TOPIC 4. MAKING MEMORY BOOKS

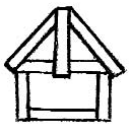
Preface:

Please note that this Topic (**Making Memory Books**) is based on material from the original Memory Project training programme. The ideas were built up with help from a group of Ugandan mothers living with HIV/Aids.This means that some of the language, examples and illustrations are geared to the culture of Uganda and the particular problems for families living with HIV/Aids.

But we believe that most of the basic ideas can be helpful for people living in other parts of the world and facing many different problems.

We hope you will find ways to adapt the ideas to fit the culture and the needs of your group and we shall be very pleased to hear from you about how you have managed to get the ideas across. We can then pass on your suggestions to other people who use this website. Please contact us via - **www.memorybooks.org.uk/feed-back-form**

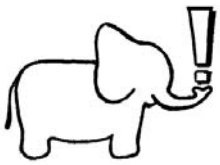
Icons used in this document:



This is where you can get a picture of how the topic fits into the whole structure of the Memory Book training programme and what it aims to achieve with the group members.



When this icon appears at the beginning of each topic it describes how the topic is broken into sessions or group activities and provides a guide to the time to be spent on each session. Elsewhere this icon details what needs to be taught by the end of a particular session or activity



Elephants don't forget and you should not forget this important piece of information or idea.



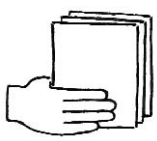
Key facts for the trainers/workshop leaders to get across during the session.



Guidance notes for trainer/leaders on how to run this session.



A story that draws a picture of a situation or explains a point or idea to the group.



Material/sheet to be given out to the group.

Background information for trainers/group leaders



This topic is at the heart of the Memory Project Training Programme and is divided into five parts. It will take a minimum of 6 hours to cover it well. Ideally Part A should be covered on the first day and Parts B, C, D and E can follow on a different day or be spread over several days. This would give group members a chance to go home, to think, talk, search for material and to come back to the group ready to move forward.

CONTENT OF TOPIC 4.



Part A. What is the Memory Book? This session is an introduction for people who are new to the idea. It will answer their questions about what it looks like? who its for? how on earth can an ordinary parent start to write a book? Group members will begin to understand how all the other topics in the training programme fit in with making Memory Books. Once they get hold of the ideas they will realise the importance of being open about family secrets, involving and listening to their children, making plans, preparing for loss and change, legal safeguards & much more.
(suggested time 1 hour.)

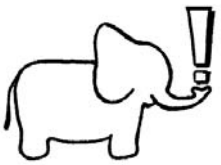
Part B. Bringing memories to life. This session helps group members to remember events and people from their own lives. They will start to think about what memories and information will help their own children face the future with a clear sense of WHO they are. The session includes practical ideas on collecting information and small objects which "say something" about their family life. There is also time in this session for parents to discuss IF and HOW to involve their children in making Memory Books.
(suggested time 2 hours.)

Part C. Mango Trees. This session helps group members to face up to the ways that traditional family life is being changed by factors such as illness or death of the main breadwinners; family breakdown; migration from the villages; climate change. In the face of changes which are usually beyond their control, group members are helped to think of different ways of coping. The outline picture of the Mango Tree gives parents and children an easy way to write down names of people or groups who they know they can rely on for support and information.
(suggested time 1 hour.)

Part D. Getting started on Memory Books. This is a practical session when group members will get going on their Memory Books. The session ends by helping them plan how they will keep up with the work at home and where they will find support to help them face the problems which this work forces them to confront.
(Suggested time 1 hour.)

Part E. How to keep going. This brief session suggests ways of helping parents to help themselves to complete work on their Memory Books and any other related tasks. It includes the idea of making a written Action Plan and suggests a simple way to set up an informal support system.
(suggested time 1 hour.)

Background information and preparation for trainers/group leaders



Before you start it's important to ***read the information*** below and prepare yourself to handle the ***emotional and personal issues*** that are likely to come up in the group. You will then be in a strong position to help group members to understand how to make their memory books. You will build up their confidence, help them to get started and fire up their determination to keep going. You will also be able to help them understand how the other topics in this training course fit together with Making Memory Books.

Information:

- Read the section on Making Memory Books in the introduction to this website.
- Read the Memory Book for Africa from start to finish.
- Read the notes below which provide background information and ideas to help you prepare to cover this topic
- If you haven't already done so, try making a Memory Book for yourself/your family. *At least make up a few pages….because you cant ask group members to do what you haven't done yourself!* Doing this practical work will remind you of the pain and pleasure of remembering the past. It will help you understand that you have to be brave to go back over some of the tough times from the past and that it can be difficult to find the right words to describe sensitive facts. It will give you practice at working out what to do when you don't have accurate information to fill in some of the sections. (You don't have to show the personal information that you have written down to anyone else – this is purely to help you to tune into the feelings of people who are being asked to bare their souls.)

PREPARING TO COPE WITH EMOTIONAL AND PERSONAL ISSUES.

Before coming on the training course, many parents have high expectations that making a Memory Book will be the solution to their problems. But it is not the solution. It is just a tool which MAY help them to get started on some of the important work described below. These are things they need to do while there is still time.

You, the trainer, have a responsibility to make sure that parents do not have unreal expectations of the Memory Book.They need to see it as part of the process which includes:

- Learning how to talk to their children about important family matters which they may not have done before.
- Finding ways to face the future and start making plans that will help protect their children.
- Building up each child's sense of identity and self-worth
- Helping children to think ahead and be as well prepared as possible to cope with problems which come up in the future
- Making sure children have accurate information, know who they can trust and where to get support in the future if needed.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH TRAINERS MUST BE READY TO HANDLE:

- There is often secret family information which parents don't know how to handle. For instance about the paternity of different children or illness in the family. Many parents will be thankful to have help to work out how much to share with their children and finding the right time to do it.

- Sometimes "being open" means breaking with tradition, discussing subjects which are usually taboo in their family. So the trainer must be ready to help parents work out what is suitable to say in the group, what stays inside the family and what to commit to paper.

- Recalling the death or desertion of the other parent, or talking about the difficulties of their present lives, may bring out quite overwhelming feelings of distress, anger, fear. So it will be important to have a quiet space and a sympathetic helper to give parents a chance to recover before facing the outside world.

- Many parents are frightened of trusting their children with the truth about problems in the family – how can they know if their child is reliable enough to keep the secret? No-one can give firm advice because every child is different, but its worth asking parents what the consequences would be if secrets escape. Could it actually be a relief to come out of hiding?

- Many families say their children react well to being trusted with the family secrets and they became more united. But in other families being so "open" has back-fired, with children becoming distressed, resentful, angry, forcing the family further apart. So its essential for the trainer to be honest about the risks of being open and warn parents to "test the water" with their children, breaking bad news slowly, not dropping it like a bomb.

