

ARCLIGHT

Community Mental Health Resilience

HANDBOOK

A Guide for
Health and Social Care
Practitioners



Authors

**Helena Ann Mitchell, Andrea Berardi, Mark Gaved,
Tania Hart, Gareth Davies, Kerese Collins.**

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Thank you

ARCLIGHT Team

Section 1

Introduction



HANDLING LIFE WITH RESILIENCE

Who Would Benefit from Using this Handbook?

The purpose of this handbook is to guide Health and Social Care Practitioners in their work with communities, based on the findings of an exploratory community mental health resilience project undertaken in Guyana with health and social care practitioners using three case study communities.

The handbook sets out the global context of the rising incidence of mental health issues, the insights drawn from the research study that can be applied to the Guyana context and the key elements that practitioners can adopt and adapt to suit their specialist field and levels of intervention.

The research differed from other studies by addressing the question of how to better promote community mental health resilience. It enabled participants in the study to create positive uplifting community stories of mental health resilience which they shared with each other and the wider community. They demonstrated how communities have collectively managed to overcome seemingly insurmountable challenges through their own actions and resources.

By acknowledging that mental health is often socially and environmentally predisposed, precipitated and or perpetuated this handbook sets out an understanding of the methodology and interventions that can be quickly and easily adopted by health care practitioners at all levels.

What is community resilience and how it can promote mental health?



The term mental health is often used to describe a spectrum from mental wellbeing or positive mental health to more serious mental health problems. Having good mental health is profoundly important for development of the individual as it helps people to achieve their potential, realise ambitions, cope with adversity, work productively and contribute to their community and society.

The concept that underlines our strategy for promoting mental health is 'resilience'. Resilience can be described as the ability to adapt and bounce back when things don't go as planned. Resilience can be thought of as an evolving process, influenced by a variety of social, economic, technological and environmental factors. Because resilience occurs even when there is great adversity, greater emphasis needs to be placed on what other factors within a community, such as family, environmental conditions and the economy, play in protecting an individual's wellbeing and mental health. Thus, a person's resilience cannot be promoted without consideration of the wider context that person lives in.

Mental health interventions at community level need to move away from just focusing on addressing individual mental health challenges. They should consider the complex levels of social, environmental, health, economic and technological influence that we as humans live with on a daily basis. For instance technologies, such as mobile phones and the internet, can effectively be used to support community resilience. Cultural values and customs, relationships and interactions with immediate family and school, environmental stressors, disease and supporting ourselves and family can all create mental health challenges as well as act as factors that can protect our mental health.

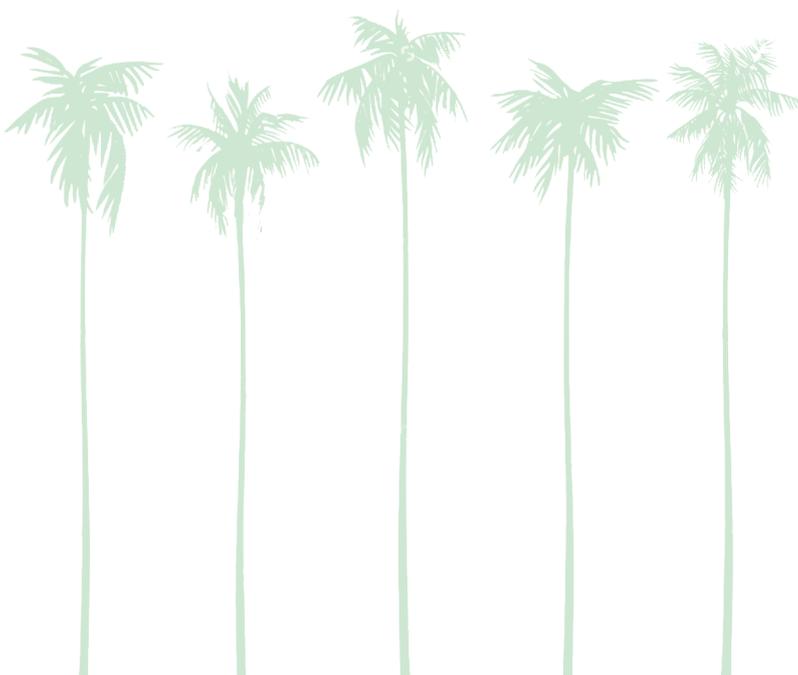
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Having good mental health is profoundly important for development of the individual.

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Defining community resilience is not an easy task as there are many differing definitions. The most basic definition is the ability of a community to withstand and recover from unfavourable circumstances. The following factors can assist a community to be resilient:

- the shared cultural practices for how a community copes with crises or disruptions and learns from adversity;
- the establishment of effective 'social networks' that maintain communication and support structures during times of adversity;
- the knowledge and skills to understand and address health vulnerabilities for those especially in need;
- the availability of a wide variety of resources to meet changing community needs, effective leadership and governance;
- the ability to sustain the complex ecological system the people live in;
- capacity to maintain key infrastructure, such as water, sanitation, energy, shelter, and food provision, processing and storage.



Why the ARCLIGHT approach?



The concepts and techniques proposed in this handbook were developed and tested in the ARCLIGHT Project, an eighteen month project, funded by the British Academy and led by The Open University, UK, in partnership with the Cobra Collective, De Montfort University, a women's refuge, and the communities of Yupukari and Enmore. ARCLIGHT stands for 'Action Research Community Led Initiative Guyana Health Team'. Throughout this handbook, we therefore refer to the concepts and techniques developed by this project as the 'ARCLIGHT approach'.

The purpose of this handbook is to share the findings of this exploratory community mental health resilience project undertaken in Guyana with health and social care practitioners using three case study communities. The handbook sets out the global context of the rising incidence of mental health issues, the insights drawn from the research study that can be applied to the Guyana context and the key elements that practitioners can adopt and adapt to suit their specialist field and levels of intervention.

The research had a unique approach in that it addressed the question of how to better promote community mental health resilience through engaging the participants as co-researchers. It enabled participants to create positive uplifting community stories of mental health resilience which they shared with each other and the wider community. They demonstrated how communities have collectively managed to overcome seemingly insurmountable challenges through their own actions and resources. This handbook sets out an understanding of the methodology and interventions that can be quickly and easily adopted by health care practitioners at all levels.

Click [here](#) for additional information on the ARCLIGHT project.



Section 2

Concepts and techniques



Global context



Globally one billion people struggle with issues, including depression, substance abuse and self-harm (WHO 2018) and these are especially prevalent in lower income nations. Fragmented service delivery, lack of research and policy in mental health as well as barriers to people seeking help like stigma make tackling mental health in these nations challenging.

ARCLIGHT's interdisciplinary research considered within this context the cultural, professional and political factors that hinder mental health recovery. The project also provided further insight and understanding, as well as policy-relevant evidence on the question of how to address the global challenge of mental health in lower income nations. More significantly, ARCLIGHT's collaborative approach underpinned by Participatory Action Research (PAR) has enhanced local provision and encouraged change in behaviour and wellbeing.

Guyana context



In Guyana, mental health services are sporadic and barely functional in some communities. Stigma continues to exist around mental ill health and has hindered efforts to provide appropriate mental health services. Poor mental health can contribute to low productivity, weak civic society, high disease burdens and can lead to traumatic experiences for all. A proactive and novel approach was adopted by a research team that aimed to strengthen three communities' resilience in order to promote better mental health and wellbeing, through identifying and sharing successful local practices that had evolved over time. The participants in this project demonstrated how they coped with challenging personal, cultural, organisational and environmental stressors and conditions which they would like to share with others in their respective communities and the wider Guyanese society. We believe there is a need to go beyond conventional approaches to mental health and focus on a model that promotes community resilience and wellbeing.

Culture and religious beliefs can influence how people think about mental health and illness. In the Guyanese culture some beliefs about mental illness are attributed to witchcraft known locally as obeah which can impact on the person seeking help. Those who consult with religious leaders may find they misinterpret mental health symptoms on some occasions. Caution is required when seeking help and support for mental ill health.



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*Without adversity to overcome,
there can be no resilience.¹*

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Meeting Community Challenges



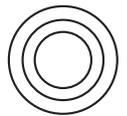
It is important to clearly articulate what community members perceive to be the challenges in their own community. For example, the following is a summary of challenges of a typical community in Guyana. Many community members rely primarily on agriculture, fishing and/or hunting, but the challenges of disruptive and extreme climatic conditions, such as droughts and floods are beginning to affect their subsistence livelihoods. The community is faced with lack of employment opportunities as in some cases major employers have shut down factories (such as sugar estates) forcing many youths to leave for mining or poorly paid jobs in urban centres, if any paid jobs can be found at all.

Malaria, dengue, water and air pollution, dysentery, alcoholism, domestic abuse, teenage pregnancies, unsustainable over-extraction of natural resources, wildfires, and a loss of traditional cultural practices and customs are all escalating problems. Services such as health clinics, transportation, schooling and policing are also in need of improvement. These difficult circumstances have meant that many community members feel helpless in facing up to these seemingly insurmountable problems.

It is important to re-emphasise here that the aim of the ARCLIGHT approach is to develop the community around what already works, rather than trying to fix what doesn't. But any community-based mental health intervention needs to appreciate the challenges within which it is operating.

