpful to help us stay on track and not be led astray. **Summary:** We can manage our life more effectively if we are more aware of where we want to go and of the different thoughts and feelings that affect this route. **MODULE 1. Lesson 1: Activity 9** 15 Self-reflection, **Evaluation of Purpose:** To collect data prior to intervention. min form completion

my worksite

Steps Du	ıration	Description	Resources, activities & materials			
communicati on skills		To identify strengths and difficulties and motivate group participation.				
		Procedure:				
		The facilitator states that we are very interested in evaluating the course and identifying the learning outcomes throughout. They introduce the programs evaluation materials (questionnaires) and invite the participants to fill them in with the help of the group co-facilitators. All participants are presented with an informed consent form. It is explained that the process is anonymous.  Summary:				
		Completion of the course evaluation questionnaires.				
VR orientation	15 min	Half of the participants will engage in the Evaluation of my worksite communication skills (Questionnaire Completion) and the other half will engage in the VR orientation. In this VR orientation stage, participants will get to try all the main functions of VR (picking up, throwing, watching a video, placing objects). As this will be the participant's first time in the VR, it is best to encourage them to engage with the process slowly. There is no need to complete the whole orientation in a single session. A maximum time of 10 minutes on the VR per participant is encouraged.	VR orientation			
MODULE 1. Les	MODULE 1. Lesson 1: Activity 10					
	5 min	Purpose:  The facilitator emphasizes the key points of the lesson; he or she encourages the participants to ask questions.	Key points			

Steps	Duration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
Conclusion / questions / homework		Procedure:  "Today we have met each other and set the goals and the values of our group. We also learnt a story about our path in life and the passengers who sometimes get in the way. We then practised with VR. Whoever did not get the chance to practise with the system today will do this first thing next week.  Next week we will identify in more detail what inspires us in the context of work and what deeply moves us. We will also continue to use the VR to explore what brings meaning	Homework
		to our lives."  Homework:  For homework, I will invite you to consider a) what routes may be important to you and b) what kind of barriers (passengers) you might face. A handout is available (Passengers on the bus; Appendix 2).	

## **Lesson 2: Introduction to Values (a)**

Lesson title	Introduction to Values (a)
Objectives	<ul> <li>Objectives of Lesson 2:</li> <li>To practice present moment awareness.</li> <li>To define values.</li> <li>To Explore values and value domains for each participant.</li> <li>To explore values in VR</li> </ul>
Week	Week 2
Duration	1.5 hours
Key terms	Body scan  Values  Goals  Value card sort  Value flipchart exercise
Learning outcomes	<ul> <li>With the completion of Lesson 2 participants will be able to:</li> <li>✓ Apply a present moment (body scan) practice.</li> <li>✓ Understand what values are.</li> <li>✓ Say the difference between values and goals.</li> <li>✓ Refer different value systems through a group exercise.</li> <li>✓ Refer different value systems through experiencing in VR.</li> <li>✓ Identify personally meaningful values in different domains.</li> <li>✓ Consider values in the workplace and related barriers.</li> </ul>

Learning methods	Individual reflection  Group activity  VR activity (experiential)  Group discussion
Evaluation	Continuous performance evaluation
Continuous performance evaluation  Woodward, L. (2017). ACT on your recovery manual. Retrieved https://contextualscience.org/files/ACT%20on%20Your%20Recovery%ual%202017.pdf  Hayes, S.C, Strosahl, K.D., & Wilson, K.G. (2012). Acceptance and complete therapy: The process and practice of mindful change (2nd edition). New York The Guilford Press.  Harris, R. (2014). Instructions for The Happiness Trap 'Values, Goals & Bacards. Retrieved from https://www.actmindfully.com.au/upimages/How_To_Use_The_Happines_Values,_Goals_And_Barriers_Cardsby_Russ_Harris.pdf	

