

# 1 Background Reading

## **Why Valuing Yourself?**

As healthcare professionals we tend to focus on what is best for the patient. By putting patients first and doing things for others, we often forget to care for ourselves. However much of a truism it may be, it is important to look after ourselves, not only because it will benefit our patients by setting a good example of 'self-care', but for our own sakes.

In addition, sick staff have implications at an organisational level. There are financial and efficiency implications. In the long term, it affects morale and staff retention. It also affects people's families and their work colleagues.

*'Physician heal thyself'* is a maxim that puts valuing the healthcare practitioner at the centre of healthcare. It is by nurturing ourselves that we heal ourselves, in order that we can effectively support the healing of others. This healing is more than keeping free from illness and promoting a healthy lifestyle. It is about developing self-confidence and self-respect, as well as learning through our experiences to find meaning for ourselves.

## **Purpose of the module**

Valuing yourself is a way of preventing burnout and its consequences. Any personal development plan is not just about educational development at work but about self-care and personal growth as individuals. We reflect not just on our work performance but where we fit as individuals in our world at home, work and life.

## **Introduction to the Valuing Yourself module**

This module helps us to explore our own self-care, but also our self-confidence and need for support, in order that we can introduce positive change and self-renewal in our lives, respect ourselves, and create opportunities for self-discovery.

In recognising our own worth, we are better able to acknowledge the intrinsic worth of others. This leads to mutual respect and harmony in all our relationships. We benefit, our colleagues benefit, patients benefit; our self-respect becomes an example to others, and in turn earns respect from others.

## Themes of Exercises

### **Caring for myself (6.1)**

Many healthcare practitioners rarely think of how they care for themselves and it can be difficult for them to address their own needs, as the view that ‘the patient comes first’ is firmly entrenched in the healthcare culture. Nevertheless, if we ourselves are not in good health at all levels, how can we truly be at our best for others?

#### *Physical*

We advise our patients to follow a balanced diet, take regular exercise, have adequate rest, restrict alcohol consumption, and refrain from smoking. Yet how many of us follow that advice for ourselves?

Keeping fit for our job by adopting a healthy lifestyle is basic common sense. There are some simple, practical ways in which we can look after ourselves on a physical level – making sure we take meal breaks, working reasonable hours – which ensure we get enough rest and exercise to maintain the energy we need to do our job well.

#### *Mental*

Mental well-being is part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and this requires addressing and managing the stress that is part of the type of work we do. We need to plan time off by taking regular holidays, free days within the week and breaks during the day. When we are not working we need to find space to relax and pursue other interests. We need to reflect on what causes us stress and make plans to change, and we need to learn to say ‘No’, to delegate and to have fun.

#### *Emotional*

In healthcare, we often find ourselves called on to deal with difficult emotional situations. To cope well, we need a good sense of self, the support of colleagues and sometimes we need to ask for professional help, such as counselling.

#### *Social*

Making time for family and friends is essential. This where we find our main support, can relax, have fun, and give and receive care and love. It is not something we should put off; it needs attention to grow and flourish, otherwise it will wither. We need to socialise out of work, be involved in the community, and pursue non-work interests, for example, by doing something creative, and developing sporting, cultural or intellectual activities.

***Environmental***

We tend to focus on providing the best environment and conditions for our patients, but it is also important to consider what working environment and conditions are good for us. This, in turn, will have a positive impact on those we are caring for.

***Spiritual***

We must learn to look after ourselves at a spiritual level and take care of our ‘inner self’ with the same kindness and gentleness we would wish for our patients. Finding times of silence helps us to reflect and connect with that much deeper self. This can be when we are walking in nature or simply sitting in a garden or park. It can happen when we relax in a bath or when we are absorbed in a task. It can be during exercise or when we practise meditation.

**A healing space (6.2)**

We all need a place where we feel safe and relaxed. We may already know of such a place in our own home or in nature. It needs to be a place where we can be ourselves, with all our special things around us. At the present time such a place may not be possible because of practical reasons, but if it was, what would it look like? What would it feel like? Although it will not necessarily make our minds calm, an outer space where we feel relaxed and secure will promote an inner peace.

**Being cared for (6.3)**

Healthcare practitioners are used to caring for others, but how often do we allow ourselves to be cared for? At work we are used to focusing our attention on patients so that all their needs are met when they are ill. We attend to them physically, mentally and spiritually. We are good at giving, but how good are we at receiving? How often do we allow people to do things for us, either on a physical level such as a massage, or on a mental-spiritual level when we unburden our troubles on others? How do we nurture ourselves and give ourselves treats or even just space to be alone?

We can create a healing and nurturing place or presence in our minds first – perhaps this is the first step to making it a reality.

**Self-confidence (6.4)**

Traditionally, healthcare professionals receive a great deal of respect from their patients. In part, this is based on a regard for their sense of duty when supporting the sick and less able. It also comes from recognition of their expert skills. And not least, healthcare professionals have long been regarded as trusted confidantes.

However, in recent years many healthcare professionals say their poor morale is due to a lack of respect. Many factors are cited for this change, including the social and cultural trend of materialism and the high expectations of patients.

Respect from others towards healthcare practitioners is something we have no control over, but we do have a say in the respect we pay ourselves and others. If we give ourselves this self-respect and treat others with respect it will encourage those around us to behave in the same way.

This respect for the 'self' involves recognition of our own values and worth. Self-respect is the experience of being at peace with ourselves, accepting ourselves at this deep level for who we are, and at the same time being open to changing our attitudes and habits.

It follows that self-confidence in our abilities as healthcare practitioners will grow as we develop our self-respect. When faced with difficult circumstances our main resource is recognition of our inner qualities. We can draw on this understanding and make decisions with a self-confidence that has humility at its core, rather than arrogance or power.

## Sources of support (6.5)

For healthcare practitioners, emotional trauma and witnessing the suffering of others can be emotionally draining and spiritually challenging. We can end up 'burnt out', exhausted and of little help to our patients.

An example of the need for support is that of John, who had been an ambulance worker for 15 years and who had an opportunity to share the reasons for his feelings of stress and exhaustion at a *Values in Healthcare* session:

*'Week after week, year after year, mangled and dead bodies. It has got to me at last. All the images of accidents I have attended and people who have died keep coming back to me.'*

John had never shared this with anyone before. He did not want to burden his wife, felt his friends would not really understand, and knew that his colleagues were under the same strain as he was. It was one of those unwritten rules that you did not talk about such matters in the ambulance service. Rushing from one emergency to another was all part of a day's work.

