

Emotional Literacy

Session Plan

Session	Emotional Literacy and Mental Health
Background Information	Emotional literacy is the ability to recognise, understand, appropriately express and handle our own emotional states and those of other people. A person with well-developed emotional literacy is therefore able to recognise and respond to the emotional states of others. This is considered a hallmark of healthy relationships.
Aim	To raise awareness of emotional literacy and how it supports mental health
Objectives	Participants will be able to: • Dispel emotional literacy myths • Describe what emotional literacy is • Discuss the impact on mental health when we are not emotionally literate • List the benefits of being emotionally literate • Identify ways to develop emotional literacy • List resources to support mental health and wellbeing
Duration	1.5 hours
Resources	• IT • Presentation • Quiz • Flipchart/pens • Session handouts • Evaluation

Learning outcomes	Participant Activity	Resources	Time
1. Dispel emotional literacy myths	Myth buster	Quiz	5 min
2. Describe what emotional literacy is	I got a feeling	Slide	5 min
3. Discuss the impact on mental health when we are not emotionally literate	Body map	Flipchart/ pens/ Slide	15 min
4. List the benefits of being emotionally literate	Body map	Flipchart/ pens/ Slide	15 min
5. Identify ways to develop emotional literacy	Developing emotional literacy	Flipchart/pens	30 min
6. List resources to support mental health and wellbeing	None	Mental health resources handout	10 min
7. Looking after our own mental health	Self-care	Slide	5 min
8. Reflection and session close	Reflection	Evaluation	5 min

Facilitator's Notes

Slide	Notes	Time	Resources
1	Welcome participants and introduce yourself before offering an overview of the session. Have the title slide up and visible whilst doing this.	5 min	Slides
2	Put up the session overview slide and read out what will be covered today. Emphasise the session is not intended to make participants experts in emotional literacy but to raise awareness of emotional literacy and how it can promote and support positive mental health and wellbeing.		
Activity	Emotional Literacy Quiz Let's start with looking at some of the	5 min	Quiz

	myths that surround emotional literacy. Distribute the quiz to participants. This can be done on an individual basis or as a group. Invite participants to complete the quiz, true or false. This is a good starting point and gives an insight into the participants' knowledge around what they believe emotional literacy is. Ask the participants if they have heard of the term emotional literacy; how would they define it? If help is required with this, break the statement down "emotional means relating to our emotions, and literacy is about the language we use". Once completed, go through each question of the quiz to generate discussion. Use the supporting statements to provide the correct answers and information. Discussion point: were there any surprises? Inform participants that the quiz is a useful activity to challenge some of the myths associated with emotional literacy.		
Activity	I got a feeling The purpose of this activity is to get participants thinking about different emotions and words we might use to describe how we are feeling. The activity should be done very quickly without the opportunity for detailed thought or discussion. Quickly go round the participants and ask the question: "How are you feeling today?" It is anticipated that the majority of participants may use words like fine, ok, alright. Discussion point: Do not go into detail about the words the participants have	5 min	None

	used, instead, ask them how easy/difficult they found this activity to do. Highlight that we often use words like fine, ok, alright, which don't tell us how we are actually feeling. Note: you can share the word fine can be thought of as "Feelings Inside Not Explained". Conclude that we can think it is not acceptable to talk about your emotions especially if we are feeling sad, jealous, disappointed etc., the ones that can be thought of as difficult and challenging. We think that people don't want to hear about these. However, if we do not speak about and deal with our emotions in a healthy way, this can impact our mental health and wellbeing.		
3	Emotional Literacy Definition So we have started off exploring some of the myths around emotional literacy and a simple activity to highlight that often we may not use the appropriate language to express how we are feeling, e.g. fine, ok, alright. Now put up the slide with the emotional literacy definition and read it out. Discussion point: do participants think there are good and bad emotions? It is helpful not to classify emotions as good or bad, all emotions serve a purpose, fear can be a protector factor and can help keep us safe, anger can be positive, it can motivate us to make change etc. When we look at emotional literacy and mental health, being emotionally literate can help protect from various mental health conditions, such as depression and anxiety. Emotional literacy can also help offset factors that increase the risk of mental health conditions, such as	5 min	Slide

	stress.		
4	Key Areas of Emotional Literacy Inform the participants that there are four key areas to emotional literacy. Go through each of the key areas and read out the bullet points. Highlight that by working and developing these areas, it can help us be more emotionally literate, which can have huge benefits to mental health and wellbeing. Inform participants there is a wealth of information available online if they want to explore emotional literacy and the four key areas in more detail.	10 min	Slide
Activity & Slide 5	What can be the impact on mental health and wellbeing if we do not recognise and manage our emotions effectively? Inform the participants that we are now going to explore what the impact can be on our mental health if we do not recognise and manage our emotions effectively. Divide the participants into groups, provide flipchart and pens. Invite them to draw a body outline and to discuss and write down what they think the impact could be on mental health and wellbeing if we do not recognise and manage our emotions effectively. Take feedback from each of the groups, one/two examples from each. Bring up the slide and use this to compare with the feedback from the groups. Inform the participants that the list is not exhaustive. Discussion point: ask the participants how they felt completing this activity? Reiterate that by not recognising and managing our emotions, it can have a	15 min (10 min activity and 5 min feedback)	Flipchart/ pens Slide

	detrimental impact on our mental health and wellbeing. However, if we are self-aware, it can help us recognise the early signs of stress or strong emotions and help us look at managing these healthily.		
Activity & Slide 6	What are the benefits of being emotionally literate? Keep participants in their groups, provide flipcharts and pens. Inform them that we are now to explore and discuss what the benefits of being emotionally literate are. Invite them to discuss in their groups what they think the benefits of being emotionally literate are to our mental health and wellbeing? Remind them of the activities they have completed so far, dispelling the myths, and the definition of emotional literacy to help them consider the benefits. Take feedback from the groups, one/two examples from each. Put up the benefits of being emotionally literate slide. Use this to compare with the feedback from the groups. Highlight this list is not exhaustive. Summarise by saying that being emotionally literate can have lots of benefits to our mental health and wellbeing.	15 min (10 min activity, 5 min feedback)	Flipchart/pens
Activity & Slide 7 & 8	How can we develop emotional literacy? Keep the participants in their groups, provide flipchart and pens. Now that we have looked at the benefits of emotional literacy, we are going to explore and consider how we can help develop emotional literacy to promote and support mental health and wellbeing. You can put up slide 4, which shows	20 min (15 min activity, 5 min feedback)	Slides Flipchart/pens Mental health resources handout

	the four key areas of emotional literacy to support this activity. Invite the groups to consider each of the areas and consider how we can develop these. Ask them to write down their ideas and suggestions. Take some feedback from each of the groups, one/two examples from each. Bring up the how we develop emotional literacy slides and read out each bullet point. Inform the participants that these are general suggestions and don't give information on detailed activities. Distribute the supporting mental health resources handout (adult or child/youth). Highlight that these are general and participants may have knowledge of local resources. Discussion point: are there any local resources that participants would like to share information on?		
Activity & Slide 9	Remind the participants of the importance of looking after their own mental health and provide a self-care activity.	5 min	Slide
Session close	Thank the participants for their time and ask them to complete the reflective practice tool	5 min	Reflective practice tool