Steps Dur	ation	Description	Resources, activities & materials
Brief settling into the session	5 min	The facilitator will introduce any new members to the group and allow some time for participants to settle in.	Discussion
MODULE 1. Lesso	on 2: Ac	ctivity 1	
<b>♦</b> Brief mindfulness practice	10 min	Purpose: To help participants set aside mental clutter and distraction, while bringing awareness to experiences in the here and now.  Procedure:  The group should proceed into a brief mindfulness exercise with the rationale of setting aside distractions, bringing awareness more fully into the here and now.  The aim of the body scan is to bring one's attention to each body part in a guided way, practicing awareness of the physical sensations noticed at each moment. Facilitators should invite participants to take a relaxed but alert posture, eyes can remain open and settled on the floor, and bring their awareness to their breathing. Then, gently guide participants to notice physical sensations in the feet, calves, upper legs, abdomen, back, chest, shoulders, upper arms, forearms, hands, and head. Finally, bring awareness back to their breathing before completing the exercise.	Present moment practice
		During the debrief, the facilitator will ask feedback on the exercise.	
		<pre>"What is it like to pause and notice our body?"</pre>	
		what is it like to pause and notice our body:	

Steps Dur	ation	Description  "What can we notice when we turn our attention on our	Resources, activities & materials
		"What can we notice when we turn our attention on our bodily experience?"  "In what way could it be useful to pause and observe our body?"  Summary:  Sometimes we can get distracted by our thoughts and feelings. Returning to the here and now can be both relaxing, and a chance to think through our choices or actions.	
MODULE 1. Lesso	n 2: Ac	ctivity 2	
Questionnaire completion or VR orientation for group 2	15 min	The facilitator will encourage the participants who did not engage with the VR orientation in module 1 to divert their attention to the system. The rest of the group will be supported in completing the program's evaluation measures.	Questionnaire completion VR familiarisation
MODULE 1. Lesso	n 2: Ac	ctivity 3	
Brief Check-In and Review of the in-between Session Work	10 min	Purpose: To reflect on the values (routes) and barriers (passengers) that each participant identified during the home activity.  Procedure:  Following the body-scan, and a brief reflection on the exercise, facilitators should proceed to conduct a group round inquiring what participants noticed in the "passengers on the bus" exercise. Inquire about:	Question and discussion



- ➤ What passengers/ barriers come up in driving the bus of life?
- ➤ What are the consequences of fighting or giving in to the passengers?
- ➤ What were some important routes (values) identified in the context of work?
- ➤ What were some barriers (passengers) stopping one from moving towards work-related directions?

Reviewing the task increases the participants' awareness of their values as well as the more specifically work-related ones. It could also reveal counterproductive strategies that they use to regulate their emotions and thoughts. If participants did not complete the in-between session work, this check-in gives an opportunity to increase motivation and reflection on these topics.

#### **Example conversation:**

Facilitator: What did people notice during the in-between session work we discussed in the last session?

Participant: Well, when I consider what is important to me in work, I realise that I just want safety and security.

Facilitators: Sounds like you noticed some important things there. So, in this respect what kind of barriers (passengers) show up such as thoughts and feelings?

Participant: I guess I am worried that nobody will be willing to give me this security so I just freeze.

Facilitator: You freeze, like you avoid thinking about it or preparing for it?

Participant: Yeah, I feel anxious when thinking about it.

Facilitator: Yes, your anxiety can be very annoying during those moments. So, in one-way freezing works because it blocks the anxiety of thinking about preparing for work but on the other hand? Does it have a downside?

Participant: Well, I don't prepare for it. I do nothing and I would like to be more ready.

If some participants have not completed the in-between session work, the review is conducted similarly. Facilitators should help participants to notice what influenced their decision to not engage in the activity. Care should be taken to avoid shaming the participant for non-completion of the in-between session work.

However, the facilitator should invite the participant to reflect on any barriers for completing the work. What is the barrier? Does the homework not align with participant values (for example, "I do not want to be in this group") or does an internal barrier (passenger) stop the work from happening? (For example, "I was never a good student and writing something down makes me anxious) or is there a practical barrier (for example, "I cannot read nor write very well").