John's story illustrates a common dilemma – how do we unburden ourselves and where do we look for support, not only in our jobs but in our personal lives? We may have friends and family to turn to in a crisis, but how much do we share of the day-to-day trauma of our work, and with whom? It is something we need to personally examine by looking at mentoring and counselling, or considering formal systems of support at our workplace.

The pressures of work can be like a log-jam in a river – the water slowly builds up until there is a head of pressure that eventually breaks the dam. We need to develop our own coping strategy, develop our own ways of redirecting the flow of water, by considering to whom and to what we can turn when faced with emotional and spiritual crisis. We all need to ask ourselves, ‘Where do I find the support in my job? Who do I turn to when I am feeling the strain?’.

### **Cleansing colours (6.6)**

Stopping and having a break, even for a few minutes, is a useful way to escape from the stress of work and everyday living. It may be just sitting in a corner or getting outside for some fresh air. These breaks can be opportunistic when there is a lull at work, or may be pre-planned to happen several times a day. But what is important during these breaks is to avoid our thoughts continuing to race in our minds and to achieve a sense of calm. This can be done by breathing and thinking through a visualisation such as cleansing colours. This kind of exercise helps to restore calm and balance, and also promotes energy for the rest of the day.

### **Making changes (6.7)**

A major source of stress is change. Change itself is not necessarily stressful but *how* we perceive the change can be. When it is imposed by someone else, such as our bosses, managers or the government, we are left feeling powerless, since we have not been consulted or involved. Yet we do have control over many of the changes in our own life, and can introduce changes which improve our level of well-being.

Before making changes we have to decide what we want and make time to reflect on what is really important for us, asking ourselves questions like, ‘What would I really love to happen?’, ‘What is it that I have always wanted to do?’, ‘What qualities do I want to develop?’ or even, ‘In what way do I wish to serve the world?’ It is by writing it down and sharing some of our ideas that changes can begin to become real. We can then observe and begin to understand the underlying values of the things we wish to achieve and how it will feel once we have achieved them. Does it make us feel content, boost self-esteem, make us happy?

To make space for these new changes, we must let certain things go. This may provide a sense of relief as we do many things out of a sense of guilt or because we ‘ought’ to. Spending time reflecting on what we can give up, and considering the resources we will need to overcome obstacles, provides a way of making positive changes.

## Four seasons (6.8)

There is value in developing an attitude to change that is accepting, non-judgmental, and flexible. We can learn to take a detached view and see changes in our lives as challenges and opportunities that are part of the inevitable cycle of life. We can see a parallel in the natural changes of the seasons and how each living thing goes through birth, growth, maturation, decay and death. A visualisation gives us a chance to experience such natural changes and helps us develop a more accepting attitude so changes in our life will be less stressful.

## The roles we play (6.9)

At one level, we are used to answering questions about our identity every day – we give our name, our job title and description, and we may add interests, hobbies, what we like to do. But does that encapsulate everything about us?

When considering caring for the self, it is important to spend some time on exploring who the self is. ‘Who am I?’ ‘What are my values?’ ‘What do I hope to achieve?’ ‘What sense do I make of everything?’ – these are the eternal spiritual questions that we need to address if we hope to find happiness and fulfilment.

We can begin to address the question of ‘Who am I?’ by looking at the various roles we find ourselves in, and by considering what qualities we express in each of these.

One way to think about this is to look at the roles we play in the various activities and relationships we have, and ask ourselves some key questions:

- What am I like as a brother/sister, as a son/daughter, as a partner?
- Am I the same person at home and at work?
- What are the positive qualities and negative attributes I show in each of these roles?
- Do I behave differently with strangers and friends?
- When I reflect on all my roles, am ‘I’ the sum of them all? If you take away those roles, where is the ‘Me’ that remains?

If we take this a step further, we can delve deeper. We may ask:

- Which part of me is asking these questions?
- How does this ‘Me’ part relate to my inner world of senses, intuition and instinct?

## Who am I? (6.10)

When we are calm and peaceful, we can go deeper, explore beyond the roles we take on in life and search for that inner self. It is this searching, this journey, that begins to give insights into some of the spiritual questions we ask. We can begin to get a sense of who we truly are when we create a peaceful space within.

## Creating happiness (6.11)

The culture within healthcare itself is often competitive and critical, and this tends to eat away at self-esteem and lead to unhappiness. We need to tap into our inner values to prevent the erosion of self respect, reminding ourselves of our positive aspects, in order to create an inner happiness.

Many healthcare professionals say they are unhappy with their job. Pay and workload are often given as causes, along with the increasing expectations of patients and government. The job itself has become more stressful as it has become increasingly complex and emotionally demanding. In addition, doctors and other healthcare workers can be self-critical and have a poor record of support within their professions, with little training in the managerial skills and working in teams that their jobs now demand. Solutions can be found to some of these problems, but what can be done now to help us to find more happiness in our lives and work?

We all have an idea of what it is like to feel happy. Call it *Nirvana*, *Heaven* or *Utopia*, it is a place where we could experience complete peace, contentment, joy and freedom from all worries. This individual image of perfection is something that we can draw on and give us something to aim for.

Every day we all seek happiness, whether through our possessions, our relationships, satisfying our physical needs or trying to fulfil our ambitions of status and wealth. Yet such achievements leave us short of lasting happiness.

It is the turning inwards to seek the riches of our own spiritual values that results in true happiness. It gives us the confidence to live and act by being true to ourselves, regardless of what is happening around us. It is not an easy path to follow, as we are held back by our own attitudes and habits and are influenced by negative images and attitudes around us. By constantly reminding ourselves that we are peaceful beings who naturally wish to act with compassion, and that we have all the wisdom we need within, we can begin to feel a more real, and lasting sense of happiness.

