



# MIND-LIFE REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

UPHOLDING THE MIND-LIFE  
MINDSETS IN OUR SUPPORT  
EFFORTS

A FACILITATOR'S  
GUIDE

mind-life<sup>™</sup>  
LIVE DIFFERENT, THINK DIFFERENT, BE DIFFERENT

Test and try version 2 July 2021

# What is Mind-Life Reflective Practice?

Mind-Life reflective practice is a process for people in a supporting role, to help them to pause and think about their support efforts and how well they are upholding the Mind-life mindsets.

When we engage in Mind-Life reflective practice we recognise that there are a number of pitfalls in supporting people. These pitfalls can entrap and further entrench a person in their experience of being "othered" or different.

In order to help us recognise and avoid these pitfalls in our support efforts, we need to pause and think in a deliberate way. If we want to offer something different, we need to think different and we can only do this by regularly pausing, and reflecting on some of the things we have always taken for granted.

This is where a Mind-Life reflective practice group can help!

When you regularly meet with a small group of like-minded people and review your support efforts against the mind-life mind sets, you will help to keep each other on track. These groups can also become a welcome support network for you as a supporter, reducing burnout, stress and worry.

Mind-Life Reflective Practice is about the support and supporter NOT the person being supported. So when you share a story in a reflective practice session, the focus is on the support you provided and how well it upholds the Mind-Life mindsets

The stories of support that you reflect upon can be your own, mash-ups of a number of stories or other people's stories (like the Mind-Life stories). The story its self is only the inspiration. The real magic is in the process of questioning, re-framing and deliberately trying out different perspectives. The example questions in this guide will help you get started.

# What makes a good reflective practice Group?

When you join or create a Mind-Life reflective practice group, you will need to ask yourself a few questions:

- Do my colleagues also believe in the Mind-Life mindsets and have a genuine desire to uphold them (even if they sometimes fail)?
- Can I share my stories of how I am supporting people without fear of judgement?
- Do I feel confident enough to question, challenge or disagree with my colleagues in a respectful way?

If you can all answer YES to those three questions then you probably have the basis for a great Reflective Practice group!

**A mind-life  
reflective practice  
group can be  
people at your  
workplace or  
another group of  
likeminded people.**

**mind-life**<sup>TM</sup>  
LIVE DIFFERENT. THINK DIFFERENT. BE DIFFERENT

Test and try version 2 July 2021

# How do I share my story of support in a Mind-Life way?

When you use a real story during a reflective practice session its very important to remember that the focus is on the **support efforts**, not the person being supported. You may share some details about the person in order to give context, but it's very important that you are not trying to fix or change the person.

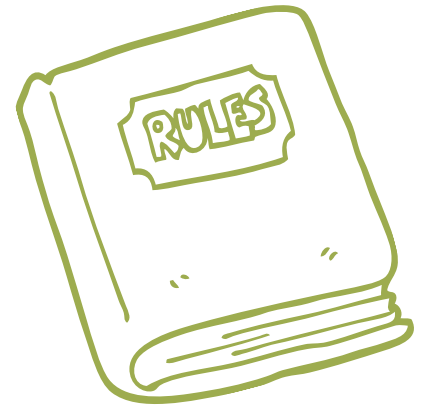
The focus needs to always be "how could I improve my support so that the person can exercise their natural ability to thrive?"

It is also important that the group doesn't get sucked into making plans or setting goals for the person. Of course, that conversation must be with the person.

The facilitator needs to keep this integrity during sessions and ensure the focus remains on the support

**mind-life**<sup>™</sup>  
LIVE DIFFERENT. THINK DIFFERENT. BE DIFFERENT

# What are the rules?



Each group will need to establish a set of rules. Some of those rules will be specific to your group, but some Mind-life specific rules are:

- ✓ Courage and humility are valued here. Those who share vulnerable stories will be supported not judged.
- ✓ We may not always agree. The value is in the act of pausing, suspending our judgement and stretching our thinking
- ✓ All discussions will remain focussed on how the supporter can better uphold the Mind-Life mindsets and identifying and avoiding the pitfalls of support.
- ✓ This group cannot decide what is best for a person. We can only stretch a supporters thinking about their support efforts.
- ✓ Any suggestions or ideas that come from these discussions are only ideas- they need to be checked with the person before being enacted.