In the case that commitment to the group is low, the facilitator can ask whether attending this group could fit with an important direction for the participant (for example, "if you were to freely choose to be here, what could this group meetings be about, if you made it personal to you?"). In case that not completing the homework was

Steps	Duration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
		related to an internal barrier (i.e, anxiety, boredom), the facilitator can help the participant identify this emotional barrier and point out the discrepancy between the desired direction and the barrier (for example "on one hand you would like to gain as much as you can from the group and on the other it is stressful to have to write").  In case that there are practical barriers (e.g., lack of literacy skills), participants can be encouraged to ask questions about the homework and enquire a different type of home practice (e.g., use drawing as notes or use reflection and memory as a tool).  Summary:  In this activity a review of the homework is completed and the importance of commitment to the course is enhanced.	
MODULE 1. L	esson 2: Ac		
<b>→</b> Values Education	15 min	Purpose: To conceptually understand the difference between values and goals and the usefulness of choosing one's own values.  Procedure:  The facilitator will introduce the concept of values in a more specific way and explain the difference to goals. The facilitator will provide examples of values and will use an exercise to help members of the group to connect with their own values.  Procedure:	Teaching, presentation, discussion

Resources, Duration **Description Steps** activities & materials "In the previous session we talked about the 'route' of the bus, but we did not define what this direction is for each of us. In this session we will be calling this 'route', a value. When we say value, we mean exactly this: what is valuable for each of us in our lives. When we understand what we value, we can then set some guiding principles into our own lives (that is, define our own routes of how each of us wants to behave). We can make choices and decisions based on these ideas of what kind of person each of us wants to be." "Consider that if we do not know the route of the bus there are many costs: -losing energy in aimless activities -feeling unsatisfied in life -doing things that we regret -failing to meet important needs in life". **Useful analogy:** Driving our bus of life without a defined route (value) is like continually driving in a new city without a map or a destination, it can be tiring, scary, stressful, and risky at times. "Depending on the life that we have had, what we value may not be clear to us. However, values can be defined and discovered even if they were foggy and unclear in the past.

What we value is about choosing how we want to be! This

is different to achieving a specific goal (such as getting a

job) because it is more about how we want to behave in life.

Once we know what our values are, we can more easily set goals that will provide us with more satisfaction in life. In addition, we can more easily endure disappointment as the path will be clearer to us.

Values can be related to different areas of life such as personal relationships, work, education, personal development and wellness and leisure".

#### **Useful Question:**

Could a member of the group give an example of a value? We can then identify the area of life that it relates to.

If a member of the group volunteers to give a response, then the facilitator can explore "to which areas of life is this value relevant?" (Relationships, work, leisure, learning, spirituality etc.).

If no participant volunteers to provide an example the group co-facilitator can share a genuine and appropriate example such as "in work, being honest with my co-workers has always been important to me. This means that even though it is difficult when I disagree with someone, I try to find a way to express myself".

#### **Illustration on flipchart:**

The facilitator uses the flipchart to illustrate examples of values and goals and their related area of life. The facilitator emphasizes that values are like a bus route (they never end – when you get to a destination, you start again), values are about how you behave (not about how you feel), values are about how you want to be (we cannot control others).

Steps Dur	ation Description	Resources, activities & materials
	Examples:  Domain: Relationships  Goal: Mend a lost relationship with a friend  Value: Be open with others  Domain: Work  Goal: Find a job  Value: Independence  Domain: Selfcare/Wellness  Goal: Exercise twice a week  Value: Being physically and mentally healthy  Summary:  Present the different between values and goals, and giexamples of personal values.	ve
MODULE 1. Lesso		
↓ Values card sort (half of the group and the other VR)	Purpose: To familiarise participants with personal value and to introduce the idea of choosing values in life.  Materials:  Value Cards  Post-its or bluetag  Flipchart  Coloured markers	Group brainstorming, individual reflection, group discussion