- Some families have literally no-one to name as guardians or supporters for their children. Because these ideas come up frequently in the Memory Book sessions and elsewhere in the training programme, its essential to give parents space to speak about their fears and despair and to help them start to find out about other solutions including support from church, community leaders or CBOs.

- On a practical level parents with many children may not have time, or find it too expensive, to write separate books for each child. They may need help to work out the most useful way to use limited time and resources.

- In some families there is very little information from the past, no records or photos, and parents can be left feeling hopeless and frightened about how they can answer questions from their children. It puts them off being "open" and they need a chance to think about how they can gather up some information, perhaps from church records, old neighbours or teachers. Every scrap of detail will help to build the picture.

- Most parents are really keen to get started but it's much more difficult to keep going on the Memory Book once the support of the trainers and group members comes to an end. So how can parents be helped to push on? Making a written plan and finding a "Memory Book partner" will be covered at the end of this topic.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF MEMORY BOOK WORK WHICH WILL ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO GET ON WITH IT:

- It gives parents a chance to think back over their whole life – including the happy times – not just the present difficulties.

- Children will be helped to see that there is more to their family history and present life than illness, death, separation and loss.

- Parents begin to think about all the important information that children need. The Memory Book format gives them an easy way to give the true picture in their own words.

- Many parents are thankful to have a place to write down "my hopes for your future" - thoughts which they turn over in their heads every day but haven't always found the right moment to talk about

- When they start thinking about what to put in their book, many parents ask themselves "Why am I just writing this down? Why don't I talk about this with my children?"



- Some parents then decide to include their children in the Memory work. This gives a chance to talk about everything they might want to put into the book. Explaining….questions…answers – and soon there are no more secrets in the family.

- In other cases children become curious when they see their parents writing in a book, collecting photos and other information. They ask questions and this often leads to open discussion about the family situation.

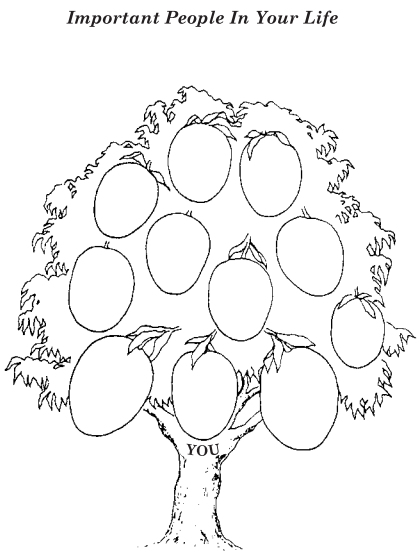
- If parents have difficulty writing, or are exhausted from illness or other problems of daily life, their children may be able to help with collecting information and writing down from their words – and soon it becomes a shared project for the whole family.

- Filling in family trees and asking children to name "people who are important to our family" is a good way to help children understand the family ties and the community networks – the people they will need to rely on in future.

- Sections which refer to family beliefs and traditions give parents an opening to talk or write about subjects which are often unspoken, which are just left to be "absorbed" over the years as children grow up. But if parents die when children are young that thread is broken and many important thoughts can be lost for ever.

- At the end of the training, even if there isn't much down on paper, at least all the group members will know that they have started the process of thinking, talking and planning for the future.

MATERIALS NEEDED FOR ALL FIVE PARTS OF Topic 4



- Well before the training session make up an ANONYMOUS Memory Book (or sample pages) which you can show to members of the group. This can be illustrated with drawings or pictures from magazines instead of identifiable photos. Although this takes time and thought, your efforts will be worthwhile in helping parents to understand what is involved. And your anonymous book can be used many times over. (This will be needed in Topic 4/A and D.)

- If there is enough money to cover the cost, provide a copy of the Memory Book for Africa for each member of the Group. (copies can be downloaded from the website…) Or printed copies can be bought from TALC. www.talcuk.org. If its not possible to give out full copies try to provide enough to be shared by 3 or 4 people during the work-shop.

- If its not possible to give out the whole Memory Book, it is essential to provide copies of the following key pages:

  - The Mango Tree
  - Family Tree Outline
  - Maps of your country, Africa, the world
  - Page headings.

These sheets will be needed in Topic 4/D. Copies are provided at the end of Part D.



- Bring a supply of newsprint, marker pens, colour pens, scrap paper, plastic sleeves and any other materials you can find which will be useful to group members when they start writing the first pages of their books.

- Bring a few notebooks, folders, files etc as examples of what could be used to make a Memory Book.(Needed in Topic 4/A)

- Collect some non-confidential examples of things which could go into a Memory Book – photos, newspaper cuttings, child's drawings, favourite recipe or hymn, list of names of relatives etc.

- Keep a supply of pictures of babies and children taken from newspapers or magazines which could be used by parents who have no photos.

- Bring along examples of containers which could be used for Memory Basket or Memory Box – such as a traditional woven basket, tin trunk or painted cardboard box. (for Topic 4/B).

- Copy of Orla Guerrin's report about mothers making Memory Books to read out in Topic 4/ A.(Copy of transcript of BBC report is provided at end of Part A.)

- Copies of the information sheet on "Your Turn, My Turn" to give out to group members near the end of Topic 4/E.

- A few anonymous samples of Action Plans made up by trainer/workshop leader in advance. (For Topic 4/E)



Part A. What is the Memory Book.

AIMS OF THIS SESSION:

- To introduce Memory Book ideas at a level which will help people with no previous experience or knowledge of it.
- To help group members to see how the Memory Book fits in with all the other topics in this training programme.
- To build confidence of members of the group by showing that all of them have knowledge, experience and memories which they can pass on through their own personal Memory Book.



KEY FACTS TO GET ACROSS IN PART A:

- The Memory Book is for everyone – not just for people who are ill – because ALL children need to know the facts about themselves.
- The thinking/remembering/talking/sharing which go into making a Memory Book can actually make you feel better.
- There is no prize for the "best" Memory Book. Instead the prize is for the children who get to hear the family story direct from their parents and carers.
- Making a Memory Book is a wonderful way to get the generations talking to each other.
- The Memory Book may contain some difficult information but its also the place to store happy memories.



How to run this session:

- explain the Memory Book ideas as you would to people who have never seen or heard of it. They need to know:

  - **What it looks like.** Show range of samples – make up your own if you cant borrow from other people.

  - **What it contains.** Show some sample pages.

  - **Who it is intended for.** Describe the pioneer women who decided to come out and be open about living with HIV/Aids and were amongst the first to write Memory Books for their children. Explain that the Memory Book has also been used by families who are coping with separation and loss for many other reasons, not just HIV. (You don't have to be ill or dying to make a Memory Book. ALL children need this information.)



- **Where did the ideas come from.** It was started in England to help African families who were a long way from home. The ideas spread to Uganda and thanks to the efforts of a few strong women, its now known all over the world.

- **BBC report on Memory Book work in Uganda.** If you have time read out the report by BBC reporter Orla Guerrin (available on this website.)