1. Herrick, A.L., Stall, R., Goldhammer, H. et al. Resilience as a Research Framework and as a Cornerstone of Prevention Research for Gay and Bisexual Men: Theory and Evidence. *AIDS and Behavior* 18, 1–9 (2014). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10461-012-0384-x>

A useful model: Bronfenbrenner's framework

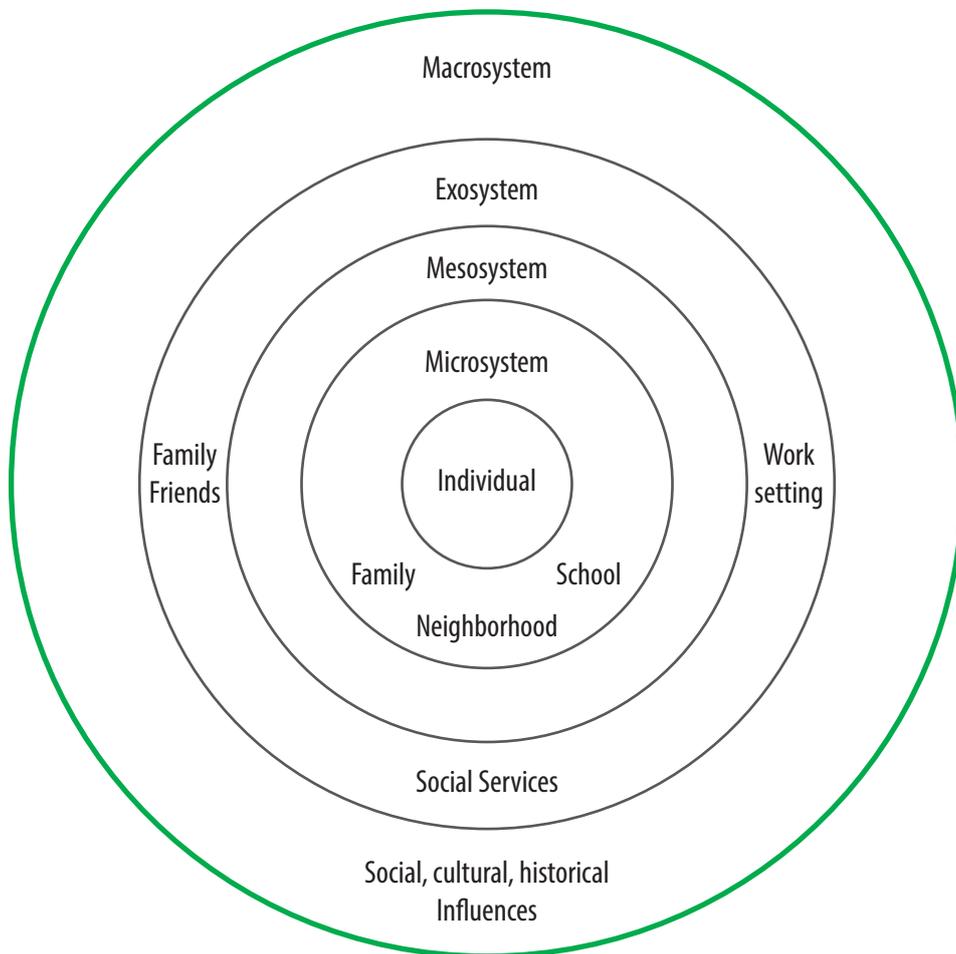


It is useful to use a tried and tested model when considering how an individual is influenced by the community or the environment he/she lives in. This will help to map out the influences and support available to community members. One useful model is Urie Bronfenbrenner's social ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner 1979²). This theory was originally developed to explain how a child's development and growth is influenced by the many environmental factors which come to influence them. Bronfenbrenner's ecological theoretical framework is now used more broadly by mental health practitioners as a tool to help understand the complexity of human behaviour and the environmental influences that impact upon a community or an individual. For instance it has been used in the mental health field to guide public health policy by helping to identify where change is needed.

The Bronfenbrenner theory emphasizes the importance of studying people in multiple settings. Five important levels are identified by Bronfenbrenner and he suggests that if positive changes or problems occur in any one of the levels, these will have an impact on the other levels. The five levels are:

1. Microsystem	This is the person's immediate influences i.e. their family/friends, work, etc.
2. Mesosystem	This is the person's connections or social linkages between his many microsystems i.e. home, school, peer group and family.
3. Exosystem	This is a person's indirect environment or links that may indirectly come to influence them i.e. parents work places, extended family members, and the neighborhood.
4. Macrosystem	This is the person's social and cultural influences i.e. their values or political, economical factors
5. Chronosystem	This is the influence of time and changes a person comes to experiences over time.

2. Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979) *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.



Urie Bronfenbrenner's social ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner 1979)

The ARCLIGHT approach gives practitioners the freedom to focus on the level that is most appropriate for the situation. It is likely that different situations may need a focus on a selection of some but not all of these levels, and practitioners need to be realistic about on which level they can have the greatest impact.

By intervening at these levels the aim is to identify strategies that have been developed for dealing with opportunities and challenges emerging from any of the five levels therefore promoting resilience.

Preparing to promote community mental health resilience ethically and safely



Community mental health resilience can be promoted in any community, small or large, rural or urban. The key is to consider carefully the identified groups' needs prior to engaging with them. This requires preparation work to ensure that your work is carried out in a safe and ethical manner.

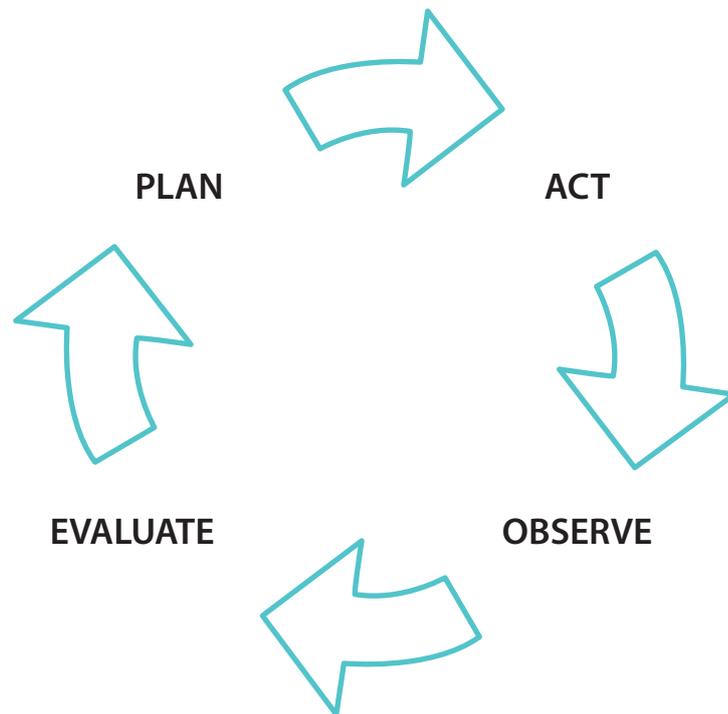
Things you need to consider prior to commencing are:

1. Do you have the support and permission of the community stakeholders and those who can influence the project's outcomes i.e a particular institution, or the community elders, managers, key workers, etc. It is important to communicate with these people and spend some time with them ensuring they are supportive of your work, its benefits as well as its limitations.
2. At the initial meeting with stakeholders try to identify one, or possibly two, community gatekeepers. These would be suitably experienced people of the community who can ensure that the right people are recruited and assist with community communications throughout. A gatekeeper acts as an intermediary between yourself as project lead and potential participants. They may also have the ability to grant or deny permission for access to certain community participants such children and those who do not have capacity to act for themselves.
3. You will need to consider with your gatekeepers the following key points:
 - a. Where to meet and carry out the activity. Identify a suitable venue, time for meetings etc. Consider how you may cater for any identified special needs ensuring the venue is suitably equipped with easy access, toilet facilities and the need for refreshments.
 - b. Your inclusion criteria and exclusion criteria for instance are you targeting a certain age group, do you wish to exclude children? Consider how your gatekeepers will promote inclusivity when recruiting your participants and how they will go about recruiting project participants and how many participants need to be recruited.
 - c. You will also need to ensure every one of your participants gives their informed consent to participate in your activity. This ensures they understand fully prior to taking part what the activity involves them doing, why they are doing it and their rights whilst participating.
 - d. Your gate keepers will be able to explain your project but it is also helpful to have a written participation information sheet for your gatekeepers to use or pass to

prospective participants. This ensures they have a more detailed understanding of the project and therefore better able to give their informed consent.

- e. All participants wishing to participate must have an information sheet and ideally sign a consent form (see consent form). A note about coercion, it is very important no participant feels obliged to participate. They may have a reluctance to participate in which case it is important to respect that. They may also wish to please so it is important to remind them that it is their choice to participate and they are under no obligation to participate at all and that if they do not participate there will be no consequences.
 - f. Discuss with your gatekeepers how you may support a participant who becomes distressed during your project/activity. What processes can you adopt to ensure that person receives the support they require. Check out with the gatekeepers if they can be a point of contact if that situation arises.
4. It is also important to consider confidentiality, as this type of project work might generate some sensitive information that participants might be willing to share with community members but not necessarily with the wider community. It is therefore important to talk to all those concerned in your project; your stakeholders, gate keepers and participants about how you will safeguard confidentiality and promote anonymity, possible via the use of pseudonyms, never naming places, deciding on what and what cannot be shared and compiling good group ground rules in collaboration with your projects participants.





Understanding Participatory Action Research (PAR) Methodology



In order to promote community mental health resilience, the use of Participatory Action Research (PAR) techniques are recommended. PAR methodology is a social, practical and collaborative activity where the building of relationships among all participants and the research team are crucial as they work towards self-determination and reform. PAR is an appropriate approach as it allows participants to give voice to their experiences and deliver outcomes based on them being co-researchers rather than attempting to impose predetermined actions or activities.

PAR adopts the philosophy that “that people have a right to determine their own development and recognises the need for local people to participate meaningfully in the process of analysing their own solutions, over which they have (or share, as some would argue) power and control, in order to lead to sustainable development” (Attwood, 1997, p. 2³). Our recommendation for starting off with a community is to first explore what is working well within a community and then uses the PAR intervention to consolidate and build on existing mental health resilience building solutions. The aim being to develop the community around what already works, rather than trying to fix what doesn’t.

