



Session overview

This session is beginning the process of building a connection between the young person and practitioner to support their recovery. This will be the opportunity to discuss expectations and give clarity on what is to come.

Information for practitioner

If appropriate you **must** tell the young person that you have not seen any images of them and never will. This is vital as it will be an overpowering and distracting thought from the young person.

It is also essential that this session is done together, both practitioner and young person giving and sharing examples and thoughts to aid the development of connection and trust.

Resources needed

- Big paper and pens

Session

Check in with the young person as to how they are feeling since everyone came together in a meeting to talk about what would be happening. Are there any thoughts or feelings that you may need to reflect on and address before you begin this session?

Inform the young person what we are going to do in this session, sharing the overview.



Introduce yourself & why you are there

Not your job description but done in a simple way that puts the young person at ease. Practitioner to explain that they have not seen any images, and won't, and that there is no expectation to talk about what has happened as the sessions will focus on recovery and moving forward.

It is possible that the young person may want to talk about what has happened, so don't shut them down and do allow them to get anything off their chest. In this case, offer reflective listening without judgment and reassure them that your work together will help them to recover from their experiences.



Confidentiality and recording

These sessions offer a safe space for a young person on their recovery journey so it is imperative that there is clarity around how we record what happens and what we share with others.

It is important to remind the young person of the boundaries we work to around confidentiality; when we have to share information for safeguarding reasons and the information that may be recorded. Practitioner to be mindful of using the terms confidentiality and safeguarding, ensuring that the young person has an understanding of what the terms mean. Examples of situations when we need to break confidentiality should be given to enhance understanding because a young person's perception of what constitutes risk may not be the same as ours.

Recording of information should be accurate, clear and relevant and reflecting on these three areas as we record can be helpful.

If information is being shared it needs to be relevant, adequate, accurate, concise, timely, secure and recorded.

As a practitioner when you record information the young person should be fully informed, and if not a safeguarding concern they should give consent for any information to be shared.



Expectations

Discussion on expectations for young person and practitioner. This is to include, but is not an exhaustive list: meeting on an agreed regular basis, no other practitioner is to cover a session, both young person and practitioner to actively participate, to be open to and respectful of each other's thoughts and opinions, to be clear on time keeping and where sessions take place, no expectation to share anything that the young person doesn't want to share, after the foundation sessions, future sessions

can be selected together, reiterating this is not about blaming them for anything that happened.



Lived experience letter

Discuss how it felt for the young person to receive a letter from someone with lived experience. It is important to note that the experience in the letter may not mirror exactly the young person's own experience and their feelings around what happened. Rather, it is an opportunity to reflect that their experience isn't unique, they are not alone and that there is a path to recovery.



Using the big
paper and pens

Activity

Communication using technology

Using the paper and pens, both young person and practitioner write or draw the ways in which they communicate using technology. This will include specific apps, emails, webcam, emojis, banking/shops, work meetings on Zoom/Teams, memes etc making sure you have a broad range of examples.

Reflection from this activity is that there are many ways to communicate, and that technology is a huge part of all our lives.

Questions to ask – in any order – for both practitioner and young person to talk about their own experiences.

- **What do we like/dislike about some of the ways we communicate?**
- **Do we communicate with some people differently?**
- **Does it make communicating better or easier?**
- **Have we faced any problems with any of these ways of communicating?**

Discussion to be expanded to consider what happened, how it felt and whether it changed the use of that medium. For example, a meme sent as a joke but not being funny.

- **What do we do when we aren't sure about something, or when we don't feel comfortable?**
- **Do we talk about how we use technology, like we might about school or a hobby? If so, who to?**
- **Is it difficult to talk to someone if we experience something we aren't sure about or feel uncomfortable with?**

Discussion may include sharing our worries about technology and the response that may receive, it being taken away from us, not being understood, being judged, feeling like we did something wrong etc.

- **Who might we feel ok to talk to?**

Young person may only identify friends, practitioner to encourage the opportunity to identify trusted adults.



Reflection on this session

The main purpose of this activity was to get to know each other and build rapport and a sense of open communication.



Closing activity

Fears and hopes

Start with fears so that worries are validated first before we move onto their hopes as this will allow a focus on a positive end to the session.

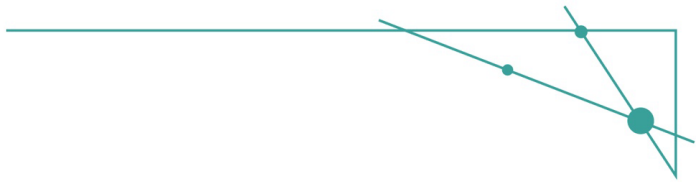
- Can you share with me 2 or 3 worries or fears you may have about what we are going to do together?
- Can you share with me 2 or 3 hopes you might have about our time together?



Reflect and address each hope and fear, being honest and reassuring.



The fears and hopes activity can be reviewed in future sessions to see how things change.



You are not alone.

I am writing this letter to you because I am a survivor of abuse, I have been where you are, and this is what I would like you to know.

You are believed and it wasn't your fault. You didn't deserve what was done to you. Abuse thrives in silence and often leads to feelings of blame and shame. But you don't need to feel ashamed or guilty. No matter what happened, the only person to blame is the person who did this to you.

You might not have reacted in the way that you thought you would. This might feel complicated and confusing, and these feelings can sometimes silence us as victims and survivors. But you don't have to justify how you feel. Your feelings are valid, whatever they may be, and they don't make you any less deserving of help and support.

It might feel like everything in your life has changed and those close to you may be hurting too. But it's important you know you did not cause this pain.

Other people may find it difficult to talk to you about what has happened in case they upset you or because it can be hard to find the right words. But I want you to know that there are people who will listen to you and who want to support you.

It's not always easy. It can feel overwhelming now, but it won't always be this way. There will be good and bad days throughout your recovery journey. Even though you might have a wobble every now and then, it doesn't mean you are going backwards, it's all part of the journey.

You're still whole as a person. You didn't deserve this, but you do deserve to live a life full of enjoyment and happiness, where you feel safe, supported and in control.

You can get through this.
-From Charlie

