CBT Storytelling Activity

Learning objectives

- Raise awareness about mental health.
- Encouragement and development of reflective practices.
- Identifying negative thought patterns.
- Promoting resilience and adaptability (boosting confidence).
- Fostering reflection and insights.
- Developing coping skills.

Participants

The activity is suitable for **participants from 12+**. The number of participants can vary based on factors such as the size of the group, the space available, and the facilitator's ability to manage and engage participants. However, generally, the game can be tailored to accommodate various group sizes, ranging from **small groups of 4-6 participants to larger groups of 20 or more**.

Needed tools and resources

- Use coping skill cards / scenario cards.
- Timer (optional).

Duration of the workshop

The duration of the CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) storytelling activity can vary depending on factors such as the number of participants, the depth of discussion during debriefing, and any additional modifications or variations made to the game. However, typically, the game itself can last anywhere **from 30 minutes to an hour**.

Co-funded by the European Union

Description of the workshop

1 Energiser (up to 5 min): Kick off the session with an energising and engaging game before diving into the game.

Example:

Move and shake: participants are in circle, then the facilitator explains that upbeat music will be played, and when it starts, participants should move around the circle in any way they like, such as dancing, skipping, or jogging in place. They are encouraged to have fun and express themselves through movement. After a minute or two, the facilitator pauses the music suddenly, prompting participants to freeze in whatever position they are in. The frozen moment is held for a few seconds before the music is restarted, and participants resume moving. This process is repeated several times, varying the duration of movement and freezing periods to keep participants engaged. After a few rounds, everyone is gathered back into the circle to catch their breath.

2 Warm-up activity (up to 10 min)

Example:

Mindful breathing exercise: start by inviting participants to find a comfortable seated position in their chairs. Encourage them to sit up straight with their feet flat on the floor and their hands resting gently on their laps. Explain that you will be leading them through a brief mindful breathing exercise to help them centre their attention and calm their minds. Guide participants to take a few deep breaths, inhaling through their nose and exhaling through their mouth. Encourage them to notice the sensation of the breath as it enters and leaves their body.

Next, invite participants to bring their attention to the physical sensations in their body, spotting the tensions. Continue the mindful breathing exercise for about 3-5 minutes, allowing participants to deepen their relaxation and focus. After the exercise, invite participants to slowly open their eyes and return their awareness to the present moment. Encourage them to take a moment to notice how they feel after the practice.

3 CBT Storytelling activity

Activity: Introduce the activity

CBT storytelling activity is a therapeutic discussion game that uses provided prompts. Each player selects a coping skill card or scenario card and completes the brief activity described on the card until everyone has finished. Additionally, blank cards are included for players to express themselves on various topics and activities.

The game includes:

- Coping Skill Cards
- Scenario Cards
- Blank cards to add your own prompts

4 Debriefing (up to 15 min)

Reflection: begin by inviting participants to reflect on their experience during the CBT storytelling activity. Encourage them to share their thoughts, feelings, and observations about the game.

Co-funded by the European Union

Facilitate a discussion about the challenges participants encountered during the activity. Ask them to identify specific obstacles they faced and how they approached overcoming them. Encourage them to share examples of using techniques such as cognitive restructuring, emotion regulation, and behaviour modification. Guide participants in identifying key learning points from the activity.

Important: encourage them to continue practising and using these coping skills in their daily lives to manage stress and improve their overall well-being.

Advise: provide participants with additional resources or support options for further learning about coping skills and mental health. This could include recommending books, websites, or local support services.

Challenging Negative Thoughts

Identify a recent negative thought you had about yourself.
Write it down and then challenge its accuracy. Ask yourself:
'Is this thought always true?'
and 'Is there another way to look at this situation?'

Short Activity: Replace the negative thought with a more positive or realistic one.

Mindfulness for Anxiety

Practice the 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique: Name 5 things you see, 4 things you can touch,
3 things you hear, 2 things you smell, and 1 thing you taste.

Short Activity: Close your eyes and focus on your senses, naming things in your environment. This helps bring your focus back to the present moment and calm your anxious mind.

Mood Tracking for Bipolar Disorder

Track your mood swings and identify potential triggers.
This can help you manage your symptoms more effectively.

Short Activity: Use a mood tracking app or journal to record your mood fluctuations and any associated events.

Reality Testing for Schizophrenia

Challenge any hallucinations or delusions by grounding yourself in reality. Talk to a trusted friend or family member about your experiences.