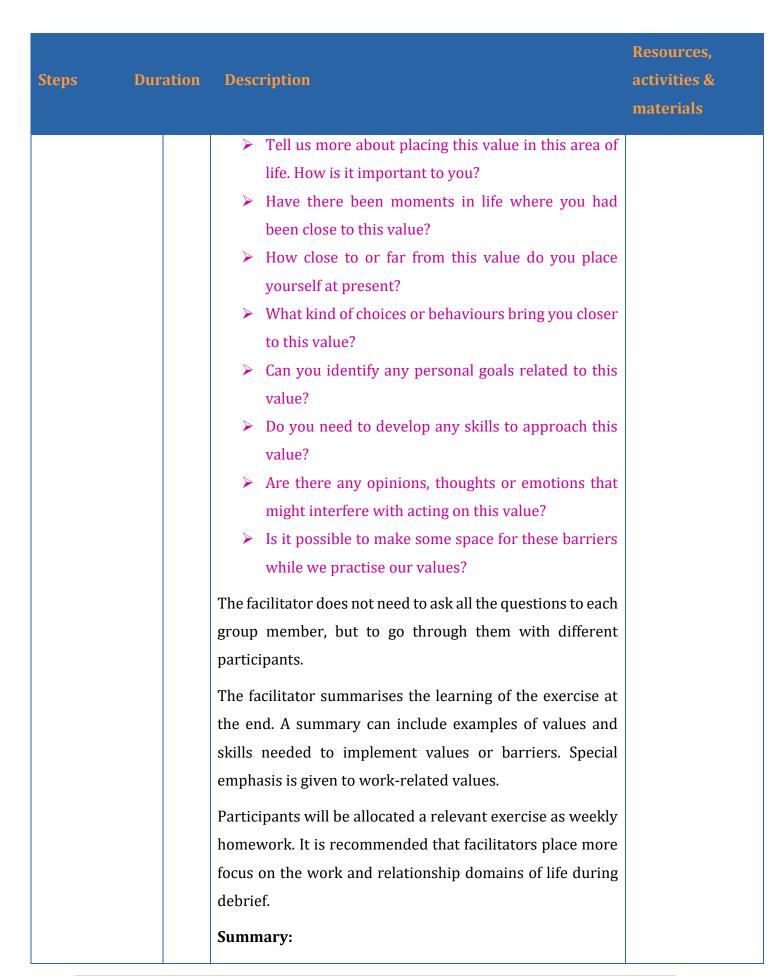
The values card sort exercise involves exploration of cards of drawings and words which represent different life values. Cards do not necessarily align with a specific area of life although for the purposes of this program we can gradually move towards focusing on work related values.

To begin the work, we will ask the participants to work individually. We will provide them with a pack of cards each and ask then to sort the cards in order of personal importance (high importance, medium, and low) – we will allocate 5 min on this task. Once participants have their list of high importance values, we will present a flipchart with 4 areas of life (divide the flipchart in a cross shape) and define four areas of living (work, relationships, personal wellness, learning).

We will encourage participants to allocate 4 of their high importance values in these four areas (one value can be allocated in different spaces). Participants can copy the name of the card on a post it and add it on the flipchart (the co-facilitator can help if any member has literacy difficulties, or they can select a drawing to represent a specific value).

The facilitator then encourages the participants to talk about at least 1 card in the group. The processing on this card can be very emotional and therefore the facilitator reminds the group of the Group Shared Values (Module 1).

In processing a card, the facilitator can ask the following questions:



Steps Durati	This exercise will allow participants to reflect on their	Resources, activities & materials
	personal values and identify areas of personal significance.	
MODULE 1. Lesson 2	: Activity 6	
VR: Intro to Value Systems Level (the other half of the group)	Users will enter a space with multiple rooms and in each room, they will be able to experiment and explore different values. This task is consistent with value prototyping by LeJeune and Luoma (2019) which consists of using action to test out various versions of valued living. This task allows individuals to answer to the question "what kind of experiential feedback does engage in this valuing task give me in terms of what is really important to me?" (p. 113). The idea goes beyond simply engaging with a task on the VR but also guiding the user's observation of the process of their experience while doing it (tracking their experience). To put it simply, the task involves observing and learning about what we value through action.  The rooms will be associated with different areas in which people customary have values:  Room 1: Connection with others (relationships)  Room 2: Contribution (positive influence, work, offering to others)  Room 3: Embracing the moment (personal wellness, physical activity)  Room 4: Caring for self (personal wellness, wellbeing)	VR value sampling experience

Resources, activities & materials

Steps D

**Duration** Description

**Room 5: Summary room** (components from all value rooms)

Each room will contain a series of activities to allow the user to explore the values. Activities will be followed up with questions or Q&A reflections to help the user reflect on their experience.

**Room 1: Connection with others**: The room is decorated with photos of people connecting with each other (adults, children, colleagues etc.). An agent will approach the user and give them a short description of this room.

The agent will say "Welcome, this room is a room of discovering whether relationships and connection to others is important to you. Values related to connection with others can be caring, love, understanding, and communicating. Around the room you will see several objects, videos, or activities about values related to connection. As you explore the room you can observe your emotional reaction and your curiosity in the experiences around you. Remember that sometimes what is important to us can bring both nice and difficult emotions."