**mind-life**<sup>TM</sup>  
LIVE DIFFERENT. THINK DIFFERENT. BE DIFFERENT

# Step by step guide to a Reflective Practice Session



You can run your group's session however works for you. However here is a suggestion of how to run a session

## PLAN

**Step1.** As the facilitator, decide if the session is going to be focussed on one shared story or if everyone can bring their own example or problem to the session for reflection

**Step 2:** Welcome the group and acknowledge the traditional owners of the land. Also acknowledge the people who we are trying to support and their wisdom and ownership of their life and story.

TIP! In the first few sessions it might be easier to use existing stories as people will feel less vulnerable

**Step 3:** Remind the group of the rules. In the first few sessions you may want to open up a discussion about this to ensure thorough understanding

**Step 4:** Either read the shared story or ask everyone to think about their own example that they would like to reflect upon.

Invite the group to discuss and ask questions for clarity.

**mind-life**  
LIVE DIFFERENT. THINK DIFFERENT. BE DIFFERENT

Test and try version 2 July 2021



For individual reflections you could break into pairs to discuss or reflect personally and just discuss a few in the group.

**Step 5:** Identify the pitfalls that are relevant. What is the problem or what is at risk here? Is it the supporter, the person accessing support or both who are experiencing a pitfall? If it's a good news story, what pitfalls did you avoid and how?

**Step 6:** Review the mindsets and think about how they might be relevant to the story and the pitfalls. Is there a mindset that really sits comfortably in this story or one that is difficult to uphold? Why is that? Either discuss as a group or in pairs.

**Step 7:** Using the Mindset Questions in this guide, invite the group to pose questions to each other that will help them pause, reflect or stretch their thinking

**Step 8:** Commitments- Give everyone some time to reflect on their learnings for today. For larger groups you might break into pairs. Then share one commitment from each person. How are you going to stretch or improve your support efforts between now and next session



# Mind-Life mind sets and reflective practice questions

On the following pages are the Mind-Life mindsets and some reflective practice questions relating to them.

Group members can choose from these questions during their reflections and discussions as a great way to get started.

Of course, you can use your own questions too. However the questions on the following pages will ensure that the discussion stays focussed on a mind-Life way. This could be especially useful for a group that is new to Mind-Life.

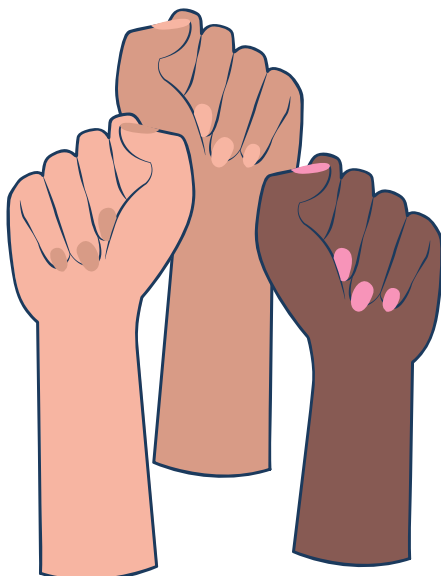
# Mindsets on Human Rights

People's right to self-determination should never be removed or denied.

For people who experience mental distress this right must be intentionally protected

Maintaining our 'Personal Sovereignty' is a basic human right. Psychosocial disability is primarily caused by loss of "Personal Sovereignty".

Being able to live, work, love and play in our own community, not within services, is a basic human right.



**mind-life**<sup>TM</sup>  
LIVE DIFFERENT, THINK DIFFERENT, BE DIFFERENT

Test and try version 2 July 2021

# Human Rights Questions

Is this support type likely to increase the person's sense of citizenship or is it simply community participation or service oriented support?

How has this person's sense of personal sovereignty been invaded?

Do they have full authorship of their story?

Do they make all the decisions in their life?

Are they asked permission before someone does something to them or "treats" them in anyway? Do they have the right to refuse?

If not, how could your support help them to reclaim their personal sovereignty

As a supporter, how can you uphold this person's right to self determination, even when they are struggling or unwell?