## 2 The Facilitator's Guide to Module 6

### Session I: Self-care

#### Aims

- To identify ways of looking after one's self
- To create a healing space in which to relax and recharge
- To identify the attitudes, values and qualities of self-confidence
- To develop plans for improving self-confidence

#### Process

This session focuses on self-care and self-confidence. Participants begin by thinking about what they currently do to look after themselves, sharing their thoughts in pairs and in the group. This is followed by a playful, creative exercise in which participants create a healing space for themselves, and then represent this in a visual way using art and craft materials. A healing visualisation allows participants to develop this concept at a deeper level, adding in the idea of a nurturing presence which can support them. Following a break and short movement exercise, participants work individually and in small groups on an extended exercise which enables them to consider the attitudes, values and qualities involved in developing self-confidence. This leads into identifying ways of building their own self-confidence in their lives.

### Session II: Support at work

#### Aims

- To identify and develop personal and inner sources of support
- To develop a plan for positive change in self-care
- To experience change and self-renewal at a deep, personal level

#### Process

Participants begin this session by considering what sources of personal support they have available to them in particular situations, identifying gaps and planning to improve their support where needed. This is followed by a short, revitalising visualisation and breathing exercise, based on the experience of colours. Participants then move into a review of the session and action planning, during which they work



on identifying a change to improve their self-care, together with exploring resources and ways of overcoming obstacles which will help them to achieve their plans. They are then guided through a final, closing meditation which helps them to experience change and self-renewal at a deep level.

A follow-up session incorporates an enquiry with a partner around the theme of 'Who am I?', and their reflections are further developed through a meditation on the same theme. An optional exercise explores personal happiness.

## Programme/plan for Module 6 *Valuing Yourself*

|                          |                               |                        |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Introduction</i>      |                               | 30 minutes             |
| <b>SESSION I</b>         | <b><i>Self-care</i></b>       |                        |
| Exercise 6.1             | Caring for myself             | 30 minutes             |
| Exercise 6.2             | A healing space               | 40 minutes             |
| Exercise 6.3             | Being cared for               | 5 minutes              |
| <i>Break</i>             |                               | 20 minutes             |
| <i>Movement exercise</i> |                               | 5 minutes              |
| Exercise 6.4             | Self-confidence               | 60 minutes             |
| <i>Lunch break</i>       |                               |                        |
| <b>SESSION II</b>        | <b><i>Support at work</i></b> |                        |
| Exercise 6.5             | Sources of support            | 60 minutes             |
| Exercise 6.6             | Cleansing colours             | 10 minutes             |
| <i>Movement exercise</i> |                               | 5 minutes              |
| <i>Break</i>             |                               | 15 minutes             |
| <i>Session review</i>    |                               | 10 minutes             |
| <i>Action planning</i>   |                               |                        |
| Exercise 6.7             | Making changes                | 45 minutes             |
| <i>Evaluation</i>        |                               | 10 minutes             |
| <i>Closure</i>           |                               |                        |
| Exercise 6.8             | Four seasons                  | 10 minutes             |
| <b>Total time</b>        |                               | <b>5 hours 55 mins</b> |

### Follow-on/homework

|               |                    |            |
|---------------|--------------------|------------|
| Exercise 6.9  | The roles we play  | 45 minutes |
| Exercise 6.10 | Who am I?          | 15 minutes |
| Exercise 6.11 | Creating happiness | 30 minutes |

## Materials



- Paper and pens
- Coloured pens/pencils
- Flipchart and marker pens
- CD player/tape recorder (optional)

### Session I

- Worksheet 6.2 Design your healing space
- Worksheet 6.4 Exploring self-confidence (3 sheets)
- CD track no. 16 Being cared for\*
- Old magazines/pictures of interior and exterior scenes
- Pieces of fabric/materials with different textures
- Glue sticks

### Session II

- Worksheet 6.5 Sources of support
- CD track no. 17 Cleansing colours\*
- CD track no. 18 Four seasons\*

### Follow-on/ homework

- Worksheet 6.9 The roles we play (2 sheets)
- CD track no. 19 Who am I?\*
- Length of rope or cord (optional)

\*or relaxing, background music

## Preparation

- 1 Read the introductory notes at the beginning of the session/s so that you are familiar with the way in which the theme is being introduced and explored. Review the list of references and resources for this module in **Part 5: Additional Resources** and reflect on your own experiences.
- 2 Familiarise yourself with the main learning tools which are being used in the session (see **Part 4: Spiritual Tools**).
- 3 Read through the session guidelines and look at the suggested session programme which will incorporate:
  - Session introduction
  - Exercises
  - Movement breaks
  - Breaks

- Session review
- Action planning
- Evaluation
- Closure

Plan each part of the session and timings in detail, using the session notes, **Part 2: Guidance for Facilitators** and the optional exercises in **Part 5: Additional Resources** for more detailed suggestions.

- 4 Photocopy any handouts and exercise sheets, and make sure that you have any other equipment listed under *Materials*.

## 3 Introducing the Module



30 minutes

Run through your planned introductory session which may include:

### **Quiet time**

### **Introductions/optional warm-up exercise**

### **Overview of session**

- Theme of session
- Aims and learning outcomes
- Programme/plan for the session
- Practical considerations
- Any questions

### **Setting the tone**

- Ground rules/principles
- Participants' expectations

### **Review of last session/homework**

See **Part 2: Guidance for Facilitators** for further guidance on introducing the session.

# 4

# The Exercises

## Session I: Self-care

### Exercise 6.1

## Caring for myself



Process:

Reflection and sharing in pairs



30 minutes

#### Learning outcome

At the end of this exercise participants should be able to:

- ✓ identify ways of caring for themselves.

#### Materials



- Paper and pens
- Flipchart and marker pens

#### Facilitating the exercise



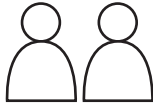
**1** Invite participants to get into pairs but to work alone on the first part of the exercise.

**2** Introduce the exercise as follows:

“Spend a few minutes working on your own, listing some of the ways in which you care for yourself. Don't just think about things you do in your time off, but also things you do to care for yourself at work. Your list can include trivial things, as well as some which you consider more significant or important.

At this stage, please write down what you actually do now, rather than what you would like to do. Examples might be: always having a coffee break mid-morning to chat; going for a run every day; taking your maximum holiday allowance each year; having a massage once a month. Include some ways in which you pamper or treat yourself.”

Allow 5 minutes.



- 3** Now ask participants to get into pairs and share their lists, as follows:

“With your partner, share some of the general areas you have written down and, within each area, some of the specific things you actually do to look after, or care for yourself.”