The agent can then invite the user to explore the room. The room has animal agents (cat, dog) who will prompt the user to touch them.

Once the room has been explored, then they open the door to the next room.

**Room 2: Contribution**: This room will be decorated in a more work like format as contribution can easily be found

in the world of work. An agent will approach the user and give them a short description of this room.

"This room is an opportunity to discover the value of contribution. Values related to contribution could include offering to others, helping others, producing, or giving back. We often find the meaning of contribution through work, by helping people close to us or even by volunteering. Look around the room and identify in what ways you can contribute. Remember that what is meaningful is not always pleasant. As you explore the room pay attention to your reaction to your actions."

The room will contain a video about helping behaviour which the user can watch. The room will also contain inanimate objects in need of caring. For example, the user may find a series of plants in need of water. The user may come across an agent in a workspace carrying heavy items and offer help.

The agent receiving the help can express gratitude: "Thank you, I appreciate the help".

In all the above situations an agent can prompt the user to explore the different areas of the room. At each point reflective questions will help to process the room experience. Once the room has been explored the user proceeds to the next one.

**Room 3: Embracing the moment**: This room focuses on embracing the moment and reaching a sense of flow.

An agent can approach the user and define the room: "This room is about finding peace in the here and now. People may value living in the moment as often through activities we can find joy and calmness. We can find this presence in the now through an activity and without one. Some people enjoy watching nature, while others appreciate physical activity. As you go around the room experiment with the different options. Remember to remain curious about your bodily and emotional reactions to the tasks."

In this room the user will have the opportunity to observe nature. The user can also try out different songs on a music console and be prompted to move with the music.

At occasional moments, reflective questions will support the activities. Q&A: How can you find more opportunities to embrace the present moment in your life? (Give options: observe the birds, sit in the sun, enjoy the breeze, exercise, draw, play music).

Once the room has been explored the user can rate the importance of these activities on a scale (rating the room will open the door to the next room).

**Room 4: Caring for self:** Room 5 focuses on self-care. This room will expose the user to various activities associated with caring and supporting themselves.

An agent will approach the user to introduce the room "This room focuses on the values of respecting and caring for our self. Some people find that this is an important dimension of living and one that is relevant to both personal and work life.

Steps	Duration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
		As you go around the room and look at different self-care	
		activities consider which are relevant and moving to you."  The room can expose the user to different self-care activities via photos on the wall (e.g., showing getting dressed, exercising, shaving, eating, praying).	
		One activity involves teaching the user to take relaxing breaths. A video about self-care can also socialise the user to the concept.	
		An activity in this room can get the user to rank the different self-care pictures into an order of importance.	
		Finally, the participant will choose a value to add to the inventory.	
		<b>Room 5: Summary room:</b> In this room a participant will be exposed to items and pictures that remind them of all the previous rooms. The idea in this room is that they will collect the cassettes (small boxes) representing each room and then array them on the table in order of personal significance.	
		This VR activity is long. Participants may spend a number of sessions reviewing it. It is important that participants are not pressured to spend more than 10-15 minutes at a time on the VR.	
MODULE 1.	Lesson 2: A	ctivity 7	
Conclusion	/ 5	The facilitator summarises the role of values in life and the importance of having them as guiding principles:	Key points &

> Provide a structure to life.

questions

min

**Homework** 

Steps Duration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
	<ul> <li>Provide motivation.</li> <li>Provide a feeling of direction.</li> <li>Provide satisfaction.</li> <li>Fulfil needs.</li> <li>The facilitator then presents the homework task on which each participant is asked to identify 1-2 values related to the work domain and consider their importance as well as certain related skills that are needed (Work values and skills; Appendix 3).</li> </ul>	

# **Lesson 3: Introduction to values (b)**

Lesson title	Introduction to values (b)
Objectives	<ul> <li>The objectives of Lesson 3 are to:</li> <li>Practise connecting with the emotional experience of a value on work and contribution.</li> <li>Continue to practice value exploration on VR.</li> <li>Identify values' priority on VR.</li> <li>Refer that values have two sides (reward and pain).</li> </ul>
Week	Week 3
Duration	1.5 hours
Key terms	Sweet spot exercise  Two sides of values  Valuing self-care on VR
Learning outcomes	<ul> <li>With the completion of Lesson 3 participants will be able to:</li> <li>✓ Practise experiencing a value at work, and enhancing motivation for developing work-related skills.</li> <li>✓ Discover a valuing self on VR.</li> <li>✓ Recognise that values are not always about having positive emotions, but it can sometimes include difficult ones.</li> </ul>
Learning methods	Individual reflection  Group activity  VR activity (experiential)  Group discussion
Evaluation	Continuous performance evaluation