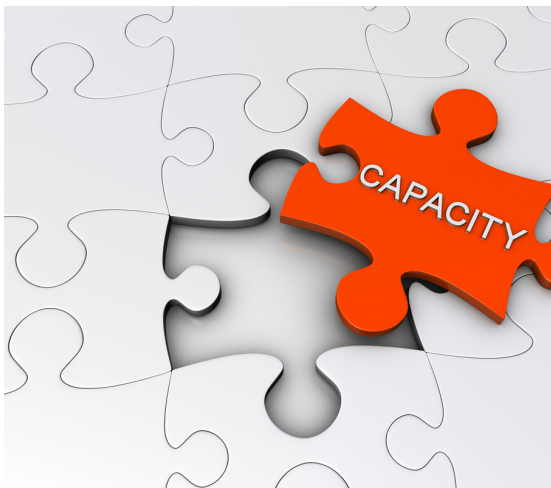
# Mindsets on Personal Capacity

People know what's best for them and are the only ones that can truly determine this.

All people are initiating beings. Every action is an attempt to meet a need.

People have an innate ability to overcome adversity

People are creative and resourceful problem solvers; this ability can become atrophied when too many or inappropriate supports get in the way.



**mind-life**<sup>TM</sup>  
LIVE DIFFERENT, THINK DIFFERENT, BE DIFFERENT

Test and try version 2 July 2021

# Capacity questions

What need is this person trying to meet? What strategy are they using?

How could you/we as supporters acknowledge the person's efforts to meet their needs (even if their strategies are flawed)

If we accept that all people have an innate ability and desire to overcome, What is getting in this person's way?

Has this person's natural problem solving muscle become atrophied in this situation? If so, how could you as a supporter help them to get strong around that again?

How did this support type come about? Is this the kind of support that the person chose? Is it time to review?

# Mindsets on the construction of Psychosocial Disability

Psychosocial disability is one construction of human distress, not necessarily permanent nor a truth

Psychosocial disability is not a symptom of mental illness, it is a negative side effect of lost opportunities

Psychosocial disability is not a symptom of mental illness but a symptom of unmet need



**mind-life**<sup>TM</sup>  
LIVE DIFFERENT, THINK DIFFERENT, BE DIFFERENT

Test and try version 2 July 2021

# Psychosocial Disability

## Questions

What natural, community opportunities are missing from this person's life? How could your support create bridges to those natural opportunities rather than more services?

How is this person's current support system missing opportunities to help them meet their needs? What needs to change within that support system to make that more possible?

What opportunities has this person missed out on or lost as a result of their illness, treatment or support systems? How could your support help them to reclaim these

What is the barrier to this person meeting their need naturally in their community? How can your support help the person to overcome this barrier rather than trying to meet the need for them?



# Mindsets on the role of others

We cannot empower or motivate others, but we  
can easily disempower or demotivate others in  
the way we offer help

Helpers can help. And helpers can harm or get  
in the way. We all have to be ever mindful  
about this

People add value based on their actions not  
their role or title



**mind-life**<sup>TM</sup>  
LIVE DIFFERENT, THINK DIFFERENT, BE DIFFERENT

Test and try version 2 July 2021

# Role of others Questions

Who would the person name as the biggest cheerleader in their life? What is it about that person that is so helpful and supportive?

All types of support bring a certain level of risk to the person. How do you understand the risk that you pose as a supporter and how are you mitigating that risk in the way that you offer support?

When looking to add a new support or service, how does the new service potentially risk the person and have you discussed this openly with them?

What could be demotivating or disempowering about the support you or someone else is offering this person?

What deeds, actions or behaviours would this person name as most helpful. Are they the same ones you value?

# Mindsets on community

People thrive when they can realise their full citizenship within their natural community

Psychosocial disability is not something that will be resolved with a medical response therefore we believe that it is not the person that needs to change but our whole community and access to the opportunities it provides



**mind-life**<sup>TM</sup>  
LIVE DIFFERENT, THINK DIFFERENT, BE DIFFERENT

Test and try version 2 July 2021

# Community Questions

What would it take for this person to remain in the driver's seat of their life even throughout this crisis or difficulty?

How could your support encourage this person to take more of the driving role in their life if they have been out of that role for a long time?

What is the barrier to this person feeling valued, accepted and belonging to their natural community?  
What is the barrier for the community? Are they the same?

What would it take for this person to be included in their natural community, just as they are now? Who or what could be the bridge to the natural community here?