Allow a further 10 minutes.

### Feedback 15 minutes



- 1** In the main group, invite participants to suggest how the items on their lists group into areas or themes, and write these up on a flipchart, eg relaxing activities, finding a quiet place, doing something which is very different from work. Alternatively, use the main headings from the **Background Reading** paper: *physical, mental, emotional, social, environmental, spiritual*.
- 2** Ask each person in turn for one good suggestion that they may have learned from their partner, and record them on the flipchart.
- 3** If you have time, invite a discussion on why self-care is so important in the context of participants' working lives (see **Background Reading** paper for further information).

### Helpful hints

Some of the participants may list practical things they do; others may consider emotional or spiritual support important.

In grouping self-care activities, it will become apparent that many activities nurture us on more than one level. For example, going running with a friend may help to improve our *physical* health, but may also be an important *social* contact and provide a means of reducing *mental* stress.

This exercise is extended during the action planning part of the session, by inviting participants to develop a specific plan for making an improvement in their self-care. Keep the ideas on the flipcharts for reference.

## Exercise 6.2

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# A healing space



Process:

## Creativity and play



40 minutes

### Learning outcomes

At the end of this exercise participants should be able to:

- ✓ identify and describe the features of a space which they can use for their own self-healing
- ✓ visually represent the space in a creative way.

### Materials



- Worksheet 6.2 Design your healing space
- Paper and coloured pens/pencils
- Old magazines/pictures of interior and exterior scenes
- Pieces of fabric/materials with different textures
- Glue sticks

### Facilitating the exercise

1 Distribute **Worksheet 6.2 Design your healing space** and explain the exercise as follows:

“This is an opportunity to design a healing space where you can go for rest, reflection and recharging. It might be a room, a space within a room, or a sheltered place within a garden.”

2 Ask participants to work individually, first of all making brief notes in response to the questions on the worksheet.

Allow 10 minutes.

3 Next, invite everyone to make use of the magazines, pictures, fabrics, coloured pencils etc to visually represent their space in any way they wish, for example, as a collage, painting, design.

Allow a further 25 minutes.



### Feedback 5 minutes

Invite everyone to share their creations and to comment on the kind of space they chose.



## Exercise 6.3

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# Being cared for



Process:

## Visualisation



5 minutes

### Learning outcome

At the end of this exercise participants should be able to:

- ✓ experience a sense of being cared for through visualisation.

### Materials



- CD track no. 16 Being cared for (or relaxing background music)
- CD player/tape recorder (optional)

### Facilitating the exercise

**1** Invite people to sit comfortably and relax. Encourage participants to sit upright, their hands held loosely in their laps, legs uncrossed and feet placed firmly on the floor.

**2** Play **CD track no. 16 Being cared for**, or read the following text to the group. If you are reading aloud, speak slowly and clearly in a gentle voice, pausing at ellipses (...), and playing background music if you wish.

“ Take a few deep breaths in and out... observe your breathing... On the in-breath, instruct yourself to relax... on the out-breath, allow all your tensions to fall away...

Imagine you are sitting comfortably in a room, looking through a large window with sunlight streaming through it... Outside there is a beautiful scene of nature... just looking at it brings a sense of calm and inspiration...

The interior of the room is set up in a way that is in harmony with your inner self. Look around you and describe this room to yourself... What are the colours...? What are the textures, the furniture and objects in the room...?

Here you stay as long as you want, whenever you want... You can sit, walk, talk, as you wish... there is no-one to determine how you should be... you just are... appreciate your uniqueness. Relax and enjoy being in this peaceful, beautiful room.

Imagine there is someone nearby, who you care for and who cares very deeply for you... understands you more than you even understand yourself. At times, when you need them most, you can sense their caring thoughts and feelings supporting you... in those moments, you feel at peace with yourself and the world.


**(Pause)**

In your own time, become aware of your body sitting on the chair, move your limbs and look around. ”

**Allow participants time to come out of the visualisation, invite them to stretch and move into the break.**




## **Break**

 **20 minutes**



## **Movement exercise**

 **5 minutes**

For this part of the session, start with a movement exercise which emphasises self-care/nurturing, eg participants stand in a line all facing the same way and each person massages the shoulders and back of the person in front. They then face the other way and repeat the exercise.

Alternatively, introduce a relaxation exercise, asking people to lie or sit comfortably while you guide them through a muscle relaxation or breathing practice (see **Part 5: Additional Resources** for some ideas).

## Exercise 6.4

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# Self-confidence



Process:

Reflection and sharing in small groups



60 minutes

### Learning outcomes

At the end of this exercise participants should be able to:

- ✓ identify attitudes and values which demonstrate self-confidence
- ✓ plan to improve their self-confidence in specific areas.

### Materials



- Worksheet 6.4 Exploring self-confidence (3 sheets).
- Pre-prepared flipcharts for Parts A and B, each headed with the main question from the corresponding worksheet, and listing the items from the worksheet down the left-hand side, with space to write against each.
- Paper and pens
- Flipchart and marker pens

### Facilitating the exercise

This exercise explores aspects of building and sustaining self-confidence in the individual.

Divide the participants into groups of 3 people.

The exercise is in three parts. Lead each part as follows:

#### Part A: Attitudes (15 minutes)

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- 1 Distribute the first sheet of **Worksheet 6.4 Exploring self-confidence**, headed **Part A**.
- 2 Ask them to work on their own to complete *Column 1* on the worksheet, answering the question 'What is the attitude of a self-confident person towards...' in relation to each of the items listed. Remind them to use only one or two words per item.  
  
Allow a few minutes for this individual work.



- 3 Invite participants to share their responses in their small groups, and to agree on one answer to each item. Ask them to write this in *Column 2* of the worksheet.

Allow a further 10 minutes for this.

**Feedback  
5 minutes**



Ask one person from each of the small groups to feed back on one or two items, until all items have been covered. Record their answers on your pre-prepared flipchart.

**Part B: Values** (15 minutes)

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- 1 Distribute **Part B** of **Worksheet 6.4 Developing self-confidence**.
- 2 Ask participants to work on their own and complete *Column 1*, naming two values a self-confident person would have in dealing with each of the people or situations listed.

Allow a few minutes for this.



- 3 Invite everyone to share their responses in their small groups, again choosing one answer for each item. Ask them to write these in *Column 2* of the worksheet.