3. Attwood, H. (1997) An overview of issues around the use of participatory approaches by post graduate students. Participatory Research, IDS PRA Topic Pack, IDS, University of Sussex, Brighton.

It is important to use facilitation skills when applying the PAR methodology to group activities to enable participants to reflect and consider several courses of action. Facilitated PAR sessions encourage collaboration among the researchers and participants and key aspects of facilitation skills can be used within a group setting.

These include:

- Act as a catalyst to bring about change
- Negotiate with the group about the role of the facilitator
- Use active listening skills
- Stimulate people to change by addressing issues that concern them now
- Use participants own words to record and listen
- Seek clarification and check what has been said
- Respond through reflection
- Help participants to analyse their situation
- Enable people to consider several courses of action
- Stimulate rather than impose change
- Assist participants to analyse their present situation, consider what they find and then plan for what they would like to change

“

PAR is an appropriate approach as it allows participants to give voice to their experiences.

”

Storytelling



When applying a PAR approach, it is important to use an appropriate means of communication that community members are comfortable with. Many interventions in communities often involve professionals 'lecturing' community members using technical or complex language that is not familiar to the community members. It is also common to find that if any information is left with community members, it is in the form of printed text. Even within the literate community members, writing is very rarely emotionally engaging. People like to engage with stories, while quite a lot of material that is distributed by external practitioners intervening is dry factual based information.



It is important to share positive practices through visual storytelling created by community members using modes of communication that they are comfortable with such as oral storytelling and pictures. Encourage participants to create stories of places that community members are familiar with and represent them, thus creating wider community engagement for the fun and enjoyment of seeing friends and family members in the narrative.

There is great value in taking and sharing visual imagery, and their associated commentary but aim to go a step further and encourage participants to weave the imagery together into captivating and entertaining adventures, containing villains, victims and heroes. These can be in the form of narrated photostories. The aim is to encourage creativity and playfulness, so that the process of documenting and sharing community owned solutions to building mental health resilience is fun for both the individuals creating the visual stories, and the eventual community viewers. It is valuable to achieve stories which can be viewed and played over and over again by community members, not only to promote positive behaviours, but also because the stories are fun and entertaining. It is important

to consider building capacity for engaging, participatory and playful visual storytelling. There is a growing trend to use storytelling to obtain information or to an intervention to bring about change. Stories are products of language; so many versions can be constructed and reconstructed to meet the situations encountered. Storytelling allows participants to talk about their experiences and to take ownership of their stories. Stories are guided by memory, hopes and fears. Guyanese people derive great benefit from telling stories as they feel storytelling contributes positively to their wellbeing.

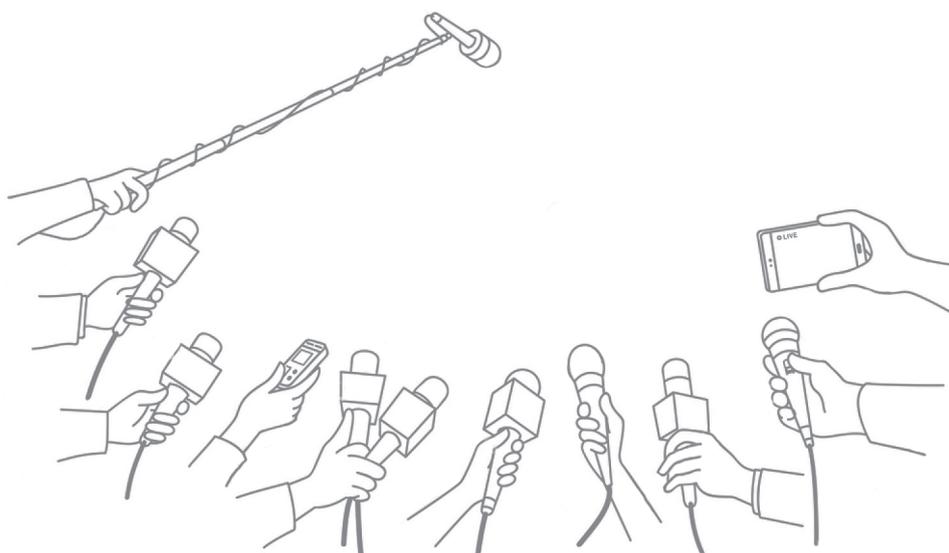
Digital tools for creating and sharing stories



Stories need to be shared, but there is a limit to how many people can be engaged when stories are simply told face-to-face. That is why the ARCLIGHT approach champions the creation and sharing of positive community mental health resilience stories through accessible digital technologies.

Many people have smartphones or access to one. As part of people's daily lives, they can be powerful tools to help gather and share stories and record the highlights of positive community activities. Participants can take photos, record audio, and combine these to create engaging videos that can then be selected and edited as a group and shared with others.

Once stories have been created digitally, the next step is to share these in a way that many people can access and talk about them. The strategy here is to stimulate dialogue and debate. This will help clarify community challenges, needs, and existing solutions, and provide incentives to get active collaboration from community members to transform the



way the community functions. This participatory process aims to enhance positive collective behaviours at the mesosystem scale (between groups and families, at a neighbourhood level), confront harmful social and cultural practices, and help to nudge towards positive social norms while addressing structural inequalities. The goal is to empower the community so they know their rights and build their capacities, so they can change their practices and influence those around them.

Sharing stories through local network tools: a DIY approach

Sharing stories between phones can be a challenge, particularly where internet or cell phone access is limited or expensive. One approach is to use low-cost, battery powered hubs that allow WiFi sharing, taking a local, “do it yourself” (DIY) approach to computer networking, setting up local tools without needing to rely on the internet or cell phone companies. This can be used where it is difficult to access commercial services.

Smartphones have a setting that allows them to connect to WiFi devices, and so they allow users to copy their photos and videos to these hubs, where others can see them and download them onto their own phones. We have used Raspberry Pi computers, running software such as the MAZI set of tools (<http://www.mazizone.eu>), that enables easy sharing of stories and other digital resources, and supports discussion. We call the combination of the technical equipment and this way of working a “MAZIzone”.

Using MAZIzones, and building a way of sharing community-created digital stories in a local neighbourhood, our strategy is to facilitate communication that is socially and culturally appropriate. The ARCLIGHT approach encourages community members to control the tools of communication directly. Such communications, however, must be combined with reinforcing activities that encourage the more widespread adoption of positive practices so as to build collective mental health resilience.

Permanently installing MAZIzones within communities allows community members to share and ‘remember’ stories of local resilience isolated from the distraction and potential harmful exposure to online content. This can be a catalysing mechanism for long-term learning and resilience building in a way that is community-led and owned.

To find out how to set up a MAZIzone in detail, go to:
www.mazizone.eu

Evaluating the intervention



Evaluation is understanding how far objectives are being achieved and how to measure results. This should be done from the beginning of an intervention. We call this “upstream evaluation”. First, you need to understand the initial situation: what people think, what challenges people are facing and what goals people have.

Throughout the intervention it is important to monitor progress, and use regular reflection and feedback to improve processes as you continue. Corrections can be made to improve the final results.

Towards the end it is important to understand what the results are: what has changed in the situation as a result of the work, and what might be tried next time.





Section 3

How to do it: Activities



This section of the handbook will introduce you to practical approaches to carry out each part of a participatory project supporting community mental health resilience.

Preparing for Evaluation



Evaluation can be carried out in three steps.

Step 1

Understand the current situation. To carry out an intervention and seek to make a change, it is important to first get an understanding of what issues are at play. ARCLIGHT uses the six principles of engaged research (the “6P’s”). This involves drawing up a table and understanding six different aspects that you need to consider to meaningfully engage your participants.

Preparedness	Have you discussed the interventions with the stakeholders you wish to engage with? Have you established relationships with gatekeepers who can give you access to the communities?
Politics	Have you considered societal, political and cultural issues that may affect both the implementation of the project and the resulting impacts? What political issues are important to local people?
Publics	Have you mapped out relevant institutions and communities and understood who they are? Who are the stakeholders who you could and should be engaging with the research?
Purposes	What are the aims, objectives and envisaged impacts of the intervention? Have stakeholders been consulted on what they would like the research impacts to be? Which steps have been initiated for consulting with stakeholders about the purposes of the project?
Processes	How will the research involve relevant stakeholders in project activities? Where is engagement likely to take place, and through what mechanisms? When, and how often, will stakeholders be involved?
Performance	What types of effects, benefits and changes (impacts) do you envisage that the project will have on those involved? What plans do you have to evaluate these impacts, both before and after the different project activities?

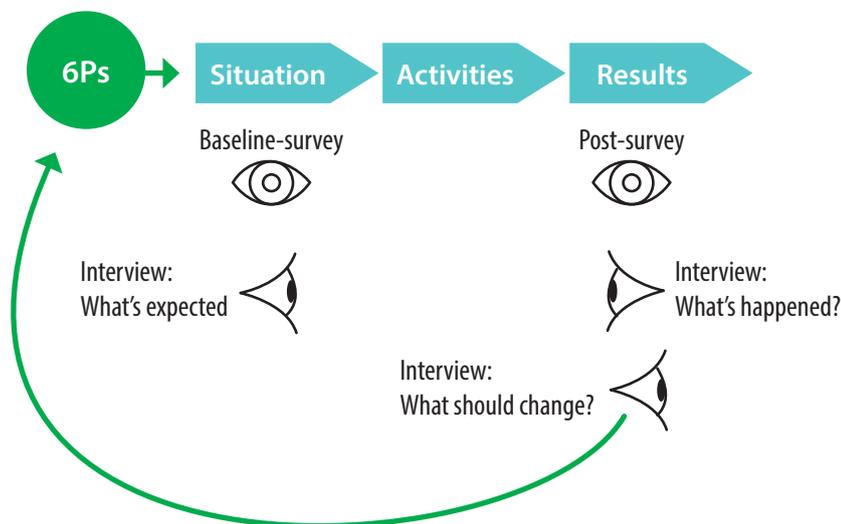
By checking each of these categories, it is likely a good mapping will take place. If used in different places or situations, it will allow them to be compared and give insight as to where different approaches might be tried, or looking back, to understand the factors that helped each project to best succeed.