Reference LeJeune & Luoma (2019). Valuing in Therapy. New Harbinger.
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Steps Dur	ation	Description	Resources, activities & materials
Brief settling into the session	5 min	The facilitator will introduce any new members to the group and allow some time for participants to settle in.	Discussion
MODULE 1. Lesso	on 3: Ac	ctivity 1	
Brief Check-In and Review of Between Session Work	10 min	Purpose: To reflect on values in the work domain and identify related goals, skills, and barriers. The conversation on skills will be a prompt for the next session on listening skills.  Procedure:  The facilitator will explore the completion of Appendix 3 Exercise 'Work Values and Skills'. In case a participant completed the exercise or they familiarised themselves with it, they are encouraged to share their thoughts with the group. Care is taken to avoid confusing goals with values. For example, 'making a lot of money' is a goal and not a value.  A good question to reveal a value would be 'in what way would money contribute to making your life nicer?' The participant might respond with 'I will buy nice things for my family'. The facilitator can then indicate: 'it sounds like offering to your family may be an important value for you then!'  Troubleshooting: A facilitator needs to be on the lookout for criminogenic goals (e.g., becoming rich quickly). Given that it is not individual therapy but a training, it is best to avoid getting into a debate with participants. A response	Question and discussion

Steps Di	uration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
		like 'sometimes some passengers/barriers can trick us into believing that they are serving our values while they may be pulling us away from them' 'it requires careful observation to know the difference' would be useful.  In the discussion on skills the facilitator will need to skilfully bring in topics of communication, self-presentation, and conflict resolution to enhance motivation for the remaining group sessions.  The question on dealing with barriers effectively is designed to reinforce motivation for skill building in the remaining sessions. Awareness of values and acceptance of emotions are also appropriate dimensions to be considered here.  Summary:  In this review of homework, participants will consider the link of values to the workplace.	
MODULE 1. Les	son 3: Ac	ctivity 2	I
Sweet Spot Exercise	20 min	Purpose:  This exercise is a combination of a mindfulness and value clarification activity. It will combine couple, group and individual work and will focus specifically on the value domains of work and contribution.  Procedure:  "We will focus on recalling a moment that had a sense of completeness to it, a tender or sweet moment. We can consider the value domain of contribution or work. This	

Duration Description activities & materials

**Steps** 

moment that you recall does not need to be big or special or intense. It is often a time that we had engaged with something important to us. For example, the facilitator here can give an appropriate example of a 'sweet moment' at work such as (my mind goes back to last Monday when I brought a coffee for my work friend, and I saw her smile – it was a moment of true connection)."

The facilitator then encourages the participants to connect with this moment through mindfulness. The instructions include: "Bring your eyes to the floor and begin with some breaths and try to recall this sweet spot moment related to work or contribution that is somewhat important to you. Notice what you see, hear, smell, or do in this place. Notice how you behave; notice what other people might see in you. How would you describe yourself in this image from the perspective of others?"

For a debrief we will ask participants to share their observations in pairs. The instruction will be: "help your partner see what the sweet spot was like from behind your eyes". The facilitator and co-facilitator will go around the groups and reinforce the learning.

#### **Troubleshooting:**

➤ Participants with mild feelings: some people may not be able to access warm feelings. For these participants the exercise may not be very interesting or effective. Be careful not to judge them for the lack of feeling. Encourage curiosity about what comes up in work and contribution even if the feeling is not very strong.