Short Activity: Engage in activities that stimulate your senses and connect you to the present moment, like listening to familiar music or taking a walk in nature.

Healthy Eating for Depression

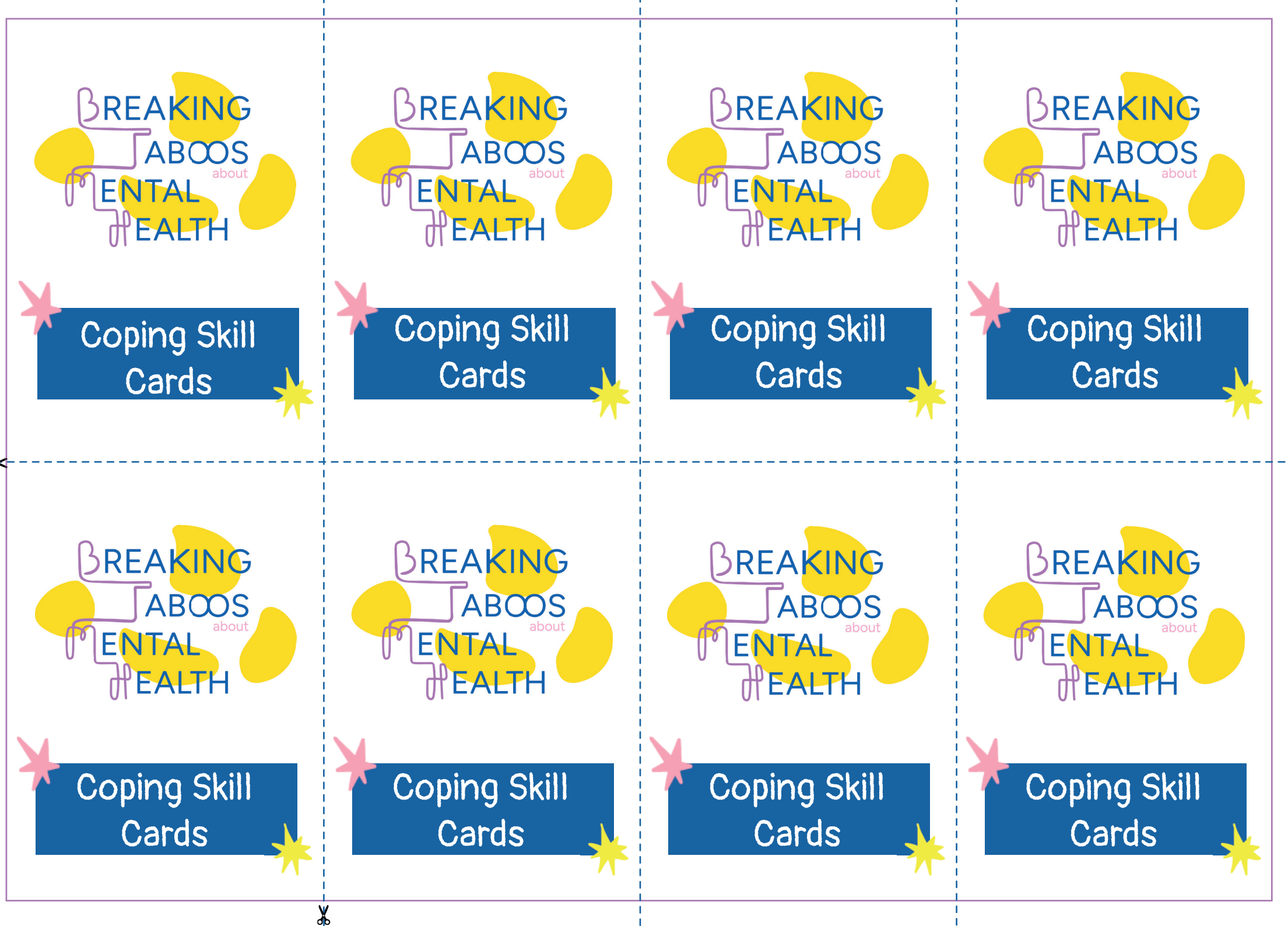
Plan and prepare a balanced and nutritious meal.
Focus on incorporating fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

Short Activity: Research healthy recipes and create a meal plan for the week. This can help improve mood and energy levels.

Self-Care for Trauma

Engage in a relaxing activity you enjoy, such as reading, listening to music, or spending time in nature

Short Activity: Set aside dedicated time for self-care activities that promote relaxation and well-being.


