Substance Use and Mental Health - Session activity

Facilitate a structured practice of substance use and mental health with preparation, reflection, and an agreed closing.

Mental health professionals | 30 minutes

Fictional example: Casey notices difficulty remembering routines after some evenings and wants a nonjudgmental discussion.

0-5 min | Agree on purpose and fit

Explain the educational scope. Ask what would be useful, check readiness and access needs, and establish choices to observe, adapt, or pass. Use an ordinary example; do not solicit trauma narratives.

5-10 min | Orient with an example

IMR-informed planning can address substance use and mental health together. Fictional example: Casey notices difficulty remembering routines after some evenings and wants a nonjudgmental discussion. Ask what is observed and what remains uncertain.

10-20 min | Practice and compare

Map how a substance-use pattern and mental health concerns may interact, labeling uncertainty and questions for the team. Offer quiet individual work, a supported conversation, or an observing role. Compare two possible responses without evaluating people as right or wrong.

20-25 min | Reflect on meaning

What should be explored without jumping to a causal conclusion? Ask what fit, what did not fit, and how culture, power, disability access, or external conditions affect the options.

25-30 min | Integrate and close

Invite one optional next step or support request. Orient to the current setting, allow an unfinished question to remain unfinished, and agree how to revisit it. End early or adapt if activation increases.

Adaptations

For a group, use fiction and no compulsory round-robin disclosure. For remote use, allow off-camera reflection and private notes. For brief use, keep one example and one question while retaining opening and closing choices.

Reflection

What adaptation or follow-up is needed?

Scope and adaptation

Original IMR-informed companion exercises, not the official IMR manual, fidelity assessment, or complete IMR program. Use collaborative clinical assessment and existing care plans. Do not change medication independently, challenge distressing beliefs through confrontation, or use worksheets to determine urgency. Increased or concerning symptoms need appropriate clinical assessment.

Original AI-assisted educational draft; independent clinical review pending. Version 1.0. Background: Illness Management and Recovery Evidence-Based Practices KIT. Full source links and scope: library.morethantherapy.org/recovery/resources/IMR-A13-4