Steps Dur	ation	Description	Resources, activities & materials
		<ul> <li>Participants choosing a high achievement or high reward moment: This is not necessarily a problem however it is useful to know the difference between types of reinforcement (high achievement vs contentment). In this exercise we seek the latter which is associated neurologically to calmness and safety rather than an adrenaline spike (often associated with risk taking).</li> <li>If we feel that our group has many risk takers, we can make this distinction at the beginning of the exercise by saying: "A sweet moment is often a laid-back moment, a moment of contentment rather than a moment of great excitement".</li> <li>Summary:</li> <li>In this exercise participants will connect with positive feelings related to a work-related value.</li> </ul>	
MODULE 1. Lesso	on 3: Ac	ctivity 3	
Values card sort (Half of the group) or VR Intro to Value Systems Level	30 min	See previous session for notes on the Values Card Sort exercise.	See previous session for description
MODULE 1. Lesso	n 3: Ac	ctivity 4	

Resources, **Duration Description Steps** activities & materials **Purpose:** To recognise that values are not necessarily associated with positive emotions. Values hold meaning and whatever is meaningful can also be painful. Procedure: "Values are linked to our heart's deepest longings, and so it stands to reason that where there are values, there is also pain. If pain and values are two sides of the same coin, then if we choose to orient around getting away from pain, we may also be turning away from our values. But often we Group aren't aware of the price we are paying. Being free to discussion. choose means knowing the cost of the available options from which one is choosing." The two sides Individual 15 of values Two-sides of the coin exercise: reflection. min **Experiential** The facilitator provides a card of a two-sided coin that one activity. can write on (Appendix 4; Two sides of values). Values related to the area of work will be written on the flipchart Presentation. to help the process (contribution, helping, creating, friendship, communication, safety, structure, routine). Participants will be asked to choose a value they deem significant in the realm of work and contribution, and make a note of it on one side of a coin. For participants who find it difficult to use written language, facilitators may offer assistance or suggest the use of symbols. Subsequently, participants are prompted to flip the coin and acknowledge and document any challenging experiences (thoughts, feelings) associated with the value on the opposite side.

			Resources,
Steps	Duration	n Description	activities &
			materials
		The group is then encouraged to engage in discussion	
		regarding the contents of both sides of the coin.	
		Towards the end, the facilitator prompts the group to	
		contemplate the implications of metaphorically carrying	
		the coin in their pocket throughout life, encompassing both	
		the cherished value and the accompanying difficulties.	
		Summary:	
		Participants will continue to process work-related values	
		and consider the importance of making space for difficult	
		feelings and emotions at work (two-sides of the coin).	
MODULE 1	. Lesson 3:	Activity 5	
		At this stage, participants have a better idea of values and	
		value choices. In this task they are asked to revisit the value	
		domains from the previous VR rooms and construct a self-	
		valuing priority list.	
+			
VR values		Upon entering the VR program, they will see prompts	
prioritisin	g 15	reminding them of the previous VR rooms. Pictures of the	
(Room 5 in	n min	rooms and names will help remind them of the content.	
Intro to Va	lue	Participants will then be presented with a table and	

cards/cassettes representing values. Participants can

arrange the values in the order that makes sense to them.

Values will be organised on the value table according to the

categories presented in the previous VR rooms.

Systems Level)

Steps I	Ouration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
		Participants will choose those values that are most meaningful to them and add them on in order of preference.  Each value will have a representative colour and shape.	
MODULE 1. Le	sson 3: Ac	ctivity 6	
Conclusion / questions	5 min	The facilitator emphasizes the key points of the lesson; he or she encourages the participants to ask questions. <b>Key points of the lesson include:</b> -Sweet moments can provide an access to what is important to us in lifeValues can have two sides. Often what is meaningful to us comes with some pain or challengeWe can consider work and contribution values and define the kinds of skills that we may want to develop to support our values.  Give a copy of Appendix 4 exercise (Two-sides of Values) for reflection in the week.	Key points

Brief Check-In and Review of Between Session Work

10 min **Purpose:** To reflect on values in the work domain and identify related goals, skills, and barriers. The conversation regarding skills will be prompt for the next session on listening skills.

#### **Procedure:**

The facilitator will explore the completion of Appendix 3 Exercise 'Work Values and Skills'. In case a participant completed the exercise or familiarised themselves with it, they are encouraged to share their thoughts with the group. Care is taken to avoid confusing goals with values. For example, 'making a lot of money' is a goal and not a value. A good question to reveal a value would be 'in what way would money contribute to making your life nicer?' The participant might respond with 'I will buy nice things for my family'. The facilitator can then indicate: 'it sounds like offering to your family may be an important value for you then!'