BREAKING
ABOOS
about
MENTAL
HEALTH
Coping Skill
Cards

Eating Disorder Stereotype

You overhear someone making a comment about someone else being "bulimic" just because they are eating a salad.

Short Activity: Discuss the harmful nature of perpetuating stereotypes about eating disorders. Explain that these conditions are serious mental illnesses and not simply a matter of choice.

Depression and Social Withdrawal

You feel overwhelmed by social gatherings and prefer to isolate yourself.

Short Activity: Challenge the urge to isolate. Make plans with a close friend or join a support group to connect with others who understand.

Healthy Coping Mechanisms

You are feeling stressed and reach for unhealthy coping mechanisms like substance abuse or self-harm.

Short Activity: Identify healthier coping mechanisms such as exercise, journaling, or creative expression. Practice these alternative strategies when faced with stress.

Schizophrenia and Social Stigma

You experience social stigma and discrimination due to your diagnosis of schizophrenia.

Short Activity: Connect with support groups or online communities to find understanding and belonging among others with similar experiences.

Depression and Sleep Hygiene

You struggle with insomnia due to depression, leading to increased fatigue and low mood.

Short Activity: Establish a consistent sleep schedule, create a relaxing bedtime routine, and avoid stimulating activities before bed.

Body Positivity for Eating Disorders

You find yourself constantly criticizing your appearance and comparing yourself to unrealistic beauty standards.

Short Activity: Practice body positivity affirmations.
Focus on appreciating your body for its functions and strengths rather than solely its appearance.

Bipolar Disorder and Mania

You experience a manic episode with increased energy, racing thoughts, and impulsive behavior.

Short Activity: Implement strategies established in your crisis plan, such as contacting a mental health professional or reaching out to a support person.

Trauma and Triggers

You encounter a situation that triggers memories of a traumatic experience.

Short Activity: Utilise grounding techniques or seek support from a trusted individual to manage the emotional response.

BREAKING ABOOS about MENTAL HEALTH

Scenario Card

BREAKING ABOOS about MENTAL HEALTH

Scenario Card

BREAKING ABOOS about MENTAL HEALTH

Scenario Card

BREAKING ABOOS about MENTAL HEALTH

Scenario Card

BREAKING ABOOS about MENTAL HEALTH

Scenario Card

BREAKING ABOOS about MENTAL HEALTH

Scenario Card

BREAKING ABOOS about MENTAL HEALTH

Scenario Card

BREAKING ABOOS about MENTAL HEALTH

Scenario Card

Anxiety and Public Speaking

You have a presentation coming up and experience intense anxiety about speaking in front of people.

Short Activity: Practice relaxation techniques like deep breathing exercises and positive affirmations. Visualize yourself delivering a successful presentation.

Stress Management for Everyday Life

You are constantly feeling overwhelmed by daily tasks and responsibilities.

Short Activity: Practice stress management techniques like mindfulness exercises, time management strategies, and delegating tasks when possible.

Anxiety and Social Media

You find yourself constantly comparing your life to the seemingly perfect portrayals on social media, leading to feelings of inadequacy and anxiety.

Short Activity: Take a break from social media or set time limits for usage. Focus on activities that bring you genuine joy and fulfilment. group to connect with others who understand.

Gratitude for Improved Well-being

You are feeling overwhelmed by negative thoughts and emotions.

Short Activity: Take a few minutes to reflect on things you are grateful for, big or small. Focusing on gratitude can shift your perspective and improve your mood.

Seeking Help for Mental Health

You are hesitant to seek professional help for your mental health concerns due to stigma or fear of judgment.

Short Activity: Educate yourself about the benefits of seeking professional support. Remember that mental health is just as important as physical health and deserves proper care.

Healthy Relationships and Mental Health

You find yourself in a toxic relationship that negatively impacts your mental well-being.

Short Activity: Identify unhealthy patterns in the relationship and consider seeking support from friends, family, or a therapist to prioritize your own mental health.

BREAKING ABOOS about MENTAL HEALTH

Scenario Card

BREAKING ABOOS about MENTAL HEALTH

Scenario Card

BREAKING ABOOS about MENTAL HEALTH

Scenario Card

BREAKING ABOOS about MENTAL HEALTH

Scenario Card

BREAKING ABOOS about MENTAL HEALTH

Scenario Card

BREAKING ABOOS about MENTAL HEALTH

Scenario Card

BREAKING ABOOS about MENTAL HEALTH

Scenario Card

BREAKING ABOOS about MENTAL HEALTH

Scenario Card