- **Explain how Memory Book ideas fit together with other topics in this training programme.** For example doing this work helps parents understand why they need to talk openly with their children (topic 3) and plan for their future (topic 7.) Discuss some of the other topics in the training programme which link in with the Memory Book.

- **Why it's so important to leave a legacy of ideas and information for children.** Describe some pages such as "My hopes for your future" and "Our faith and what we believe in" and discuss what they might contain.

- **How the Memory Book can help children to really understand who they are and hold on to a clear sense of identity, especially if they get separated from family or community.** Talk about some of the pages which could help children know who they are and where they belong.

GROUP ACTIVITY: WALKING & TALKING

after so long sitting and listening, get everyone moving. Introduce the ***Walking and Talking activity*** (See separate instructions at end of Topic 4/Part A.)

Ask participants to move around, discussing anything arising from today's introduction to the Memory Book, especially any fears about how they will manage to do the work, what will be hard, what will be fun.



⇨ After ten minutes bring the group back together for a few minutes feed back. Encourage questions and problems - especially from less confident members.

⇨ Give reassurance including any of the following points:

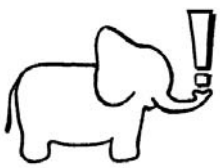
- Some parents feel desperate that they have so little information, but other people in their circle will be able to help – relatives, neighbours, teachers. Part C of this topic (the Mango Tree) will focus on where to get ideas and support.

- Making a Memory Book is not like an exercise at school. No-one will be marked down for bad writing or for not filling in every page! The important thing is to help children make more sense of the past and be less afraid of the future. Even a few words and ideas will help.



- Most children are nosey and when they see their parents working on the Memory Book they will want to know what it is. Its not something to hide. On the contrary it's a great way to start talking and getting the children involved - and the sooner the better!

- In the next sessions there will be help around for people who are not comfortable with reading and writing.



AND FINALLY:

- ⇨ Give out copies of the Memory Book for Africa, or copies of the key pages (listed above.)
- ⇨ Ask everyone to come to the next session with 2 or 3 items which could be included in their memory book, such as a family photo, a school report, a favourite poem or hymn, a leaf from a tree in the yard…..All ideas welcome!
- ⇨ Ask everyone to bring in a small object from home which stirs up memories of their own childhood. They will be invited to talk about it at the next session.

END OF PART A….

MEMORY PROJECT

Transcript of BBC Report on the Memory Project - Uganda

ORLA GUERIN is a foreign correspondent with the BBC. She travelled to Uganda to meet the women of NACWOLA who were the pioneers of Memory Book work in Africa. Below is a transcript of her talk which was broadcast on the BBC in the UK and on the World Service in 2000. The work and the people she describes are 100% true. Very similar work continues to this day, but now under the leadership of a new organisation called National Co-allition of Women with HIV/Aids in Uganda - NACOA. (NACOA.Uganda@gmail.com) NACOA members work out of the same old buildingß, up a dusty side road in Kampala. ***This is what Orla said on the radio:***

If you want to say goodbye now what would you say?

If you had to gather up all the fragments of your life and tell your story to those you are leaving behind where would you begin?

How would you find words to tell your children you're dying and what advice would you leave behind?

Up a dirt road in Kampala past rows of wooden huts, coated in squalor, there is a small house where dying women are writing of their lives.

The house is small but welcoming. So many little feet have played in the garden that the grass has been rubbed away. Inside the bare front room a framed photo of Princess Anne hangs over a long table. She visited in 1998. Here at the table, women work on their Memory Books. These are home made scrap books with photographs pasted in and pencil drawings of family trees with tribes and clans. They contain happiness and pain of a whole life time; tracing the story of the mother, from her own birth right up to the birth of her children and on to present day. The women tell their sons and daughters about their first steps, their first words, their first days at school. They will leave behind a separate book for each of their children.

Irene Nakku-Namagembe has four books to write for her daughter and three sons. She's working hard to finish them in time. "The books will be their treasure I will leave them," she told me. "The children can see me crying as I write some parts but through the books I can tell them things I find hard to say." In her Memory Book, Irene is telling her children about their father's death from Aids. "The children say you're going to die just like daddy," Irene told me, "But in the book I am able to explain that I'm not going to die today."

The Memory Books are an act of love and bravery. The women explain how they were infected. How sick they sometime feel and how much time they may have left. Those who cannot read or write are being helped by their own children. One woman died after she had written just a few pages. Her son is trying to finish her story.

"My son, Ezra, loves football" Irene told me. "And his brother Ediga likes music. So I am telling them to keep up those interests when I am gone. Although they must study, too. For my girl I am saying I don't want you to have to get married even if you can't stay at school. If we live long enough we can tell our children in person what we want for them, if not at least it's in the book."

Rebecca Nakabazzi is just 24 years old but she has already finished the Memory Book she is leaving for her 9 year old son, Julius Logolube. This attractive, slender, young woman with carefully braided hair and tiny star shaped gold earrings seem to me to be well but when she sat by my side and began to show me her book I could see that her life was slipping away. "That's me," she said, pointing to a broad shouldered girl with a round face and full cheeks. I could see no trace of this girl in the slight figure beside me.

"Julius, I was in labour all night," she writes, "and you weighed 4.3 kilos when you arrived. As a baby you were fat but you sat up early. You like porridge with no milk, and you never cried before

Transcript of BBC Report on the Memory Project - Uganda

going to school. You wanted to go. You always liked to play alone. And you liked keeping rabbits and going out on your bicycle. My favourite memory is of the time someone brought some food and you kept a piece for me. And then there was the time when you stayed with me for days after my brother died."

A lively, confident boy smiles out from the photographs in Rebecca's book. Julius looks like a happy child. but the family snap shots of picnics and parties include many loved ones who are already dead. His father, Patrick, his young cousin, Brenda, his aunt, Betty, all have been taken by Aids.

The book includes detailed instructions on how to reach his grandmother's house. "I don't know which relative will take him after my death," Rebecca told me. "So I want to make sure he can always find his way back to my mother's place." "You might meet with problems," she writes to Julius, "but I want you to bear with them. If you get the chance to stay on in school I want you to be active in your school work. I want you to go to University and to get married when you grow up." But Julius may not live long enough to fulfill these dreams. In the book Rebecca tells him, very gently, that he too was tested for HIV when he was just 4 and he also has the disease.

Simple as they are the books cost more to put together than many of these women can afford. But they all want to write one. "It is the last thing we can do for our children," Irene says.

A retired British social worker, Carol Lindsay-Smith, from Suffolk, got the project going. She's still a regular visitor to the house in Kampala. "It helps the women so much to know their children are prepared," she says. "And the children get to know their mother is not just someone who is dying, but someone who has led a life."

MEMORY PROJECT

TOPIC 4a - GROUP ACTIVITY Walking and Talking

This activity can be used to help members of the group get talking easily about a wide range of topics. It can be useful at different times in the training programme. Today it is being used to encourage everyone to talk about their hopes and fears about making Memory Books and some of the other ideas that have been raised so far.