To understand the initial situation using the 6Ps, information can be found through 'desk based research' but interviews or focus groups with local community members or individuals working with the communities can provide insights.

A 'baseline survey' - a survey that tells you what people think at the beginning of a project is valuable. This will enable you to understand community members thoughts, opinions, and knowledge before you start, and from this, you will be later able to return and carry out the same survey and see what has changed, to help understand if impacts have been realised.

Step 2

Ongoing monitoring: while the project is ongoing, it is important to understand how well activities are going, if the project is starting to make a difference, and if any challenges or problems are happening that require a change in course. Gathering feedback after activities such as workshops or training sessions is valuable, and encourage the project team to keep a diary.



Cycle of case study evaluation (Davies, adapted from Pawson⁴ and Tilley (1997) and Holliman⁵ et al, 2017)

4. Pawson, R., and Tilley, N. (1997) Realist Evaluation. Sage, London, UK
 5. Holliman, R., Davies, G., Pearson, V., Collins, T., Sheridan, S., Brown, H., Hallam, J. and Russell, M. (2017). Planning for engaged research: a collaborative 'Labcast'. In: Kucirkova, N. and Quinlan, O. eds. The Digitally Agile Researcher. The Open University Press, London, UK. pp. 88–106.

Step 3

At the end of the project activities, it is important to look back over what has been done and understand what the results are, what made a difference and where there were challenges. Carrying out a second survey with participants who filled in an initial baseline survey will help you understand if changes have happened. Interviews with key people can give rich information about how they saw the activities and realised impacts. Interviews can also investigate what should be done looking forwards: how should the positive aspects be maintained, what could be done differently next time, and what plans should there be for the future?

Steps for learning across situations

If you are looking across more than one place or situation, you should seek to use the same approach in each. This will allow you to compare and see if different factors in the different places give different results when carrying out the same activity. Consider how the approach you have chosen works or has challenges, in each situation. Using the 6Ps to characterise each situation will enable you to understand what conditions help an approach to succeed, and what might be likely to cause challenges, if you were to try it again elsewhere.

Consider:

- What rules the community operates under (not just written down, formal rules, but also social rules which can be more powerful than written laws)
- What roles do different play in the community? Are there roles for older and younger people, men or women?
- What are the characteristics of the community: use the “6P’s” to write down some details

The different situations can be compared by analysing feedback that has been gathered (interviews, surveys, feedback from workshops) to see how they differ in the insights they offer against a common set of themes. This will help explain how the situations and activities have influenced community mental health resilience.

How to run a resilience activity using participatory action research



As a practitioner you should work collaboratively with participants in order to commence building relationships. When using PAR methods every effort should be made to work together to achieve mutually agreed goals. Effective collaboration depends on the practitioners and participants trusting each other and trust develops from regular and honest communication.

Other factors to be considered are:

- Clear and open communication channels from the outset.
- Clarify expectations concerning respective roles and responsibilities and agree them.
- Disclose conflicts of interest and acknowledge disagreements.
- Consider the group dynamics and how the participants of the group are interacting with each other.
- Encourage the silent participants to be more vocal and observe who are the dominant ones in the group.
- Where sensitive information is being disclosed, remind the participants of the principles of confidentiality by not disclosing any information discussed in the groups outside of the sessions.
- Emphasise positive behaviours when discussing resilience including the meaning of resilience.
- Develop self awareness of how to handle difficult situations.
- Reflect on how you have managed the workshop afterwards and note down what you have learned.
- Encourage the participants too to reflect on their own learning and share with the group.
- Make a note of what they have learned after you have completed the workshop.

Starting off with your group

When you bring a group of participants together you need to set an agenda with clear goals of what you intend to achieve. The PAR group problem free activity sessions are useful to establish effective ways of working collaboratively with participants. Session 1 gives you a taster of what you can do in the first problem free session including tips for an agenda and an ice breaker. Further sessions are listed in the appendices.

Here are some tips for an agenda for the first session activities.

- Set a flexible agenda.
- Ensure each participant is introduced to each other at the beginning of the session.
- Set group norms/rules/boundaries and expectations as these govern behaviour and avoid chaos.
- Set the context – aims and objectives, content and timing.
- Encourage warming up, ice breakers and stretching activities.
- Avoid making any distracting noises during sessions (turn cell phones off).
- Allow one person to speak in turn rather than all members speaking at the same time.
- Allow for some silence when it occurs.
- Beware that some topics can be sensitive and respond appropriately.

Here is an example of an ice breaker that can be used:

- What music do you listen to?
- Name a favourite tune?
- What is your favourite colour and why?

See an example of Session 1 in the appendices “should be outside the only text in the box - make sure to delete” - singpost here...

Creating positive stories of resilience

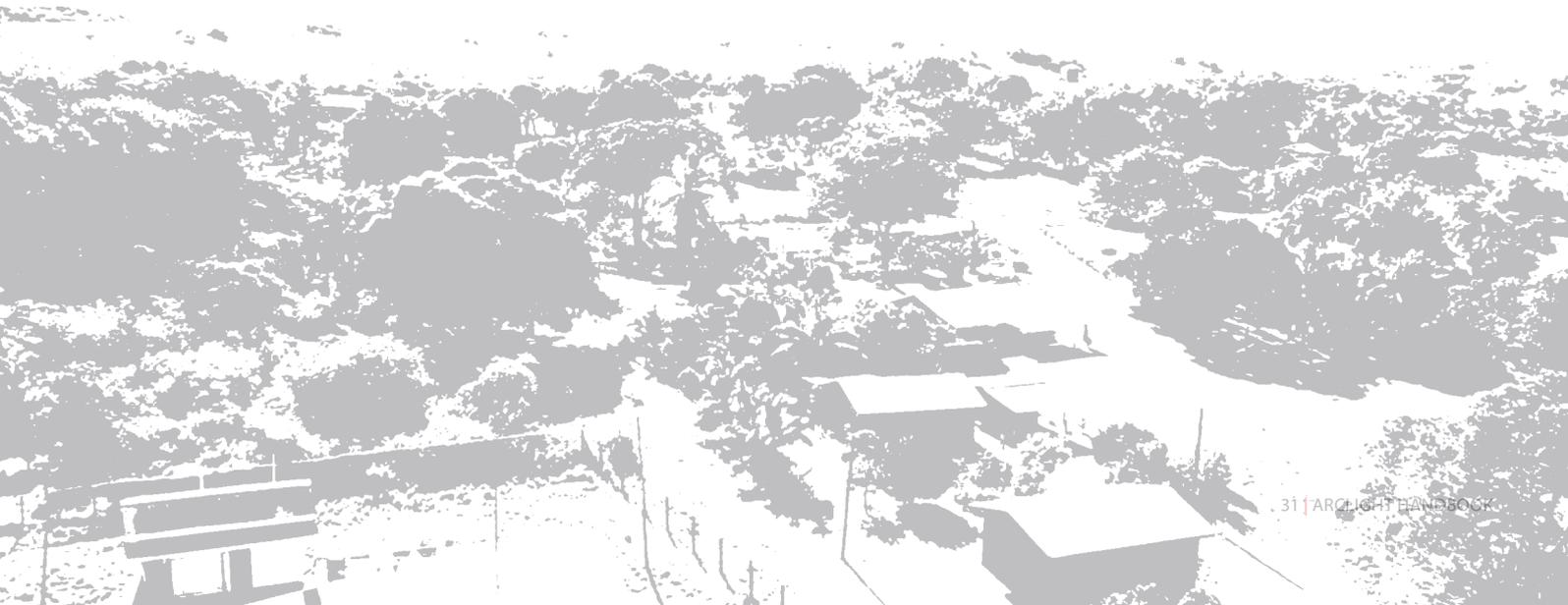
Questions that can be used to create positive stories of resilience:

- Can you recall a pleasant experience within your community and encourage participants to share these experiences with each other?
- How has the community coped with adversity?
- What do you think resilience/bouncing back from life's hardships means?

Listening to stories requires the facilitator to give full attention to what is being said. The following skills are required.

- Maintaining eye contact
- Show a keen interest in what is being said
- Do not judge
- Do not offer advice
- Provide an environment where the person can talk freely
- Offer prompts after long periods of silence
- Give space and time to talk

You may find that many pleasant stories are recalled verbally including how individuals faced intolerable situations and used strategies to overcome them. For those who find it difficult to converse in a group setting, you can ask them to express their feelings, hopes and aspirations in different ways. Some may like to draw pictures, paint, produce poems, use technology or write stories.



Here are three example from ARCLIGHT's case study communities:

Community waste management in Yupukari.

There is no government supported activity for waste collection and management in Yupukari. As a result, there is a tendency for waste such as plastic, tins, glass, batteries and paper to accumulate around households or to be dumped randomly along paths. This was not only proving to be a major health hazard through direct (most children are bare foot) and indirect injury (waste is burnt in open fires releasing carcinogenic and other toxic fumes and ash), but was having a growing psychological effect, as the once pristine village was becoming gradually overwhelmed with non-degradable waste and toxic ash. Yupukari has recently organised a 'village clean' up, where community members all got together to collect the waste from the village and dispose of it safely away from the village. This made people develop a more positive perception of themselves and their village.

Resilient story from a participant in a Closed Community for Vulnerable Women.