Allow 10 minutes.

**Feedback  
5 minutes**



Ask one person from each of the small groups to feed back on one or two items, until all have been covered. Record their answers on your pre-prepared flipchart.

**Part C: Qualities** (5 minutes)

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- 1 Distribute **Part C** of **Worksheet 6.4 Developing self-confidence**.
- 2 Ask participants to work on their own again, and to list their special qualities of self-confidence on the worksheet, together with which qualities they wish to develop further.

**Feedback  
15 minutes**



- 1 For the remaining time, you may wish to facilitate some discussion about people's responses and the process.
- 2 If there is time, go on to invite participants to suggest what specific actions they would take to develop their self-confidence in the areas they identified on **Part C** of the worksheet, and to produce a timed action plan. Alternatively, they could undertake this task as part of the **Action Planning** session later in the day.



**Lunch break**

## Session II: Support at work

### Exercise 6.5

## Sources of support



Process:

Reflection and sharing in pairs and groups



60 minutes

#### Learning outcomes

At the end of this exercise participants should be able to:

- ✓ appreciate the qualities involved in giving support
- ✓ identify gaps in personal support
- ✓ identify people who act as personal sources of support in specific situations
- ✓ develop an action plan to improve support.

#### Materials



- Worksheet 6.5 Sources of support
- A pre-prepared flipchart sheet for Part C of the exercise, containing the following:

#### **Gaps in support**

- *Who and where might you turn to in each specific circumstance?*
- *Who would be your 'Number 2' if that person were not available?*
- *How would your chosen people respond to your request for support?*
- *Are there any particular actions you could take now, to improve or increase your sources of support?*
- Paper and pens

## Facilitating the exercise



This exercise is in three parts.

### Part A: Support at work (20 minutes)

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1 Split participants into small groups of three or four people. Introduce the first part of the exercise as follows:

“Share an experience of an occasion when you were supported at work.”

Allow 5 minutes.

2 Next, invite participants to share as follows:

“Now, think of a time when you supported someone at work, and briefly share that experience with the group.”

Allow a further 10 minutes.

3 Invite each group to try to identify the qualities demonstrated by themselves and other people when giving support, and to note these down.

Allow 5 minutes.

## Feedback 5 minutes



Ask groups to share some of the qualities demonstrated by people giving support. List them on a flipchart and ask for some individual examples.

## Helpful hints

This exercise provides an opportunity for people to share issues around support at work. Encourage participants to focus on the qualities that people exhibit when giving support, rather than on negative aspects.

### Part B: Personal support (15 minutes)

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1 Distribute **Worksheet 6.5 Sources of support** and ask participants to work individually, filling in their responses to the questions on the sheet.

Allow up to 5 minutes.



2 Invite participants to reflect on their responses and share with a partner what they have discovered. Are there any gaps?

Allow a further 10 minutes before moving on to the final stage of the exercise.

### Part C: Support plan (10 minutes)

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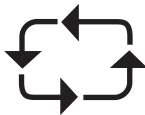
I Display your pre-prepared flipchart and lead participants into a brief action planning exercise as follows:



“Work on your own to develop an action plan for addressing the gaps in support you have identified.

Be specific about to whom and where you might turn in each specific circumstance. Who would be your ‘Number 2’ if that person were not available? Consider how your chosen people might respond to your request for support. Are there any particular actions you could take now to improve or increase your sources of support?”

#### Feedback 10 minutes



Allow the remaining time for feedback as a whole group. Ask participants:

- What have you learned from the exercise?
- Did you identify one or two key people or a broad network of people?
- What kinds of action have you identified to improve your personal sources of support?

#### Helpful hints

This may be an opportunity for the group to consider ways that they could build up a support network. Examples may be provision of counselling, mentoring, getting together at work breaks, and identifying support networks as part of the training. (Remember: a support group needs an experienced facilitator to keep it on track.)

If participants have come together as a work team, they may wish to develop a plan for strengthening support to the team, as well as individual members.

Remind participants that they may want to extend their work on identifying and planning support in the **Action Planning** part of this session.

## Exercise 6.6

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# Cleansing colours



Process:

## Breathing and visualisation



10 minutes

### Learning outcome

At the end of this exercise participants should be able to:

- ✓ practise a colour breathing exercise to restore calm, energy and balance.

### Materials



- CD track no. 17 Cleansing colours (or relaxing background music)
- CD player/tape recorder

### Facilitating the exercise

- 1 Invite people to sit comfortably and relax. Encourage participants to sit upright, their hands held loosely in their laps, legs uncrossed and feet placed firmly on the floor.
- 2 Play **CD track no. 17 Cleansing colours**, or read the following text to the group (read slowly and clearly in a gentle voice, pausing at ellipses (...) and playing background music if you wish).

“ Sit quietly and comfortably... slow your breathing until it finds its own gentle rhythm.

Watch the breath... moving in and out at its own pace. In this exercise you are going to imagine breathing colours through different areas of your body.

We will start at the base of your spine... focus on that area... breathe in and out at your own pace... and see the colour of the breath to be a warm red... breathe this red in and out until you feel it is the right shade and texture for you. See it fill your whole body.

Now move on to focus your attention just below the navel... breathe in and out slowly... and see the breath as a rich orange colour. Breathe in and out and see the breath reaching your whole body.



Move up to the solar plexus, breathe into this area of the body, this time using yellow... Again, 'watch' the breath gently moving in and out... and settle on a shade of yellow that you feel happy with. See the breath fill your whole body.

Move up to your heart in the centre of your chest... breathe in a green so it fills your lungs and spreads to your whole body... breathe in and out slowly until you have a clear green throughout your body.

Turn your attention to the throat and imagine the breath is blue... breathe in a pure blue so it fills your whole body.

Now focus on the forehead and breathe in the colour indigo... at your own pace, breathe in indigo for several breaths until it reaches a colour you feel comfortable with and fills your body.

Finally, on the top of the head, at the crown, imagine the breath is the colour violet. Think of the colour violet and breathe it in. As you breathe out, imagine yourself breathing away any toxins that may distort the colour. At your own pace breathe in violet... in and out three times until you feel there is a pure violet colour entering through the crown of your head to fill your whole body.

See yourself as a radiant rainbow person... ..