Procedure:

- Ask group members to clear chairs or mats out of the way.

- Explain that you want them to walk around the room or the compound at an easy pace. It's a bit like walking through the market. Every now and then you will call out STOP and you want them to stop and look around till they spot someone they would like to chat with.

- Explain that you want them to talk about anything coming out of today's introduction to the Memory Book

  – It might be their worries about taking on a huge task,

  – How will they cope if reading and writing are difficult?

  – How will they find all the information they need?

  – How can they get background on the children's father if he is no longer around?



- After 2 or 3 minutes talking time ask them to move on again.

- Repeat the process a few times until everyone has had time to talk or listen to each others questions and worries.

- Bring everyone back together to share their questions and feelings.

- Write down any important ideas and questions and reassure the group that these will be covered in later parts of the workshop.
  (Trainer be sure to keep this list of available for the rest of Topic 4 so you can tackle any problems as you go along.)



Part B. Bringing Memories to Life.

AIMS OF PART B:

- To help members of the group to re-live important experiences and recall memories from their own childhood.
- To show that knowing about the past helps us make sense of the present and do better in the future.
- To help parents work out which memories and information will be important to pass on to their own children.
- To introduce the idea of the Memory Box or Memory Basket and what could go into it.
- To give parents a chance to start thinking IF and HOW to involve their children in the Memory Book work.



KEY FACTS TO GET ACROSS IN THIS SESSION:

- All sorts of things stir up memories, not just big events or valuable objects.
- Everyone will have different ideas about what is important and what helps to build up a solid identity.
- All the stories people tell today could become part of their personal Memory Book.
- Give parents a chance to discuss whether its right to involve their children in Memory Book work – and if so when and how?
- Remind parents that if they let their children get involved in the Memory Book work they will have their own ideas about what they want to know and will want to choose some of the "precious objects" to go in the Memory Basket.
- If someone tells a story which brings tears, don't run away from it – we all, trainers and group members, need a chance to talk about the hard realities of life & death.
- If someone tells a story which brings laughter, take the chance to say memories can be happy as well as sad.
- Remind members of the group again that they have all promised not to discuss personal information outside the group.



CASE STUDY 1

In the early days of the Memory Project the trainers were looking for different ways to help group members REMEMBER THE PAST. The idea came up to bring in a Memorable Object. No-one had any idea what to bring. But one woman "hit the spot." She brought in a tiny tin cooking pot which she remembered her grandmother using over the open fire in their home. As she talked about her frail old grandma, she remembered her childhood in the village, her parents working far away, the many days without news or money, but how her grandmother always managed to keep things going. This old lady was strict, sometimes harsh, but the children were always clean, punctual for school, polite to their elders, religion played a big part in their life. As this woman described her early life and her love & respect for the tough old granny, other members chimed in with their child hood memories – some sad, some warm and happy. It was as if the lid was OFF the box of memories.



How to run this session:

GROUP ACTIVITY:

when group members arrive invite them to get together in threes to talk about something pleasant It could be a favourite song, special food, how they chose their children's names. (All these ideas will be useful later on when writing their Memory Books.) there's no feedback from this exercise except to remind everyone to "hold on to your memories."

- ⇨ Next bring the group together and explain that no two Memory Books will be the same.They are all made up of the history, memories, hopes and fears of each family. Everyone who writes a Memory Book has different experiences and things they want to explain. Every child has different questions that need answers.

- ⇨ Now invite group members to take part in a short Brainstorm, when they can share and compare their ideas on what sort of information will be important for their family.(You can find advice on "brainstorming" in the Trainer's section of the Memory Books website.)

- ⇨ Ask members of the group to call out their ideas on what they think their children will want to read or see in their family Memory Book. Write down the ideas on newsprint.

NEXT:

- ⇨ Introduce the idea of Memory Baskets and Memory Boxes – small containers in which people can save a few small everyday objects which will remind the children of family and home.

- ⇨ Show some different containers which they could use - a traditional basket, tin box or decorated cardboard box.



⇨ Next invite members of the group to show and talk about their Memorable Objects brought in from home.This was the "homework" from the previous session.) Ask each person to say how it makes them FEEL and what MEMORIES it brings up. If anyone forgot to bring an object, invite her to describe what she would have brought and why its important to her.

⇨ If group members are willing invite them to put their objects into the basket or box which you have provided. (They will get them back at the end!).

⇨ Point out the variety of objects and the different emotions and stories which have come to the surface. These are the sorts of memories and ideas which will make their Memory Books and Memory Baskets "come alive."

⇨ Encourage group members to suggest what else they could find around the home that would help to build up the memories. These don't have to be valuables but simple things like an old toy, a piece of cloth from mother's dress, photos, children's drawings, even a stone or dried leaves from the compound.

⇨ At the end make sure everyone gets back their precious object.

GROUP ACTIVITY:
split the members into small groups, each to discuss one of the following questions:

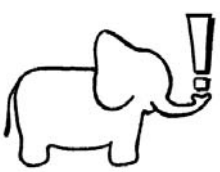
- If we talk to our children about the sort of information that is coming up in this training how do we know they can be trusted with family secrets?

- How can we explain the Memory Book ideas to our children and the reasons why we feel we must do this work?

- Is this a good way to start talking openly – or is it easier to keep quiet and hope our children wont get too inquisitive?

- If we let the children get involved with Books and Baskets, how will we cope with their questions?

⇨ Ask for feedback from each group and end with encouragement that they keep thinking and talking about when and how to inform and involve their children.



HOMEWORK. Ask group members to make a list of 5 people or events which have made a difference to their lives. These could be good or bad experiences. This information will be useful in the next session.

END OF PART B.



Part C. The Mango Tree.

AIMS OF THIS SESSION:

- To help members of the group face up to the ways family life is changing - and why its becoming so important to write down the information children will need in the future.
- To compare the African oral tradition to the idea of writing down important family information which is being suggested in this training.
- To think of different people who have memories and information about their community, family and individual children.
- To help group members realise that they have already learned a lot of new ideas and are now on the way to finding new ways to tackle their problems.



KEY FACTS TO GET ACROSS IN THIS SESSION:

- Many extended families are overwhelmed by illness and other problems, so parents can't always rely on the old systems for help in bringing up their children.
- If the future looks bleak, parents need to find different people and organisations to help them with advice, information and support. They must not wait until the crisis hits home.
- Once family information is written down, even if parents or elders are not around to tell them, children will always be able to get at the true facts. Its even better if children have been able to discuss the contents of their Memory Book with their parents.
- Many of the ideas discussed in this and other sessions are just what's needed to go in the Memory Book.
- In every session, every day, people have made progress in thinking and speaking about things that really matter for their children. Now its time to catch the words on paper!