As a young woman I had great plans for my life but due to a life experiencing abuse, my plans were shattered. A shattered early life will not prevent me from moving forward and upward. The positive support I have received is giving positive energy not to look back at the past but to forge a better future. I am proud today I am a resilient woman.

Every experience makes you grow in a rural Indo coastal community.

The community of Enmore is diverse and multiracial now. I am proud to say it has evolved. It has 2 primary schools, supermarkets, pharmacy, post office, internet cafe and not least the polyclinic. We are very glad and appreciate the clinic because in times gone by we would have to go all the way to Georgetown for treatment. Now we are enjoying easy access to healthcare and counselling. The community like any other is faced with challenges. Crime is still being committed here but is not so prevalent. The people are very hard working and can be relied on to help one another during good and bad times. The closure of the estate was an eye opener to us all. Now you can find a lot of women who were stay at home moms working alongside their husbands to make a better life for themselves and their families. Many of the skills they had that were dormant are now revived. I have learnt that we can handle every experience we encounter in our community.

Discussing community resilience

When discussing community resilience in subsequent collaborative sessions, ask participants to identify the strengths within their community. The Enmore community believed that social and lasting relationships with family members and friends were very important and strong family relationships can make you more resilient. They identified strengths as:

- Helping one another
- Giving support including financial and moral
- Understanding each other
- Developing trust and staying humble
- Being non judgemental
- Remaining positive in life

Other strengths that may be discussed is the role the church or other places of worship/religious practices can play in the individual's life.

Another question a practitioner can ask in a session is "what might a community that has mental health resilience look like?"

Participants may choose words to describe 'mental health' as:

- Stable mind
- Handling situations
- Resilient
- Coping
- Unhappy
- Depression
- Loneliness
- Mind focus
- Disconnection.

Other terms used for resilient mental health communities are:

- To be supportive of each other
- Neighbour help neighbour
- Appreciate each other
- Share with each other
- Pray for one another,
- Adequate medical facilities and sports help to take your mind off problems.

Participants in community resilient sessions believe that looking after your physical health and well being can be beneficial to your mental health as we all have mental health and it underpins everything we do in our daily lives. It needs to be maintained and looked after as “to be mentally healthy” is to have the ability to deal with whatever the situation is at hand no matter how difficult”.

The attributes that make a resilient society mentally healthy are:

- Cooperative
- Unified
- Sociable
- Loving
- Peaceful
- Helpful
- Caring with togetherness and kindness.

How to create an engaging digital story of community resilience

Having explored and discussed community mental health resilience, this could be a good time to develop stories. The digital storytelling approach championed by ARCLIGHT focused on creating narrated slideshows using mobile phones. This is one of the easiest ways that a digital story can be created.





This requires participants to follow these steps:

Identifying the story	Identify a positive experience in your community and think through whether it has the ingredients for a positive and uplifting story: is there a challenge that was overcome? Are there interesting characters such as villains, victims and heroes? Was the solution truly community owned, or did it come from outside of the community?
Creating a narrative	Once the story has been identified, write out the narrative of the story: set the scene; introduce the challenge and the key characters; describe how the challenge is resolved; explore the lasting impacts on the community. Try to aim for a story that can be read out for about two to five minutes.
Develop a storyboard	Try and break down the story into individual scenes and make a note of the different images that can represent the story.
Capture your imagery	Now is the time to go into your community and take pictures to represent the story. Some of these pictures can be of actual real life situations, while others you may need to role play with friends and family. When even role playing is difficult, you can be imaginative and take a picture of something drawn by hand. In some instances, when the subject matter is too difficult to capture with an image, a symbolic representation can also be a good substitute.
Produce your story	Use your phone to record your story and use any video editing App to combine the audio recording with your pictures.
Share your story	And finally, use your community's DIY network or any other means available to you to share your story with the rest of the community.
Debate and evaluate	Look for opportunities to gain feedback on your story, what impact it may have had, and gain ideas for your next story.

Using DIY networks to record, share and debate digital stories

Digital networking hubs can help record and share community mental health resilience stories, and promote the aims and outcomes of the initiative. ARCLIGHT has developed a five-step process for helping community participants work with DIY networks.

A five-step process can help people engage with digital sharing platforms like MAZI, helping participants to engage with the project and access and debate each other's stories. This can break down what might appear a complex process into more manageable steps.

Step 1 – Engage

First, encourage curiosity and a willingness to experiment with a MAZI network hub, and through this to connect with the wider project's aims and processes. Activities could include helping community members to post local news stories through a WordPress blogging site, and engage in brief social exchanges on a message board (e.g. 'Guestbook'). This is a key part of the necessary process of ensuring participants give 'free, prior, and informed consent' for taking part in activities.

Step 2 – Inform

Second, help participants to the MAZIzone using their smartphones for resources on well-being, resilience, and community owned solutions, along with more practical tips on storytelling using different forms (text, drawings, photos, video). These resources should be loaded onto the MAZI before the initiative starts and can include text, images, audio and video. They will comprise short introductory materials uploaded on the file sharing facility (e.g. 'NextCloud' software) providing examples and explanations so that participants build their understanding of the concepts and the techniques underpinning the project.

Step 3 – Debate

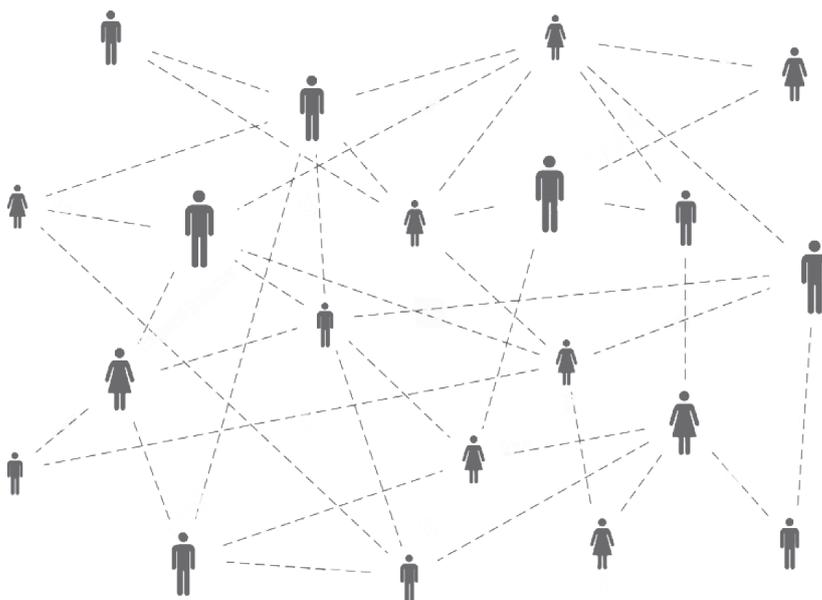
This crucial step supports participants in their reflections of the initiative's aims, concepts and techniques, and to raise queries, concerns, ideas enabling them to decide how to proceed. Discussion can happen in groups, and can also be recorded using the simple collaborative writing tool deployed on MAZIzones, Etherpad. Taking notes of discussions allows the group to come back to their earlier thoughts later on in the project and see if their ideas have changed, and enables the facilitators to draw together learning outcomes and challenges when working later with other groups.

Step 4 – Create

Here, participants are encouraged to produce and upload their own stories (pictures, videos, audio stories) on the MAZIzone. This is likely to be participants contributing their own community stories of resilience, but can also include participants co-developing new resources alongside facilitators, as community members become more confident and find their voice. These resources might be community-led ways of describing the initiative's aims within the community, and expanding or contributing concepts and techniques. The WordPress blog facility, Etherpad, and NextCloud could be examples of software tools used.

Step 5 – Manage, Maintain and Sustain

The ultimate goal of a participatory initiative is that community members themselves take over the running and maintenance of the approaches and supporting tools. Sustainability needs to come from the community itself. In this final step, participants are encouraged to produce an accessible narrative of who is doing what, when and how, and the emerging results of the initiative. The MAZIzone or other digital platform could serve as the 'digital collective memory' for building community mental health resilience. This social memory needs to be in the form of an engaging and captivating story that encourages community members to manage and maintain the digital tools, and the content held on it. 'Champions' who will support the rest of the community need to be identified, and supported to learn the skills to run the digital tools themselves, using existing guides and writing their own to support the rest of the community to tell and share their stories. A WordPress blog could be a good tool to tell and promote this story.



Reflecting on your cycle of participatory action research

Reflection is crucial when using PAR methods for both the practitioner and participants as they rethink their position, discover new ways of being, acting and doing, and deal with the issues they face as they agree on a course of action. A useful model for reflection is Schon's⁶ (1983) which is a structured approach when reflecting on issues emerging from a workshop or any event. Schon's model focuses on reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action.

Reflection-in-action

- Reflecting while doing
- Thinking on your feet and what you intend to do next
- What are your feelings in that particular situation?
- Testing out new ideas by drawing on previous knowledge and understanding.

Reflection-on-action

- Occurs after the event based on what you can remember
- Recall the experience by exploring your memory in order to retrieve it
- Reflect and try to understand what has happened
- Identify what you have learned from the experience leading to personal action.

When reflecting practitioners and participants should be encouraged to think, reflect and interpret their experiences while in the group setting. As issues emerge from the workshop, the practitioner may find that the participants show strengths and discover strategies that they could use to overcome future challenges. Many may find they have the freedom to voice their feelings and concerns and share their experiences with each other. As these workshops can be activity driven, the participants may produce a range of poems, digital storytelling episodes, writing skills, songs, drawings and paintings to demonstrate incredible resilience against hardship and adversity.