In your own time be aware of the room again and then gently move your hands and feet and look around the room. ”

**Helpful hints** This can also be done with the addition of sound, making the sound for:

|                       |     |               |
|-----------------------|-----|---------------|
| Base (red)            | OH  | (as in bOne)  |
| Sacral (orange)       | OH  | (as in Oval)  |
| Solar plexus (yellow) | EH  | (as in Enter) |
| Heart (green)         | AH  | (as in fAst)  |
| Throat (blue)         | OO  | (as in fOOt)  |
| Brow (indigo)         | EE  | (as in cLEAn) |
| Crown (violet)        | AMH | (as in fARM)  |



### Movement exercise



5 minutes



### Break



15 minutes

## 5 Session Review



10 minutes

### Guidance notes

- 1 Briefly review the session by displaying the session aims, learning outcomes and session programme. Remind participants of the activities they have undertaken.
- 2 Pick out any highlights, referring to materials that participants have produced and which you have displayed.
- 3 Hand out the **Background Reading** paper for participants to take away, pointing out any references and resources for this module, should they wish to explore the theme in more depth.

See **Part 2: Guidance for Facilitators** for further guidance.

## 6 Action Planning

See **Part 2: Guidance for Facilitators** and **Part 5: Additional Resources** for information and guidance on action planning. Below is a suggested action planning exercise.

### Exercise 6.7

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## Making changes



Process:

Reflection and sharing in pairs



45 minutes

#### Learning outcome

At the end of this exercise participants should be able to:

- ✓ identify ways of improving their self-care.

#### Materials



- Pre-prepared flipchart containing the following heading and two questions:

*Making a change to enhance your self-care:*

- *Why is this important to you?*
- *What does this change you have chosen give you?*

- Paper and pens
- Flipchart and marker pens

## Facilitating the exercise



This exercise is in three parts. Lead each one as follows:

### Part A: Identifying a self-care goal (20 minutes)

---

**1 Give out paper and pens to all participants and invite them to begin by working on their own:**

“Consider for a moment that you have been advised that you need radically to change your lifestyle as a matter of importance and urgency (this could be because of illness or change in circumstances) in order to improve your self-care.

Write a list of all the things that you always wanted to do and which would enhance your self-care. What is really important to you? It may be something you would like to happen, achieve or develop a skill in. Write as many as you like without letting any obstacles come into your mind.

Once you have written them down, choose one and imagine what it would be like in as much detail as you can: the feeling, the sights, sounds and tastes.”

**Allow about 5 minutes for participants to think this through and write their lists.**



**2 Now ask them to work in pairs as follows (display your pre-prepared flipchart):**

“Choose a partner and share one of the things you have chosen. Your partner's job is to listen, then ask two questions: 'Why is this important to you?' and, 'What does this change you have chosen give you?' After a few minutes, change over. (If you have time, choose another item from your list, and repeat the questioning).”

**Allow 15 minutes for this stage of the exercise**

### Part B: Giving something up (5 minutes)

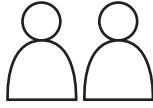
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**Invite participants to work individually again, as follows:**

“To make room for any changes we may need to give something up, or let go of an attitude. Make another list of all the things that are not important to you or you dislike doing. After you have made your list, choose several you could give up to allow space and time for you to achieve your new goal.”

**Allow 5 minutes.**

**Part C: Identifying obstacles and resources (10 minutes)****1 Ask participants to work in pairs again as follows:**

“With your partner again, share your ideas and discuss whether there are other things that may stop you achieving your goal, for example, time, money, skills, or lack of determination. Also consider all the resources that can help you achieve your goal, such as new skills, space, money and courage.”

**2 Allow a couple of minutes to ask participants to briefly share the following before moving into feedback:**

“Finish by imagining that you have achieved your goal. What would you do or say, how would you feel? Tell your partner.”

**Feedback  
10 minutes**

**1** Divide a piece of flipchart paper into two columns, headed *Suggested changes* and *Method*. Ask each pair to feed back to the main group, first recording suggestions and then discussing what methods might be used to implement them.

**2** Ask participants which part of the exercise they found easiest to do – what sort of blocks or issues did they face?

**3** Finally, close the exercise by asking everyone to close their eyes for one minute and imagine that they have achieved their goal.

**Helpful hints**

Be alert to the fact this exercise could raise serious issues around unhappiness at work or in relationships. These may have to be acknowledged and, after the session, help may need to be given to individuals to access appropriate sources of support. However, it may also be an opportunity to demonstrate a caring, supportive environment within the group. This will depend on whether it is appropriate for the group to support the individual beyond the session, and on the experience of the facilitator.

This action planning session could also be used to extend **Exercise 6.5** by asking participants to choose one thing that they could change to improve their level of personal support in the next two weeks, and to develop an action plan for achieving this change.

## 7 Evaluation



10 minutes



### Materials

- Copies of evaluation *pro forma* (if being used)
- Pens

### Guidance notes

Run through your planned evaluation activity (see **Part 2: Guidance for Facilitators** and **Part 5: Additional Resources** for information and guidance on evaluation).

As an alternative or additional activity, you may also want to give out a more formal evaluation form at this point for participants to complete now or return by a given date.

Remember to plan in some time as soon as possible after the session to complete your own evaluation of how you think the session went.

## 8 Closure

Lead the group in your planned closure activity (see **Part 2: Guidance for Facilitators** and **Part 5: Additional Resources** for information and guidance on closures), or use the suggested activity below).

### Exercise 6.8

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## Four seasons



Process:

Visualisation



10 minutes

#### Learning outcome

At the end of this exercise participants should be able to:

- ✓ experience the process of change and self-renewal through visualisation.

#### Materials



- CD track no. 18 Four seasons (or relaxing background music)
- CD player/tape recorder (optional)
- Paper and coloured pencils/pens

#### Facilitating the exercise

- 1 Invite people to sit comfortably and relax. Encourage participants to sit upright, their hands held loosely in their laps, legs uncrossed and feet placed firmly on the floor.
- 2 Play **CD track no. 18 Four seasons**, or read the following text to the group (read slowly and clearly in a gentle voice, pausing at ellipses (...)) and playing background music if you wish).