How to run this session:

- Tell members of the group that you want them to think about how family life used to be organised and how they learned important family information when they were children. (learning through stories told by grandparents, doing simple tasks as part of the family workforce, gradually becoming aware of traditions and rules and the status of clan elders and community leaders….)
- Ask them to call out (brainstorm) their experiences of growing up in a traditional family with its history, rules and traditions. How were decisions made? Who was in charge? What was it like for the children? Write ideas on newsprint.



⇨ Next divide the group into 4's or 5's. Ask them to talk about their own family life today and HOW and WHY things have changed from the ideas listed on the newsprint?

⇨ After ten minutes ask them to think about the ideas being raised in this training (openess between parents & children, planning for their future, written information etc.) Ask them to talk in their small group about WHAT THEY CAN DO to help their children know who they are, where they belong and who they can trust in the future.

⇨ Bring the small groups together and take feedback on both steps of their discussion. Ask the group how far they think they have begun to build the new ideas into their thinking?

NEXT

⇨ In the second part of the session introduce the MANGO TREE. Provide copies of the outline for each person and explain its purpose, using information from the Mango Tree instructions sheet (at the end of part C).

⇨ Ask members to go back into their small groups to work on

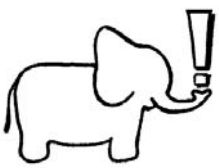
(a) WHO has knowledge of the family history which could be included in the Memory Book – this might include memories of a parent or grandparent who has passed away or stories about individual children

(b) WHO could parents ask for personal support while working on their Memory Books.

⇨ After discussion in their groups, each person can fill in some mangos with ideas of people they could talk to.They may want to include some of the people from yesterday's homework list.

⇨ Before the session ends remind the group members:

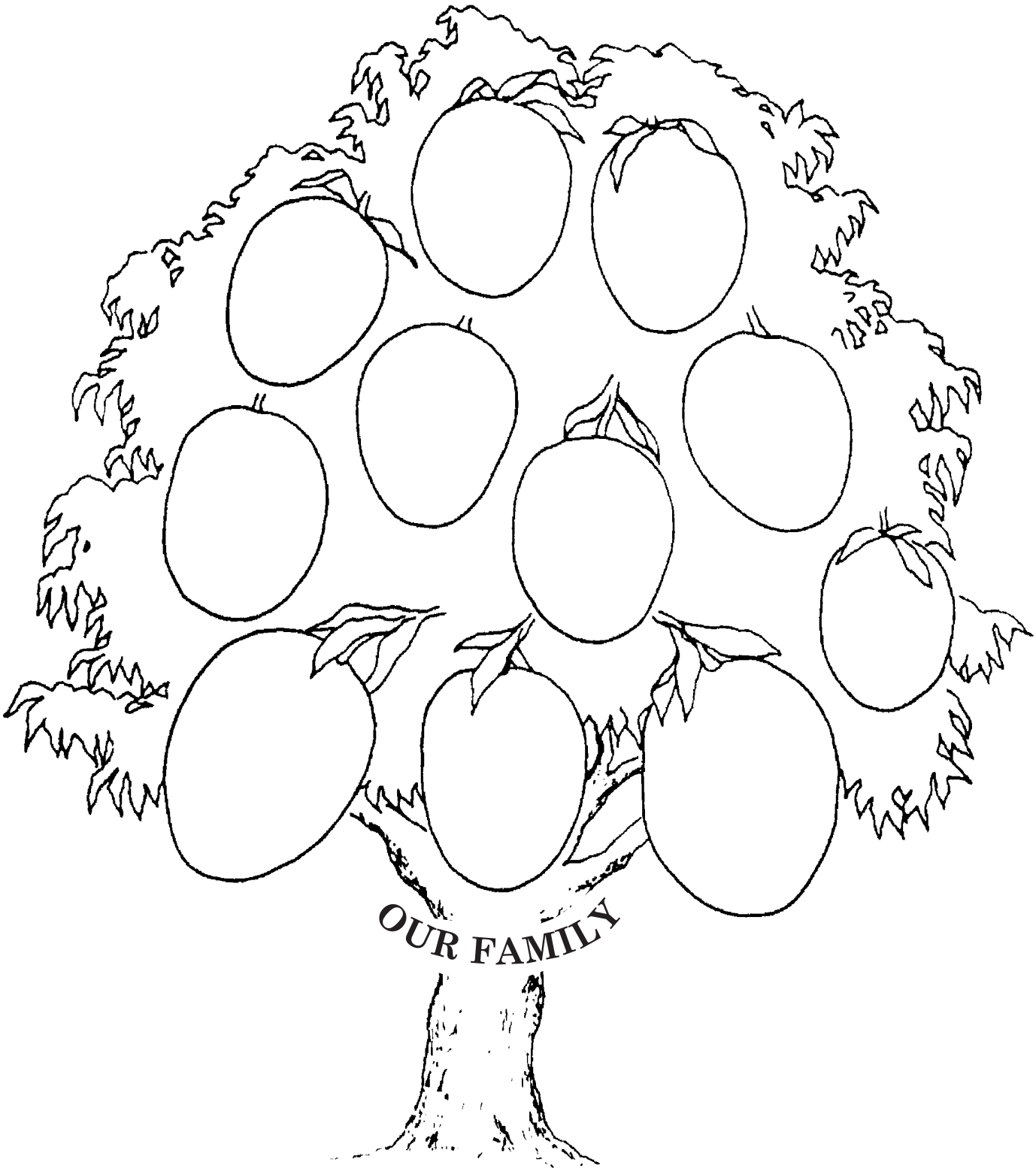
- the Mango Tree doesn't have to be full of names at this stage.
- this is just an exercise to get people thinking about sources of information and help outside the immediate family circle. ***No-one is expected to follow up on these ideas until they feel ready***.
- Children might like to see the Mango Tree and suggest some names to be included.



FINALLY: Remind members of the group that the next part of this topic will be a practical session, getting started on planning and writing pages of their Memory Books and ending with ideas about how they can stick to their plan and get the support they need to see it through.

END OF PART C.

People and Organisations which can help us make plans for our children



MEMORY PROJECT

TOPIC 4 - GROUP ACTIVITY The Mango Tree

The Mango Tree idea can be used in several ways in different parts of the Memory Project. For example:

- When parents are just getting started on collecting information to include in the Memory Book they are making for their children, the Mango Tree can be used to make a list of "people who can be asked for ideas and memories." This is the way it is used in Topic 4.

- When parents are starting to make plans for the future care of their children, the Mango Tree can be used as a way of listing "People and Organisations which can help us make plans for our children." This is the way its used in Topic 7.

- Whenparents and children are working together to write a Memory Book, the Mango Tree can be used as an easy way for the chid to write or draw pictures of "Important people in your life."

Using the Mango Tree in Topic 4.

- Make a copy of the Mango Tree outline for each member of the group.

- Explain the purpose of the activity – in Topic 4 the Mango Tree is being used as a way of helping people to think of who could be asked for information and memories about the family and individual children.