The participants in the community of Enmore reflected on what they had achieved during the group sessions. Initially they found it difficult to identify their learning from the many activities but attributes such as development of self- discovery, self-belief and specific skills such as writing stories or poems about resilience demonstrated how they overcame hardships. The practitioner and the participants can develop their learning in a similar way if a safe environment is provided where the participants could privilege their feelings, beliefs and practices.

6. Schon, D. A. (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner*. Basic Books, New York.

Keeping a reflective diary

Keeping a reflective diary is important as it aids reflection and encourages the practitioner to think about their reactions and interactions with the participants and to record their feelings when conducting a workshop. Being reflective involves deep introspection, as you become aware of how your own agenda, experiences and motivation can contribute to interactions with participants and potentially influence the knowledge and actions created.

Tips for keeping a reflective diary

- Describe the learning experience/event
- Analyse the topics or issues by discussing your feelings and opinions about the topic
- Consider the values and experiences learnt from the experience/event
- Identify any actions you may wish to take.

How to share your learning with fellow practitioners

Building collaborative networks and sharing common learning experiences with fellow practitioners are crucial as you learn from each other. It is important to develop mutual respect and understanding of each other's roles so that you are fully cognisant of what the individual does.

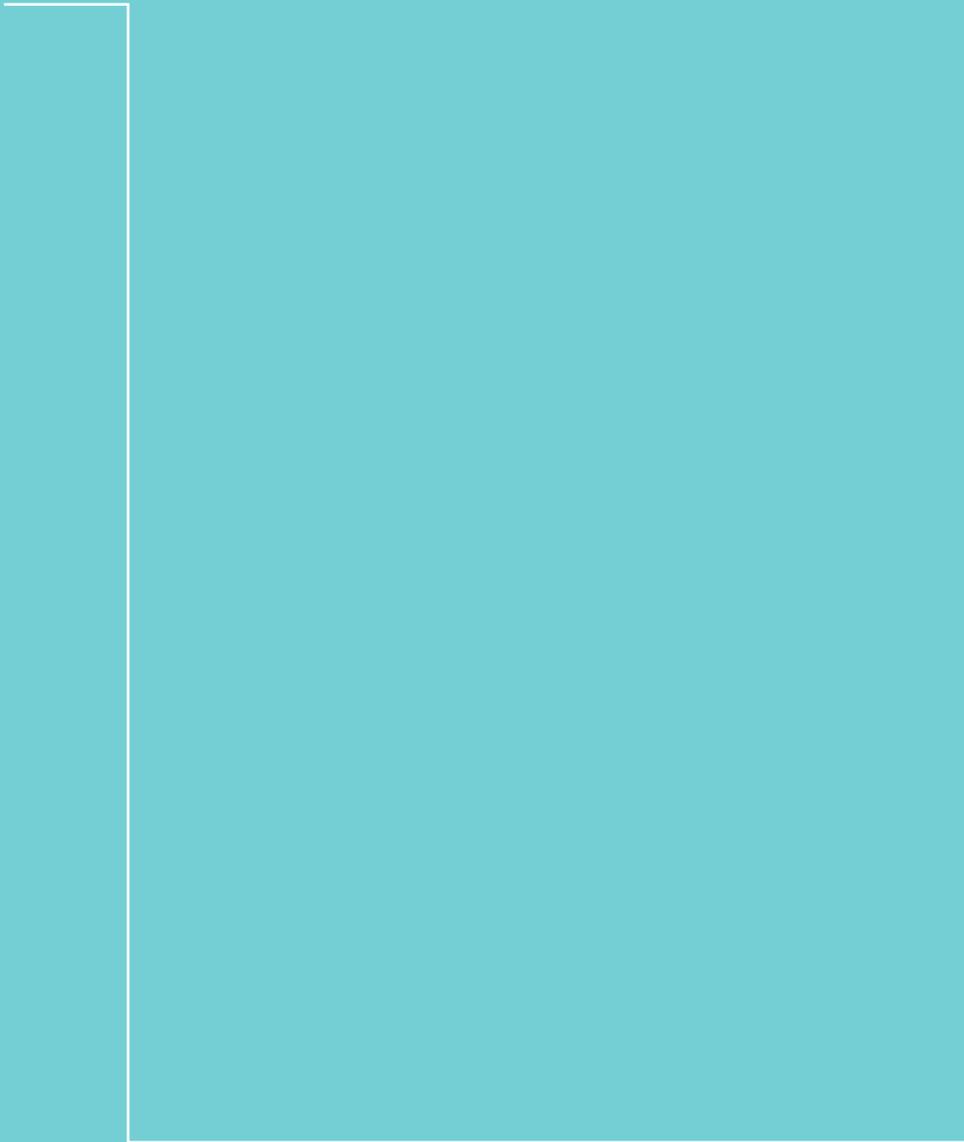
Sometimes when you are faced with challenging situations the needs of others may be ignored, but act with integrity and demonstrate values that support positive interactions with your peers.

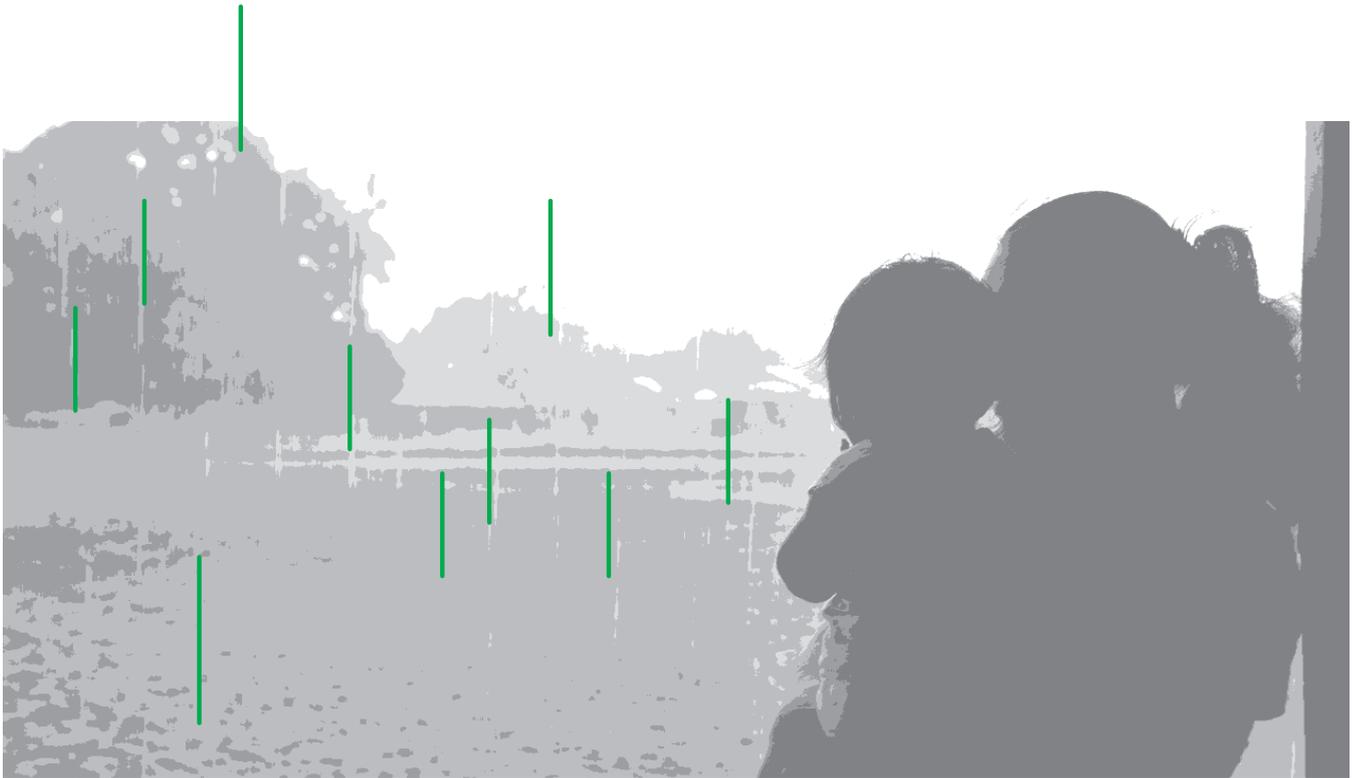
When involved in co-designing activities with colleagues, demonstrate a willingness to question and challenge as appropriate. Show an interest in new ideas and techniques by seeking to find out more about them and take them on board if relevant. Aim to communicate at all levels and influence new ways of working with fellow practitioners via a range of media for example, face-to-face, email, online / virtual or by adapting your style to suit the audience.



