**MST4Life™ “*Self-reflection”* tool**

As a facilitator of psychologically informed and strengths-based practice, such as the Mental Skills Training (MST) Toolkit, it’s important to continually reflect for professional development. The purpose of this tool is **1)** to provide structure to your personal reflections and **2)** to help facilitators adhere to the strengths-based delivery style of MST4Life™\* (we know from research that this delivery style is crucial to helping young people achieve positive outcomes).

*\*Please note that as this tool was originally developed for MST4Life™, it was designed with group sessions in mind. However, the majority of the behaviours are still applicable for 1-to-1 support work if using as part of the MST toolkit.*

Understanding the form

The first column breaks down the delivery style of MST facilitators into four broad areas:

**Competence\*\*, Autonomy\*\*, Relatedness\*\*** and **Facilitation skills**

Each delivery is subdivided into helpful (darker shades) and unhelpful (lighter shades) delivery behaviours. For example, behaviours that may thwart or support a young person’s feelings of autonomy are included together. Even the best facilitators sometimes display behaviours that are less than ideal – this form provides an opportunity to reflect and improve upon those areas.

Each delivery style area has specific behaviours associated with it. For example, the *Relatedness* area of delivery style includes the behaviours of being friendly, relaxed and welcoming, and being active during sessions.

*\*\*For definitions of these terms, see page 36 of the MST toolkit. Available at* [*www.sprintproject.org*](http://www.sprintproject.org) *and* [*www.homeless.org.uk*](http://www.homeless.org.uk)

Using the form

Place a score in the ‘Rating’ column according to a 0-3 scale for each behaviour within each delivery style (details of scaling can be found on the tracking tool below). Use the comments box to expand upon your scores, give a specific example, or provide context.

Notes

These notes aim to provide clarity to the more technical terms in the form

1. Includes use of solution-focused tools such as: Miracle question, scaling questions, exploration of past successes and problem-solving.

2. Non-directive conversation (Autonomy supportive) means that most of the talking comes from the group members rather than the facilitator and recognises that the group member often has their own answers and solutions. In directive conversation (Autonomy thwarting), the facilitator is in control of the conversation and presents most of the ideas or solutions. Examples of directive conversation: “You’re still procrastinating, just should just do it”, “If you want to get a job, you need to focus and keep your commitments”. Examples of non-directive conversation: “What would be your preferred option?”, “Could you say a bit more about that?”

3. Using the example in the note below, an example of unhelpful reassurance could be “I’m sure you’ll be able to find another job, it won’t be as bad as you think”. It is better to rely on non-directive conversation (see note 2) and reflecting/paraphrasing skills.

4. Reflecting involves mirroring what a person has said back to them (e.g. Participant: “I’m scared about losing my job”, Facilitator: “It’s a scary situation”). Paraphrasing involves using your own words to state what the person has just said. Summarising involves stating the key points of what a person has said to check and/or show understanding.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Darker shades: 0 = Didn’t do this at all 1 = Didn’t do this well 2 = Did this somewhat well 3 = Did this very well*  *Lighter shades: 0 = Didn’t do this at all 1 = Did this a little 2 = Did this a few times 3 = Did this often* | | | |
| **Area of delivery style** | **Behaviours** | **0-3** | **Comments** |
| **Supporting**  **Competence**  (AKA effectiveness, self-efficacy, mastery) | Acknowledged contributions & praised specific successes |  |  |
| Focused on solutions1 |  |
| Focused on mental skills and strengths |  |
| Had a positive and energetic approach |  |
| Provided a sense of purpose to session |  |
| Competence thwarting | Focused on the past |  |
| Focused on problems |  |
| Punished mistakes |  |
| Made fun of someone |  |
|  | | | |
| **Supporting**  **Autonomy**  (AKA independence, self-management) | Utilised non-directive conversation2 |  |  |
| Asked questions and explored viewpoints |  |
| Provided reasons for requests |  |
| Acknowledged and showed acceptance of people’s perspectives |  |
| Provided opportunities for choice |  |
| Autonomy thwarting | Engaged in directive conversation2 |  |
| Completed an activity for someone |  |
| Offered rewards to do something |  |
| Expressed own views above perspectives of group members; rejected a person’s perspective |  |
| Readily provided reassurance3 |  |
| Used controlling language such as “you need to/have to/should/must” |  |
|  | | | |
| **Supporting**  **Relatedness**  (AKA belonging, connectedness) | Came across as friendly, relaxed and welcoming e.g. greeted each person (vs. coming across as cold/unfriendly) |  |  |
| Played an active part in the session (vs. passive rather than proactive; did not display interest) |  |
| Built rapport e.g. made informal conversation not related to session; attempted to get to know people better |  |
| Tried to involve everyone in activities or discussions |  |
| Relatedness thwarting | Only talked to people who are already engaged |  |
| Only talked to people when related to the session |  |
| Restricted interaction between group members |  |
| Used humour inappropriately |  |
|  | | | |
| **Facilitation skills: Structure, group management, and communication** | Was prepared and organised for and during the session (vs. unorganised materials, over-reliant on session plan) |  |  |
| Helped maintain group order and focus e.g. redirected extended unrelated conversation, reminded group of ground rules |  |
| Displayed open body language |  |
| Clear explanations of topics/activities |  |
| Provided guidance throughout activities |  |
| Made use of open questions |  |
| Used reflecting, paraphrasing & summarising4 |  |
| Facilitation skills | Got distracted from session e.g. by having an extended informal conversation |  |
| Asked leading questions (e.g., did you enjoy today’s session?) |  |
| Unclear explanations of topics/activities (e.g. complicated words, unsure of session activity) |  |