- Divide up into small groups. People will be talking about sensitive personal information so they need to feel comfortable with the people in their group.

- Some people may prefer to work alone or in pairs.

- Ask people to share ideas so they can learn from each other. They don't have to name names but suggest the sort of people who could be asked for help. (a check list is given at the end of this sheet.)

- Here are some questions to help group members focus:
  - Who knows about the family history?
  - Who could fill in memories of a parent who has already passed away?
  - Who can supply stories about individual children?
  - Who knows about family and clan traditions?
  - Who knows where family members are buried?

- At the end of the discussion each person can start to fill in her mangoes with names of people who may be able to help them collect important information.

- It doesn't matter if the Mango Tree isn't full of names. This is just the starting point.

- Remind people that the main purpose of this activity is to start thinking about who has information beyond the obvious circle of family and friends.

- Bring everyone together to share ideas. Be ready to fill in any gaps with ideas from the checklist.

CHECKLIST FOR TRAINERS/WORKSHOP LEADERS:

Here are ideas of people who may have useful information:

- School teachers.
- Parents of school friends.
- Religious leaders and members of congregation.
- Youth and sports club leaders.
- Health workers.
- Community leaders and Clan elders.
- Employers, work friends.
- Extended family including those living overseas
- Grandparents, brothers and sisters.
- People still living in the village where the family came from.
- Relatives of parent or grandparent who has already died.



Part D. Getting Started on Memory Books

AIMS OF THIS SESSION:

- To talk about different ways of making Memory Books.
- To think about whether to make a Memory Book for each child or one for the family to share.
- To fill in sample pages from the Memory Book.
- To work out how to use ideas from the Mango Tree exercise in previous session.
- To continue collecting ideas for contents of the Memory Basket/Box.



KEY FACTS TO GET ACROSS IN PART D:

- It takes time to make one Memory Book, let alone several versions for different children. Its best to tackle a few pages at a time.
- Its not a race! Everyone can go at her own pace.
- If you use a loose leaf folder or leave empty pages in a note book, new information and photos can be added any time. ***In fact the Memory Book should be a living record of the family today as well as holding information from the past.***
- Pages written during the training can be re-written at home if they haven't come out quite right.
- Some families have moved around so much they have lost all the family records and photos.They can still make a book based on whatever they can remember and using pictures from newspapers or magazines, or their own drawings, to represent their children.
- Once parents start to think and write about what their children need to know, they begin to realise its just a small step to start to talk with their children.
- Most children are excited if they catch sight of the maps, Mango Tree and family trees and are really keen to get involved.
- They specially love collecting items for the Memory Basket.
- THIS IS NOT AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK, JUST TAKE IT ON ONE DAY AT A TIME… the last part of this Topic will give ideas on how to keep going and finding a **Memory Book Partner.**



How to run this session:

⇨ Tell the group that after the hard work in previous sessions, this is the big moment when they can get creative and really start to write.

⇨ Show the anonymous Memory Book or sample pages (made by you the trainer in advance!) to remind them of different ways of making Memory Books.

⇨ Ask the group members to sort themselves into small groups where they will feel comfortable talking about personal information.

⇨ Ask each group to choose one of the "easy" topics (eg. My Schooldays or Where I grew up.) First they can share ideas, then start writing their ideas on sheets of paper.

⇨ Remind the group that this is just a trial run – whatever they write can be improved and copied into their real book later on.

⇨ Next bring the group together to discuss:
- how has it felt so far?
- is it better to make a book for each of their children or one big family book to share?
- what are the problems or benefits either way? (eg costs, time available, unequal amounts of information on each child; problems arising when children have different fathers etc.)

⇨ Write up important ideas on newsprint.

⇨ Next ask everyone to go back into small groups with the same people or different people – their choice.

⇨ This time ask them to tackle more complicated topics (eg. My health, My hopes for your future …) First they can discuss ideas in the group, then start to write down their individual ideas on sheets of paper.

⇨ Bring the group back together and ask for feedback about how it has felt to work on such sensitive information. Write important points on newsprint.

⇨ In the last ten minutes of this session ask group members to choose a partner to talk about what names each of them has written on their Mango Tree and how they think these named people will be able to help (a) with information and (b) by providing support.

FINALLY reassure group members that they have made a good start. They have collected material from earlier sessions as well as writing some pages today; they have lots of ideas about contents for a Memory Basket and some of them seem interested in letting their children get involved. THIS IS NOT AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK!

Remind the group that there is one more short session to complete this topic. It is called HOW TO KEEP GOING and will provide ideas on how to make an action plan and how to set up an informal support system.

END OF PART D.

This

Memory Book

is for

.....

This Memory Book has been written by.....