Section 4

Conclusion





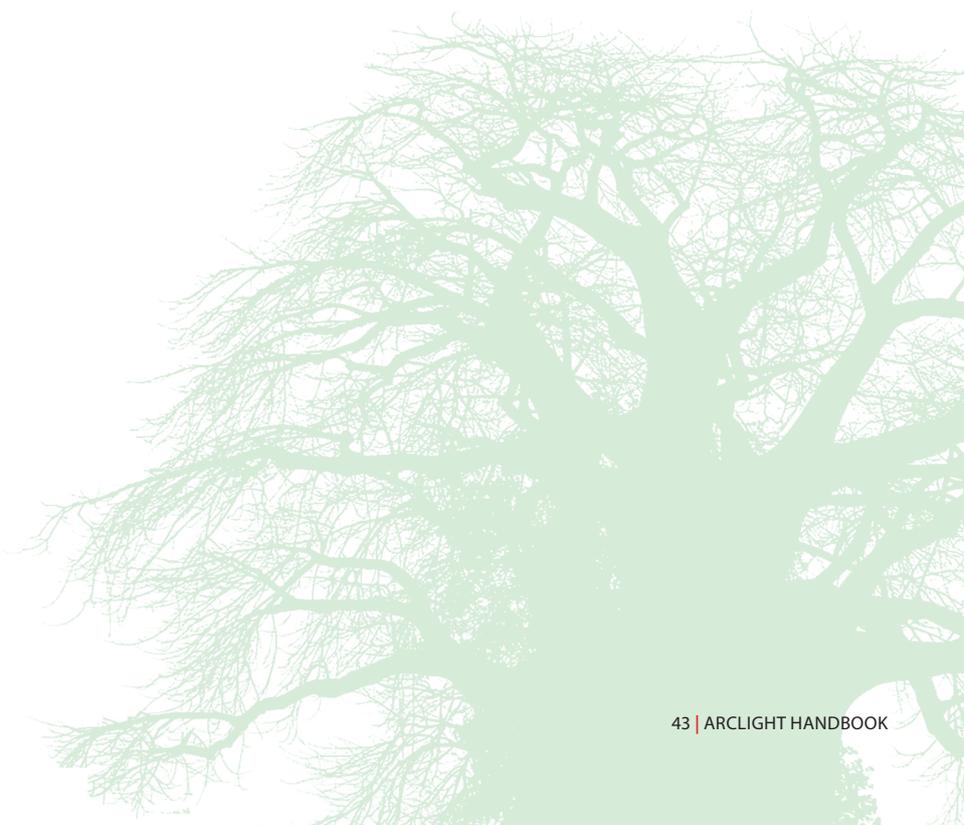
This handbook has presented a proactive and novel approach for strengthening community mental health resilience that engages beyond the individual, and instead adopts a social ecological systems approach that engages the community as a whole. A person's resilience cannot be promoted without consideration of the wider environmental context and the complex system they live in. Our approach therefore encourages mental health programmes and policies to move away from an exclusive focus on promoting individual resilience to consider the complex levels of interaction at different scales of organisation. These include cultural values and customs, the relationships and interactions we have with our immediate family and school, the environmental stressors that we are exposed to, the disease burdens that we carry, and the myriad of other complex challenges that affect individuals.

Imposing external solutions often leads to disempowerment and despondency in people, particularly the most marginalised communities. Our novel approach instead has focused on recording and strengthening existing successful examples of mental health resilience within the community as a whole, rather than promoting foreign and unfamiliar ideas and practices. Information and Communications Technologies, such as mobile phones and DIY networks, can support a more integrated and participatory mental health intervention strategy at community level by allowing participants to record, share and discuss their success stories with fellow community members. This handbook has showcased how giving people voice and agency allows challenges within a community to be better solved by identifying positive practices from within that community and trying to promote their use, as opposed to focusing on behaviours that are

negative and trying to fix them with solutions that have emerged from outside of the community.

As the global Covid-19 pandemic has shown, the future will be characterised by an increased frequency and impact of extreme events, especially as the effects of escalating climate change and biodiversity loss escalate. Communities will be affected by heat-waves, floods, droughts, wildfires, mass migration of people, economic hardships, conflict and exacerbating health impacts. These disruptive effects will also increase pressures on public services, infrastructure and the wider economy, straining social functioning within families, communities and organizations, thus further deteriorating the collective capacity to mitigate and adapt to shocks such as climate change. This means that mental health challenges will only increase.

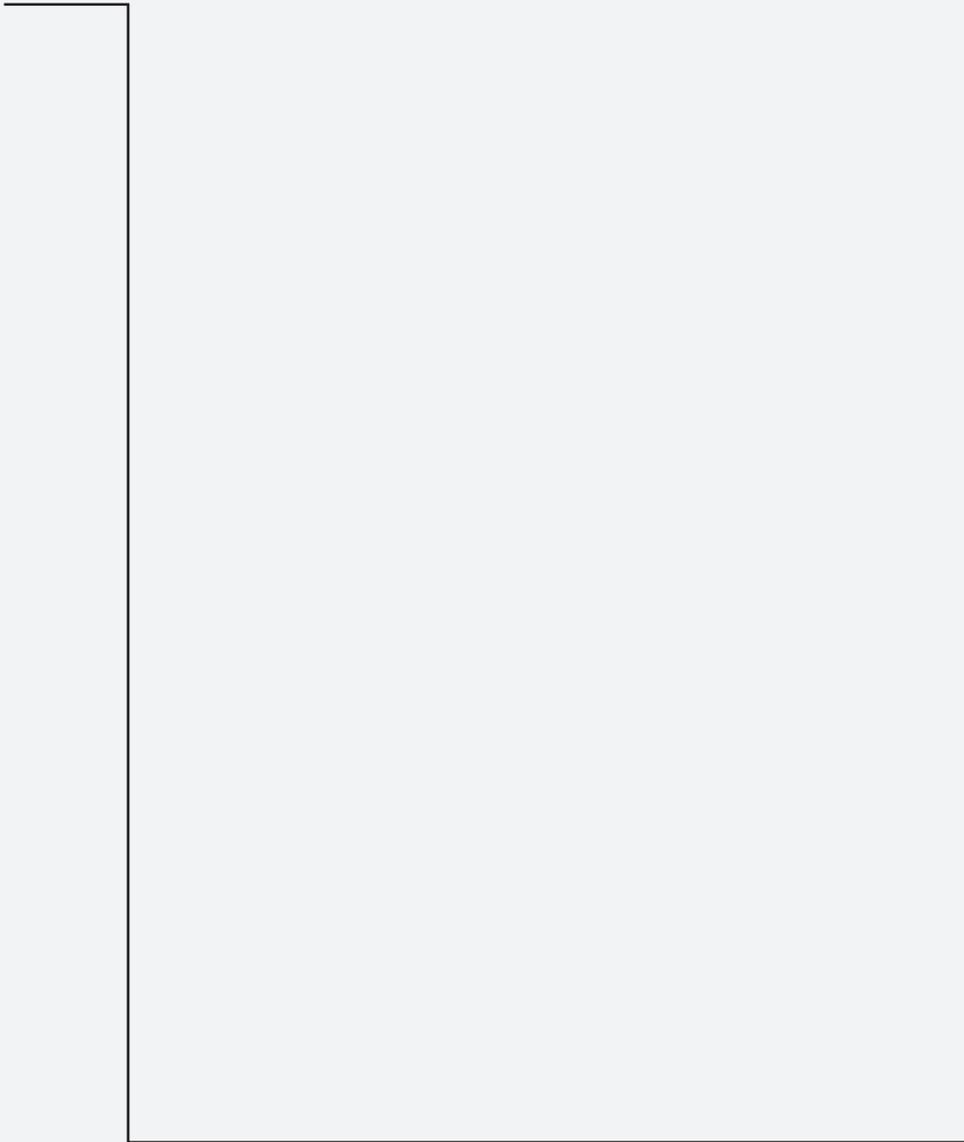
Our approach proposes a low resource and straightforward strategy to strengthen community mental health resilience in the face of this growing pressure. We therefore encourage practitioners to adopt, adapt and promote their own version of this handbook within as many communities as possible.





Section 5

Appendices



Consent Form



This consent form was used on the ARCLIGHT project, You can use it as a template and edit it to suit your purposes

For those participating in the study of:

ARCLIGHT Project: Co-producing Resources for Community Resilience

Details of this study can be found in that attached participant information sheet. Please demonstrate your consent to the following questions by initialing and dating the box.

	I agree
<p>I confirm that I have read and understood the Information Sheet for Participants. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered.</p>	
<p>I understand the information given on the information sheet relating to confidentiality (this part on the information sheet is entitled: Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential).</p>	
<p>I understand I can withdraw participation in this study at any time, with no explanation required, and that this will have no effect on me or my family whatsoever.</p>	
<p>I give consent to take part in this study.</p>	
<p>I agree that when discussing experiences I will try to avoid using individuals' names.</p>	
<p>I consent to my discussion being audio recorded, typed and stored safely electronically and non-identifiable quotations potentially being used by the research in subsequent publications and conferences.</p>	
<p>I give permission for information, including the use of quotations, collected via questionnaires, audio or video recordings, to be used in any presentation of the findings with the understanding that my anonymity will be assured, unless I waive my anonymity in writing.</p>	
<p>I give permission for any video recordings made and photographs taken, or I choose to share with other participants, the researchers and wider Guyanese community during the project to be used in any presentation of the project, including the project website.</p>	
<p>I understand that relevant sections of the data collected during this study will also be looked at by researchers and health care professionals from Guyana University, The Open University and De Montfort University in the UK and other Guyanese organisations who have an interest in wellbeing.</p>	
<p>I would like to receive a copy of the summary of the research findings</p>	



Printed name of participant.....

Participant's signature..... Date

Printed name of researcher

Researcher's signature..... Date

Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in this study.



Workshop sessions: example activity guidance

SESSION 1

Getting to know the group through a range of problem-free activities. Initiate warming up and stretching activities. Discuss group rules, boundaries and expectations.

Participants

Participants will be asked to complete a questionnaire assessing their knowledge and understanding of resilience before group activity commences.

Examples of activities for the participants emphasising positivity and building trust that can be shared with others will include the following.

11:00 – 11:05	Group Ice-Breaker The Big Door
11:05 – 11:10	Introductions
11:10 – 11:20	Consent Form
11:20 – 11:35	Ground Rules, Boundaries & Expectations
11:35 – 11:55	Participants Questionnaire
11:55 – 12:00	Break
12:00 – 12:25	Getting to Know You

What music do you listen to? Name a favourite tune? What is your favourite colour and why? What are the positives about being Guyanese? Find something in your environment that describes you and bring it to the group.

12:25 – 12:45	MAZlzone and Stories
12:45 – 13:00	Reflection

SESSION 2

Missing opening apostrophe to know you' activities for half an hour. The focused discussion will then be on concepts of resilience.