“ Sit comfortably and relax. Take a few deep breaths. Close your eyes and concentrate on the sensation of your breath in your body... the feeling inside your nose as the air enters you... the difference in the feeling of the air leaving your body... the feeling of your muscles and lungs moving to pull in the air, and moving to expel it.

Imagine that you are a plant or tree somewhere in the world. What are you? And where would you be? See yourself as that plant and how it would feel... see your shape, your size and your foliage. What is the landscape around you like?

It is the beginning of autumn. Look around you at the scene, the colours, the smell... are there other plants and trees? What is the soil like and the landscape?

As time passes you are preparing for winter; you are retreating into yourself. What do you do? What happens to you at this time? It is a time for letting go of parts of yourself... your foliage... your flowers... your shape... What is happening to the landscape around you, the weather... the colours... the smell...?

Time passes... winter approaches... it is cold. It is a time for pulling your energy back into your core. You are withdrawing into yourself... it is the right time for retreat... for conservation. What are the strengths that you have deep inside yourself...? What keeps you going...? What strengths sustain you...?

After some time you notice another change; it begins to get warmer and the sun stays longer in the sky. Gentle showers moisten the soil around you. Spring has come... It is a time for renewal... time for the energy to rise within you and for you to bring forth new growth... How are you changing...? What is the nature of your new growth...? How is it fed...? What changes do you notice in the landscape around you – the soil, the sky...? Look at your flowers, watch them unfold.

Time passes... the sun is getting hotter, the days deliciously long. It is full summer... a time of abundance and fruitfulness... Look at your fruits... they are beginning to ripen... within them they carry the seeds of next year... Let your fruits fall to the ground to enrich the earth around you.

Time passes again, and the long days of summer begin to shorten. You are at full strength, but you begin to prepare for autumn and approaching winter. There is some time to go, but what is the landscape around you like and how do you fit into it? How does it feel?



Reflect back on the changes you have gone through; autumn, winter, spring, and summer, and now back to autumn... You accept change as a natural part of your life and know that you are able to nurture and renew yourself.

In your own time, open your eyes and sit quietly with the images.”

**Feedback  
(optional)**



Involve participants in a general feedback on the visualisation and how it made them feel.

If there is extra time, you can invite participants to draw how they saw the scene, either in one of the seasons or in all of the seasons. Invite them to share their drawings with the rest of the group.

## 9 Follow-on/homework

### Exercise 6.9

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# The roles we play



Process:

Reflection and sharing in pairs



45 minutes

#### Learning outcomes

At the end of this exercise participants should be able to:

- ✓ identify the qualities they express in their different roles
- ✓ consider whether they are more than the sum of their roles.

#### Materials



- Worksheet 6.9 The roles we play (2 sheets)

#### Facilitating the exercise



- 1 Invite participants to find a partner.
- 2 Give out **Worksheet 6.9 The roles we play** (2 sheets) and ask participants to complete the worksheet in their pairs. You may want to give participants the choice of doing this on their own initially, before sharing with a partner, or for each person to ask their partner the questions and fill in their answers on the worksheet.

Encourage participants to be spontaneous in their responses, rather than spending too much time considering their replies (see **Helpful hints** below).

Allow 30 minutes in total, prompting partners to swap roles after 15 minutes if they are using the question/answer approach.

**Feedback**  
**15 minutes**



Ask each pair to join with another pair to briefly discuss whether individuals felt they were the sum of their roles or whether they discovered a 'Me' as well (see **Background Reading** paper). If time, this discussion could be continued in a group feedback session.

**Helpful hints** Here are some example responses you can draw on:

**What am I like...**

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| at work?             | <i>efficient, submissive, cheerful, bossy</i> |
| at home?             | <i>easy-going, lazy, assertive</i>            |
| as a brother/sister? | <i>open, intolerant, humorous</i>             |
| as a son/daughter?   | <i>critical, respectful</i>                   |
| as a parent?         | <i>responsible, strict, supportive</i>        |
| as a partner/spouse? | <i>relaxed, argumentative, kind</i>           |
| as a work colleague? | <i>supportive, co-operative, competitive</i>  |

**What am I like when I am...**

|          |                                     |
|----------|-------------------------------------|
| angry?   | <i>sulk, rage</i>                   |
| sad?     | <i>blame others, withdraw</i>       |
| happy?   | <i>sing/hum, playful, forgiving</i> |
| anxious? | <i>indecisive, jittery</i>          |

**What was I like...**

|             |                               |
|-------------|-------------------------------|
| as a child? | <i>trusting, enthusiastic</i> |
| at school?  | <i>loner, extrovert</i>       |

**What do I feel passionately about?**

*injustice, football, the environment, my family*

**What motivates me?**

*inner inspiration, my husband/mother/friends/colleagues, desire to do my job well*

**What am I like when I am quiet?**

*find peace, mind races*

## Exercise 6.10

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# Who am I?



Process:

## Meditation



15 minutes

### Learning outcome

At the end of this exercise participants should be able to:

- ✓ experience their identity at a deeper level using meditation.

### Materials



- CD track no. 19 Who am I? (or relaxing background music)
- CD player/tape recorder (optional)

### Facilitating the exercise

- 1 Invite people to sit comfortably and relax. Encourage participants to sit upright, their hands held loosely in their laps, legs uncrossed and feet placed firmly on the floor.
- 2 Play **CD track no. 19 Who am I?** or read the following text to the group (read slowly and clearly in a gentle voice, pausing at ellipses (...)) and playing background music if you wish).  
“Sit quietly and relax. Take a few deep breaths and turn your focus onto your thoughts...

Who am I...? Am I just this body...? When I look into a mirror, what am I looking at...? Is that me...? Is there more to me than my physical image? My body is very real. I can touch it. I am aware of each part of it, even with my eyes closed.

Is this who I am...? As I think about these questions, I begin to get an idea of where I am. Somewhere inside my head is me. I'm not just my face, or my mouth or my eyes, I am something more than these things.

Who am I...? Am I my thoughts? Am I the one who is thinking, the one who is questioning...?

Now, sitting in this very quiet moment with no-one else looking at me, no-one else telling me who or what I am, I spend a few moments enjoying myself, getting used to my qualities... and getting to know how I think and feel... It's a nice feeling, I can be me... I don't have to please anyone, I don't have to attract anyone's attention to me. I don't have to do what other people expect of me, just be who I am.