The Story Of Our Family

Facts About Members Of Our Family

Our Family Home

Our Faith - The Things We Believe In

Family Traditions & Special Events

Your Birth

How You Got Your Name

When You Were a Baby

The First Time You

Your School Days & Growing Up

Your Interests & Activities

My Favourite Memories Of You

My Hopes For Your Future

Important People In Your Life

Information About Your Health

Information About Your Mother

Mother's Childhood

Mother's Growing Up & Adult Life

Mother's Interests & Activities

Mother's Likes & Dislikes

Mother's Special Memories

Mother's Beliefs & Thoughts On Life

Mother's Health

Mother's Life Today

Information About Your Father

Father's Childhood

Father's Growing Up & Adult Life

Father's Interests & Activities

Father's Likes & Dislikes

Father's Special Memories

Father's Beliefs & Thoughts On Life

Father's Health

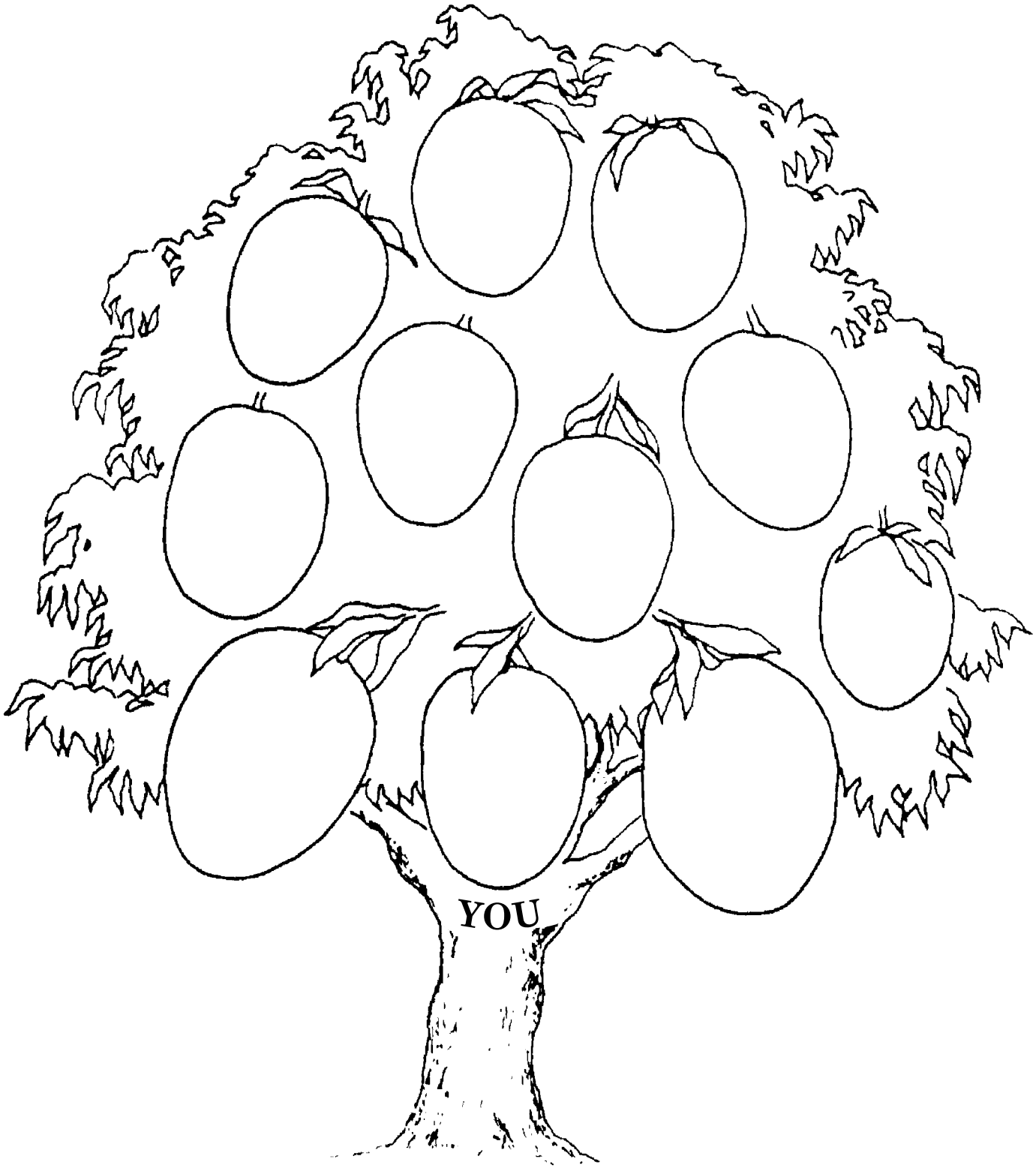
Father's Life Today

Names & Addresses Of People
Who Are Important To Our Family

Dates & Information About
Other Important Events & People

Where To Find Documents & Records

Important People In Your Life



FAMILY TREE



GRANDFATHER	GRANDMOTHER

GRANDFATHER	GRANDMOTHER

UNCLES	AUNTS	OTHER UNIONS	FATHER	MOTHER	OTHER UNIONS	UNCLES	AUNTS

COUSINS	HALF BOTHERS/ SISTERS	BROTHERS/SISTERS	BROTHERS/SISTERS	HALF BOTHERS/ SISTERS	COUSINS

YOU

MAP OF AFRICA



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Part E. How to Keep Going.

AIMS OF THIS SESSION:

- To give members of the group ideas on how to write a simple action plan to help them keep up the pace on completing their Memory Books and any other related work they decide to take on. (Ideas on making Action Plans is given in Information Sheet/Handout at the end of this section.)

- To try out ***Your turn My turn*** - a way of giving and receiving support which may help parents to keep focussed on the work they want to do as a result of this training course. (This idea is fully explained in the Group Activity sheet /Handout at the end of this section.) Another way to describe this idea is "**Finding a Memory Book Partner**".



KEY FACTS TO GET ACROSS IN PART E:

- People have begun to come together as a group and deal with some challenging new ideas. Its hard to face the end of this session and realise that each person has to continue alone.

- Everyone has learned and changed. The next trick is to hold on to the new ideas and good resolutions.

- Having a written **plan of action** helps us to stay focussed and measure progress.

- **Talking regularly** with a ***Memory Book Partner*** who has been through the same experience makes it easier to stick to plan.



How to run this session:

- Explain to the group that we are all full of good intentions but most of us find it very difficult to stick to plan.

- Having a written PLAN of ACTION can help.

- Show examples of ANONYMOUS action plans (made up in advance by the trainers and based on ideas in Action Plan information sheet given below.)

- Spend 5 minutes taking ideas from the group about what they might want to include in their Plan of Action.

- Write up the ideas on newsprint so group members can see how it would look.

- Encourage members of the group to make an Action Plan in the next few days.

- Next explain the informal support system called Your Turn My Turn. Use the information in the Group Activity sheet below to introduce the idea of finding a reliable Talking and Listening Partner.



⇨ Then invite members of the group to try out this idea , to see if this way of helping and supporting each other could be helpful to them.

⇨ As far as possible follow instructions on the My Turn Your Turn sheet (see below.) Encourage people to find one or two others that they would feel comfortable talking to, then to look for a quiet spot and get going.

⇨ But beware, if time is running short you may have to simplify what you ask people to do, or limit the amount of time for each person to talk. *The important thing is to give everyone a chance to be the Talker and the Listener; also to have the experience of talking about whatever feels most important to them.*This is a luxury for most people!

AND FINALLY.

⇨ Bring group members back together again. Don't ask for detailed feedback on what they have discussed. But sound them out for **how it felt** to be free to talk and to get full attention from someone who cares about you and understands your situation. Also how it felt to really listen to someone else's issues?

⇨ Remind people that its a personal decision whether or not to find a Talking and Listening Partner (or Memory Book Partner??) Each 'partnership' will have to make its own decision about when to meet, how long to talk and the boundaries of discussion.

⇨ Some people might want to use their Partner to help them stick to their personal Plan for Action. Others may need help coping with a crisis. Its up to them how they use the space.

⇨ Remind everyone *again* that absolute confidentiality is essential when they share personal information.

⇨ Before people leave give out copies of the information sheets on the Plan for Action and on Your Turn My Turn.

⇨ This is now the conclusion of TOPIC 4 and you the trainer and all who have worked through this long topic should be congratulating each other on what you have achieved and what you WILL achieve in the weeks ahead!

CLOSE THE SESSION AS YOU WISH - THERE ARE A VARIETY OF IDEAS IN THE SECTION FOR TRAINERS.

End of topic 4

MEMORY PROJECT

GROUP ACTIVITY: Your Turn My Turn - *a helpful way to give and receive support*

Background information for the trainer/ workshop leader to explain to members of the group.
Many people come along to the Memory Project workshops because they hope it will solve all their family problems. But sometimes the workshops raise more questions than they answer. In fact group members are sometimes left feeling they will never manage to sort out their lives and make things better for their children.

But over the years members of the groups have realised that the workshops are just the beginning of the process. The next step, to USE the new ideas and take control of their lives, is up to them.