Preparation

- *Hand out notebooks*
- *Set up flipchart*
- *Plain sheets for toolbox (cut out pieces)*
- *Paint, coloured pencils, paper, etc. for stories*

11:00 – 11:05	Group Ice-Breaker Jump In, Jump Out
11:05 – 11:30	Pre-Assessment Questionnaire
11:30 – 11:45	Review of the Previous Day Introducing the Toolbox
11:45 – 12:00	Gratitude Exercise
12:00 – 12:30	Questions

- Concepts & understanding of resilience.
- Recall a pleasant experience and share these experiences with each other.
- Resilience is a common word and many of us use this word. What do you think resilience/bouncing back from life's hardships means?
- Give an example of someone whom you know has bounced back and moved on in life.
- What qualities do you think the individual showed?
- Homework: what would a Guyanese community that has faced challenges and hardships look like to you?
- Spend some time thinking of this overnight and come prepared to share your thoughts in the next session.

12:30 – 12:50	Creating Stories
12:50 – 13:00	Reflection

SESSION 3

Introduce various forms of resilience from societal/ community/family/individual perspectives. Ensure group members speak in the third person. Give home work by asking the individual to bring back examples from society and community on how it promotes resilience.

11:00 – 11:15	Gratitude Exercise
11:15 – 11:30	Group Reflections

Participants will be divided into 4 groups of 3.

On flip chart paper, take a few moments to draw, write or otherwise represent your thoughts and feelings about your experiences in the group so far:

• One thing I've learnt about myself is

.....

.....

• One thing I've learnt about others in my group is

.....

.....

• A word would I use to describe how these group sessions have made me feel is

.....

.....

• The strengths/positive qualities have I noticed in myself and others in the group are

.....

.....

11:30 – 11:45	Feedback from each group
11:45 – 12:20	Questions for Participants

Yesterday's homework

- Share with the group: what might a community that faces hardships look like?
- If you were asked to describe Guyana to a stranger, what words would you use?
- How do you think Guyana copes with hardships as a country?
- Do you think it is a society that cares for its people?
- If so what makes it one? List some of the characteristics
- What can you tell us about community resilience?
- How do people in your community bounce back when bad things happen to them?
- How does it face its hardships?
- Can you give some examples of how being united can benefit families?

12:20 – 12:50

Reflection through Creativity

Breathing exercise: Haaa! (3-5 mins)

Divide participants into groups based on their preference:

- Those who prefer to talk:
 - Those who'd like to play with technology:
 - Those who'd like to do some art (Drawing/painting/craft):
- Group leader appointed by participants

Each group will then be invited to choose one of 2 topics to explore in their group:

1. Freedom
2. Family

12:50 – 12:55

Homework

Focus on providing examples of your own individual and family resilience. Focus on examples that show strengths.

Think of a bad situation that has happened to you and tell us:

- How have you bounced back from bad things happening to you?
- As a group, how has your family dealt with bad things happening in the past?

You can draw pictures or write a poem/short story to share with others in the group.

SESSION 4

Introduce family resilience, which can be a sensitive topic for some groups.

11:00 – 11:15	Appreciation circle
11:15 – 11:45	Reflections - Session 3 Homework

What were some of the examples of your own or your family's resilience you remembered?

Share with the group what you came up with:

- How did you bounce back after something terrible happened to you?
- How did your family bounce back after hardship?

11:45 – 12:20	Questions for Participants
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1. What does being healthy mean to you and your family?
2. What do you think of when you hear the words "mental health"?
3. What do you think a person means when they say, "you are coping with a situation"?
4. How do you respond when faced with difficult situations? What sorts of things do you do?
5. What role does religion/church play in your lives?
6. How much control do you feel you have over your life?

Homework

You can continue exploring these questions as homework. You may choose to write your responses as a story/poem, do a drawing, create a video or take pictures. Remember to focus on positive examples.

12:20 – 12:55

Creative Reflections

Participants return to their groups based on their preference:

- Those who prefer to talk:
- Those who'd like to play with technology:
- Those who'd like to do some art (Drawing/painting/craft): Group leader appointed by participants

They will be invited to continue to work on the stories they started creating. This time, they will start to prepare their stories for sharing with an audience: they may choose to write a poem/short story, continue talking, do a narration, draw pictures, create a video, etc.

12:55 – 13:00

Closing

SESSION 5

Facilitators will request examples of stories from the participants' homework to show how individuals coped when faced with adversity.

11:00 - 11:15

Ice-Breaker: Similarity Circle

Step forward if:

1. You like black cake
2. You like it when people give you money
3. You wish you were at home in bed right now
4. You like a good party
5. You like to dance
6. You've ever had your heart broken
7. Something bad has ever happened to you
8. You sometimes wish you could do it all over again
9. You've cried about something that made you sad in the last 10 days
10. You're glad you decided to come to these sessions

Feedback:

1. What did you notice in this exercise?
2. Did anything surprise you about anyone; if so, what?
3. Did you change your thoughts about anything or anyone based on what you observed?

11:10 - 11:30

Group Reflection

In your groups share:

- Something I learnt
- Something I'd like to learn more about
- Something I already knew that was discussed well

11:30 - 12:00

Question Prompts

- Describe a time when something didn't work out as well as you'd hoped.
- What did you do?
- What did you learn from it?

- What lifestyle changes have you had to make when faced with hardships?
- What would you say has been your biggest failure? How did you deal with it?

Homework review

- Did anyone think of any stories they'd like to share around mental health, coping, religion, control over your life?

Homework for today

- What are the different ways you have coped in when faced with challenges?

12:00 - 13:00

Creative Reflections

Opportunity for participants to continue working on their stories/creations.

SESSION 6

11:00 – 11:15	Quack-sidio-say - Fun activity for Guyanese audience
11:10 – 11:55	Participants

1. Would you say resilience is important? Why or why not?
2. What conclusions have we arrived at so far regarding resilience (bouncing back) in our own lives?
3. What conclusions have we made about resilience in the wider Guyanese population?
4. How might Guyana benefit if more people focused on becoming more resilient?

Theme for strengths

5. What ideas have you observed repeating since we started the sessions? Are there any particular words, phrases or strengths you hear coming up a lot? These are called themes.

11:55 – 12:30	Group Work
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In your groups, think about this (20 mins):

- If you were to create a model or a plan for how to strengthen your ability to bounce back, what would your plan look like?

A plan may include a list of steps, shapes, words or even pictures you'd like to use to remind you of your goals.

Feedback (15 mins)

12:30 – 12:35	Homework
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Take away the themes you've highlighted today and use poems, pictures, drawings to bring them alive.

12:35 – 13:00

Creative Reflections

Opportunity for participants to continue working on their stories/creations.

SESSION 7

11:00 – 11:15	Team-building exercise: Newspaper Tower - The task is simple to build the tallest freestanding structure that can support the weight of the egg at its tallest point for a specified time. The team works together to complete the task.
11:15 – 11:30	Share Your Plans

Participants invited to share their resilience plans with the group.

11:30 – 12:00	Review of Emergent Themes
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1. Which theme/s stood out to you and why?
2. What ideas would you add to the list if you could?
3. What ideas would you take away from the list?

Creating a Resource

1. Reflect on the fact that these ideas came from you. How do you feel?
2. What do you wish the people reading what you've come up with knew about you?
3. If you had to create a book of some kind, to help people become more resilient, what would you want it to say? What sections/headings would you add? What sorts of things would you want the resource packet to contain?

Homework

Participants may think further about this resource.

12:00 – 13:00	Creative Reflections
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Participants will be invited to spend the remaining hour creating/working on their stories.

SESSION 8

There is a need to encourage flexibility to enable the participants to develop themselves and the resources in this session and two subsequent ones.

11:00 – 11:15	Group Activity – the Egg
11:15 – 11:45	Review What can we learn about resilience from this egg exercise?

Invite participants to share their homework with the group.

- What resources have you created?
- Why is it important for us to have resilience resources:
 - For ourselves
 - For our children
- How do you plan to develop these further?

11:45 – 13:00	Creative Expressions
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Invite participants to continue working on their stories, preparing them for sharing with others.

SESSION 9

The participants are encouraged to further develop their resources. This development will be led by the participants as it could be done in a variety of ways but the aim is to facilitate the promotion of emotional literacy among the participants. The facilitators will be encouraging problem solving skills, improved communication including assertiveness, taking control of their lives, being optimistic and learning from past experiences.

11:00 – 11:15	The Egg
11:15 – 11:45	Participants

1. What challenges do you think will arise in your life in the coming days?
2. How do you plan to deal with them?
3. How might you apply some of the resilience resources you've created when faced with challenges?
4. What would you call the collection of all of these resources you've created?

Homework

What symbol would you use to encourage yourself to stay strong in difficult times?
What are some positive things you can say to yourself to encourage yourself to keep moving forward?

11:45 – 13:00	Creativity
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Participants invited to continue creating resources.

SESSION 10

Facilitators encourage more development of the participants' resources including how attending these sessions have created change for them.

The developed resources will be loaded by the facilitators onto the MAZlzone, a small computer not connected to the internet. These resources will be anonymised so that they can be shared with others in the refuge.

The participants spent the day developing resources and discussion on how they intended to bring about changes in their lives.

The format of the session was similar to session 9 except that the focus was on future plans.

Questions for a Reflective Diary



How to write reflectively based on Borton's⁷ (1970) reflective framework.

What (Description)

Identify an event and write a descriptive account about:

- What happened?
- Who was involved?

So what? (Interpretation)

Spend some time to reflect on what is happening in the event.

- Consider what is the most important aspect of the event
- Were there any misunderstandings?
- If so clarify these and explain
- How is this event similar to or different from others you have experienced?

What's next

Conclude what you have learned from the event and how you can apply it to future situations.

- Identify what you have learned
- Suggest how your learning can be applied in the future



7. Borton, T. (1970) Reach, Touch and Teach. Hutchinson, London.



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