I like me. The more I get to know myself, the more I can be myself when there are others around, and that feels good. The more I appreciate who I am, the easier it is to appreciate who others are. Each one of us is a unique being. Each one of us is worthy of being alive.

Now, very gently, I remember again that I am sitting inside this body, in this room, and I know who I am.

In your own time move your hands and feet and look around the room.”

**Feedback  
(optional)**



You may wish to leave the group in silence for a while or ask for some brief comments.

## Exercise 6.11

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# Creating happiness



Process:

Visualisation



30 minutes

### Learning outcome

At the end of this exercise participants should be able to:

- ✓ consider their current level of happiness and experience moving towards an increased level of happiness.

### Materials



- Length of rope or cord if you are leading the 'active' version of this exercise
- Pebbles or coloured beads (optional)

### Facilitating the exercise

This exercise can take the form of a visualisation only, or involve participants more actively (in which case, see additional guidance in brackets below):

Take the whole exercise slowly, allowing time for participants to reflect on, and feel each stage.

**I** Ask participants to sit quietly before guiding them through the exercise as follows:

“Imagine you are in a field or large space outdoors and there is a long rope across the field.”

(If you are leading an active exercise, use a rope and lay it out across the room. Additionally, you can mark the rope in sections 1, 10, 20, 30 etc up to 100 using a marker pen, or put numbered pieces of paper next to it representing these points.)

“One end of the rope represents misery and the other happiness. There is a scale of 1 to 100 between each end of the rope.”

(One person in the group could stand at one end of the rope acting 'misery' and another at the other end demonstrating 'happiness'.)

“ Sit quietly for several minutes and check out how you feel right now. Sit and reflect at all levels where would you place yourself on the rope. Give yourself a score.

Go and stand in that place alongside or next to others. How does that feel? Stay there for several minutes.

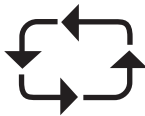
Now think about where you would like to be to experience happiness.

Next, move to where you would like to be on the rope scale. How does that feel? What number are you?

Finally, try and see if you can move up to 100. This represents complete happiness. What is that like? If you find that difficult, ask yourself what is it that is holding you back.”

**Allow up to 15 minutes to guide participants through the various stages of the exercise before feedback.**

### **Feedback 15 minutes**



Invite participants to get into small groups of 2 or 3 and share their experiences for the remaining time, in particular:

- Where did they place themselves on the rope scale and what, if anything, held them back from moving further up the scale?

### **Helpful hints**

For 100 (ie complete happiness) you could apply a label like *Nirvana, Heaven, Eden*, or whatever seems appropriate for your group.

Most people will place themselves somewhere between 50 and 70 and move up to between 80 and 90.

Be prepared for the fact that the question, ‘What held you back?’ may bring up some challenging issues. Examples are: ‘Don’t feel worthy’; ‘Fear’; ‘What is there left to achieve?’; ‘No-one is 100.’

Use some quiet time at the end to connect with how it feels to be at the 100 end.

You may wish to give each person a pebble or coloured beads so that they can remind themselves of the good feeling (happiness) when they go about their daily business and come across difficult experiences.

## Worksheet 6.2

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# Design your healing space

Visualise a space where you could create a restful area for yourself – a place where you can go to rest, reflect and recharge. This could be a room, a part of a room, or a sheltered space within a garden.

**1 For each of the questions below, make brief notes to help you build up your image.**

*Where is your space?*

*What would you enjoy looking at?*

*(eg: pictures/photos, plants, special objects, view through window)*

*What would you enjoy smelling?*

*(eg: scented candle, fresh air, flowers)*

*What would you enjoy touching?*

*(eg: fabrics, pet stroking, comfortable chair, grass under your feet)*

*What would you enjoy listening to?*

*(eg: music, radio talkshow, silence, birdsong, running water)*

*How would you ensure privacy?*

*(eg: 'Do not disturb' sign, screening from other, agreement with others)*

*What would you clear out of your space?*

*What would you enjoy doing there?*

**2 Now try to represent your space, using the art and craft materials and pictures available.**



## Worksheet 6.4 Part A

# Exploring self-confidence

## Attitudes

| <i>What is the attitude of a self-confident person towards...</i> | <i>Column 1</i> | <i>Column 2</i> |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| Being in a crisis   |                 |                 |
| Success   |                 |                 |
| Obstacles   |                 |                 |
| Work  |                 |                 |
| Colleagues  |                 |                 |
| Patients  |                 |                 |
| Friends   |                 |                 |

## Worksheet 6.4 Part B

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# Exploring self-confidence

### Values

| <i>Name two values a self-confident person would have in dealing with the following...</i> | <i>Column 1</i> | <i>Column 2</i> |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| A dominating manager   |                 |                 |
| A difficult family member  |                 |                 |
| Making a mistake   |                 |                 |
| Junior colleagues  |                 |                 |
| A complaining patient  |                 |                 |
| A rebellious child   |                 |                 |
| Anxious relatives of a patient   |                 |                 |

## Worksheet 6.4 Part C

---

# Exploring self-confidence

*What are your three main qualities of self-confidence?*

1

2

3

*What three qualities of self-confidence would you wish to develop more?*

1

2

3

## Worksheet 6.5

---

# Sources of support

*1 List the person you would choose to turn to for support in the following circumstances:*

Making a mistake at work:

A row with your partner/best friend:

Following an accident in your car:

A death in the family:

To chat to when feeling low:

To tell a secret to:

If you had been diagnosed with a serious illness:

A dispute with a colleague at work:

A patient that has upset you emotionally:

*2 Where are the gaps in your support?*

*3 How could you fill these gaps?*

## Worksheet 6.9

---

# The roles we play

Apply some simple adjectives to yourself below, to describe your positive and negative qualities in the following relationships and circumstances:

### 1 What am I like...

at work?

at home?

as a brother/sister?

as a son/daughter?

as a parent?

as a partner/spouse?

as a work colleague?

### 2 What am I like when I am...

angry?

sad?

happy?

anxious?

### 3 What was I like...

as a child?

at school?

Worksheet 6.9 (continued)

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**The roles we play**

**4 What do I feel passionately about?**

**5 What motivates me?**

**6 What am I like when I am quiet?**

Now discuss in your group whether you are the sum of your roles, or whether there is a 'Me' as well.