Gradually some good ideas have grown up including simple ways to help each other to keep working on difficult decisions and making big changes. One of these ideas is ***Your Turn – My Turn.*** This is a way to make space for talking and listening with a trusted friend. People who manage to do this regularly find that it helps them to cope better with the pressures and problems of daily life. Whatever problems come along they know it there will soon be a time when they can offload their fears and frustrations. ***Your Turn – My Turn*** is explained below.

Another idea is to write down an Action Plan covering the most important and urgent tasks which have to be faced. This is described in a separate information sheet at the end of Topic 4/E.

People who manage to put these two ideas together often find themselves moving forward.

Your Turn – My turn explained.
Your turn – My turn is a way for two people who have similar problems to give each other a listening ear. They become Talking and Listening Partners who agree to meet on a regular basis, taking it in turns to talk and listen to each other.

Most of us have problems finding the right time and place to talk about the things that are really important to us. We don't want to make demands on people who have worries of their own. So we pass in the road, both with our heavy burdens of worries and fears. We keep missing the opportunity to "share the load."

But how would it feel if we could find the right person, a reliable friend, to be our ***Talking and Listening Partner?*** Could it really help to share our worries and support each other to work on problems which keep us awake at night?

The experience of parents who have already tried this idea is that they soon begin to feel stronger, more in charge of their lives. They get through each day more easily because they know another support session will be coming up soon. Instead of sinking under the weight of problems, they begin to work out with their partner how to tackle one thing at a time. Another good outcome is that the give and take of listening and sharing ideas on a regular basis benefits both partners – so they can both feel satisfied that they are really helping someone else.

If this simple arrangement can really help - how can we get going?

Trying out Your turn – My turn in the workshop.

The trainer/workshop leader will explain the ideas given above and give the following guidance on trying out the system:

- Members of the group who want to take part are invited to choose a talking/ listening partner from among those present. (This may not be their permanent partner, its just a way of trying out the system.)

MEMORY PROJECT

GROUP ACTIVITY: Your Turn My Turn - a helpful way to give and receive support

- They move to a quiet spot in the room or compound and each person has ten minutes to talk about whatever is on her mind.

- Its important to warn everyone that at this stage they should not share information that they want to keep confidential. (Later on, if they decide to try the system for real, they can decide exactly what to share.)

- The listener encourages and responds but does NOT interrupt with her own problems at this stage.

- After ten minutes they swap over, so the Listener becomes the talker, with her own chance to explain her problems.

- After 20 minutes the group comes together. The trainer must emphasise that there will be absolutely no feedback on personal information.

- Explain that people will be invited to share their view on general questions which will help other members of the group to think if this is something they want to try.

- Possible areas for feedback/discussion include:
  - ✦ From this brief experience is it likely to be a good way to give and get support?
  - ✦ How would you find the right person that you can trust with your personal information?
  - ✦ How could you make time to meet and talk?
  - ✦ Would it be important to have a regular time and place to meet?
  - ✦ What happens if the partners cant keep to the right balance of talking and listening?

- Finally it is suggested that anyone who plans to try this support system should follow simple ground rules. Copies of page 3 to be given to anyone wanting to try out the ideas.

MEMORY PROJECT

GROUP ACTIVITY: Your Turn My Turn - a helpful way to give and receive support

Ground Rules.

If you decide to try out Your Turn – My Turn please keep these ideas in mind:

- When you find a Talking and Listening Partner make a firm promise to each other that whatever you share is strictly confidential.
- Decide on a trial period – say 4 meetings – to give both of you a chance to see if this system suits you and whether you can both keep to the agreed times.
- Decide on a time to meet that's convenient for you both, for example just after children have gone to school or just after church?
- Work out how often you will meet. Don't be too ambitious because you don't want to let each other down.
- Decide how much time you can both spare – for example a total of 40 minutes giving each person 20 minutes to talk. When you see how it goes you can increase or decrease the time.
- Decide on a place to meet that's easy for you both and where you have privacy to talk.
- If both partners have written Action Plans, this might form a good basis for discussion.
- Decide in advance to review the "experiment" after the agreed trial period. Be prepared to be honest if you don't think its working well enough.

MEMORY PROJECT

GROUP ACTIVITY: Ideas on Action Plans

Most of us really mean to get on and do the things that are URGENT and IMPORTANT - things like:

- Talking to our children about problems in the family.
- Making a Will
- Registering our rights to ownership of property
- Finding people who are willing to be guardians to our children
- Making peace with relatives or neighbours when there has been a dispute.
- Making sure our children have a clear sense of who they are – (this might be done by completing their Memory Books.)

Every family Will have other URGENT and IMPORTANT things on their list – which are just waiting for the right moment to be done.

But there are plenty of reasons why most of us put off doing the things that matter the most..

For example:

- We are afraid to face up to serious problems about health, money, relationships.
- We may not know where to get advice, especially about legal and money matters.
- Its hard to find the right time to start talking to children and family.
- We may feel that we just don't know enough or we are not strong enough to stand up for our rights.
- We know its going to take time – and we are already overloaded just coping day to day - with illness, lack of money, childcare.

So its not surprising that most of us feel its just too much to take on the big problems. Its easier to turn a "blind eye" and just hope that one day the "right moment" will turn up.

But the fact is, unless WE make the decision to take on these things that matter the most, they will not get done. They are not going to go away but will sit there, worrying us night and day.

WHAT can we do about it???

Most of us make lists (on paper or in our minds) of things we need to get on with every day. Most lists are a mix of small easy things and big difficult things. Its easy to tick off the simple things (getting food, choir practice, school fees.) But the big ugly things get left un-done day after day. SO WE NEED TO FIND A WAY TO MAKE SURE THE IMPORTANT AND URGENT THINGS DON'T KEEP SLIPPING OFF THE BOTTOM OF THE LIST!

One idea is to make a special list - an **ACTION PLAN** – which only lists things that are both IMPORTANT AND URGENT. These are the things we really need to do if we are ever going to have peace of mind.

On the back of this sheet is an example of a very simple **ACTION PLAN**.Each person can change it to suit herself – putting down the things that matter most in her personal situation.

Remember.

- Don't write an impossibly long list. Better to put down your top five tasks and really work on them (and then have the satisfaction of ticking them off.)
- When you have cleared a couple of tasks from the list you can add two more – or move some up from the NOT so urgent list.
- IF you decide to look for a Talking and Listening partner (as explained in the information sheet on "Your Turn My Turn") you could both use your Action Plans as the starting place. This way your meetings will focus on what matters most to each of you.
- Don't despair if you get stuck on your first Important and Urgent task. Move on to another one and you will build up your confidence.
- Never forget that two brains working on a problem are better than one!

ACTION PLAN

Name.....

Things to be done that are **URGENT AND IMPORTANT**	**WHO** can help me to get these things done???	**WHEN** will I **TRY** to do it?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
Things to be done that are IMPORTANT but NOT so URGENT. (These can be moved up when there is a space..) 1		
2		

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