Question and discussion

Troubleshooting: A facilitator needs to be on the lookout for criminogenic goals (e.g., becoming rich quickly). Given that it is not individual therapy but a training, it is best to avoid getting into a debate with participants. A response like 'sometimes some passengers/barriers can trick us into believing that they are serving our values while they may be pulling us away from them' 'it requires careful observation to know the difference' would be useful.

In the discussion on skills the facilitator will need to skilfully bring in topics of communication, self-presentation and conflict resolution to enhance motivation for the remaining group sessions.

The question on dealing with barriers effectively is designed to reinforce motivation for skill building in the remaining sessions. Awareness of values and acceptance of emotions are also appropriate dimensions to be considered here.

## **Summary:**

In this review of homework, participants will consider the link between values and the workplace.

# **APPENTICES**

#### Appendix 1.

#### Aims of the RECOMMIT Group

- 1. To provide an opportunity to explore the role of your personal values within your life.
- 2. To explore communication barriers to getting back into a working life that you appreciate.
- 3. To find workable ways to respond to the barriers that show up after release at work and beyond.
- 4. To provide a space in life where we can consider actions, both large and small, that will move us toward a life we value in the world of work.

#### **Group format**

- 1. The group is a mix of structured exercises, group discussion, experiential and exploration exercises, and skills practice.
- 2. Our aim is not to teach you what to do. Instead, we encourage you to try the skills and exercises presented in this group and trust your direct experience of what works or doesn't work to move you forward in your life.
- 3. There is a strong focus on what is happening in the here and now and how we can move forward in the future with a solid direction based on our values.
- 4. The group will try to be fun and engaging with some exercises taking place in a VR environment. You can always communicate with us about whether an exercise was useful, interesting, or even not suitable for you (including the VR experience).

#### **Appendix 2**

#### Passengers on the bus

Imagine you are driving a bus to a destination of your choice; somewhere important to you. On the journey with you are several passengers. These passengers have their own ideas about where the bus is going. When they are not happy about the direction, they shout up and try to persuade you to do things their way. These passengers represent your thoughts, memories, emotions and physical sensations. There are a few possible responses to these passengers, not all of them are healthy or useful.

### The Struggle

You (the driver) may respond to the passengers and try to get them to be quiet by arguing with them or shouting over them. All your energy is spent in arguing with the passengers rather than focusing on the direction of travel (towards your values).

Who are your passe	engers? (e.g. anxiety, anger, fear, neg	ative thoughts)
5471 . 1		
wnat are some unn	ealthy things that you do to make th	em stop interfering?
wnat are some unn (Drink, act out aggr		em stop interfering?
		em stop interfering?

#### **Giving In**

You may try to make peace with the passengers and do what they say – giving in or avoiding doing things because it's too hard. It may feel safer to go along with the passengers in the short term, but long-term there is no movement towards your valued direction.

willcii oi your passe	engers do you give in to? (stop doing what is important to you,
believing the negati	ve thoughts)
What is the long-ton	m concoguence of that? (a.g. not living your life in the way
	m consequence of that? (e.g., not living your life in the way
What is the long-ter you would like)	m consequence of that? (e.g., not living your life in the way
	m consequence of that? (e.g., not living your life in the way
	m consequence of that? (e.g., not living your life in the way
	m consequence of that? (e.g., not living your life in the way
	m consequence of that? (e.g., not living your life in the way

Complete the diagram below with the details of your own bus.

What value (route) are you trying to head towards to in the **area of life that concerns work?** 

Fill this in as the **destination** of the bus. What **passengers** get in your way?

Use the speech bubble to write down the kind of things they say to you.



# Work values and skills

Life domain: WORK
What are 2 Important Values in the domain of work for me? (e.g., trust, loyalty, security, friendship, communication, commitment, safety, routine, structure, creativity)
What are some specific goals that I have in this area of life? (e.g., find a job, get a degree, get a certificate, create a CV, go to an interview, ask about referrals to jobs).
What skills do I need to develop to move closer to this value and goal? (e.g., how to talk at work, how to ask for work, how to write a CV, how to present self at interview)
Are there any barriers to engaging with this value? (e.g., fear, anxiety, negative thoughts)
How can I deal with any barriers in a healthy way?

# Two sides of values



