

RACE4LIFE

Empowering people in Substance Use Disorder recovery



From Theory to Practice

**Integrating Sport in Substance Use
Disorder Recovery**

A Theoretical Foundations and Practical Applications for Sport Science Students



Co-funded by
the European Union

The role of Sport in Addiction Recovery

Play, feel, meet, live



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RACE4LIFE Blended learning for Sport Science University students

Editor

Panagiotounis Fotis, KETHEA, Greece

Co-editor

Angeliki Koutsoukou, KETHEA, Greece

Hassandra Mary, University of Thessaly, Greece

Hatzigeorgiadis, Antonis, University of Thessaly, Greece

Theodorakis, University of Thessaly, Greece

Research team

Stalsberg Mydland Trond, ALARM, Norway

Line Karlotte Staff-Poulsen, ALARM, Norway

Sheehan Lisa, Coolmine, Ireland

Ailish McDonald, Coolmine, Ireland

Ascari Andrea, Centro di Solidarietà di Reggio Emilia, Italy

Notari Giulia, Centro di Solidarietà di Reggio Emilia, Italy

Torras Híjar Eduardo, Association Sport to live, Spain

Rovira Font Maria, Association Sport to live, Spain

Panou Niki, ARGO, Greece

Ioakeimidou Maria, ARGO, Greece

Papamakarios, Georgios, KETHEA, Greece

Nicola Barbieri, UNIMORE, Italy

Pighi Elisa, UNIMORE, Italy

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Substance use disorder: is the persistent use of drugs (including alcohol) despite substantial harm and adverse consequences. Substance use disorders are characterized by an array of mental, physical, and behavioral symptoms that may cause problems related to loss of control, strain on one's interpersonal life, hazardous use, tolerance, and withdrawal.

Addiction: is a treatable, chronic medical disease involving complex interactions among brain circuits, genetics, the environment, and an individual's life experiences. People with addiction use substances or engage in behaviors that become compulsive and often continue despite harmful consequences.

Behavior: an organism's activities in response to external or internal stimuli, including objectively observable activities, introspectively observable activities, and nonconscious processes.

Behavior change: any alteration or adjustment of behavior that affects an individual's functioning, brought about by psychotherapeutic or other interventions or occurring spontaneously.

Tailored sport-based intervention: is defined as a targeted action or process that affects the functioning and/or performance of a person through changes in their thinking and behavior

Sport: All forms of physical activity which, through casual or organized participation, aims at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships, or obtaining results in competition at all levels.

Physical Activity (PA): Any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that results in energy expenditure above resting level.

Exercise: is a subcategory of physical activity that is planned, structured, repetitive, and aims at improving or maintaining one or more components of physical fitness.

Life skills: Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable humans to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of life.

Motivation: the impetus that gives purpose or direction to behavior and operates in humans at a conscious or unconscious level. Motives are frequently divided into (a) physiological, primary, or organic motives, such as hunger, thirst, and need for sleep; and (b) personal, social, or secondary motives, such as affiliation, competition, and individual interests and goals. An important distinction must also be drawn between internal motivating forces and external factors, such as rewards or punishments, that can encourage or discourage certain behaviors

Experiential Learning: Experiential learning is a learning method through experience, involving active engagement with real-world situations, reflection, and applying insights for future actions or situations.

PAR-Q: is a self-screening tool for individuals planning to start an exercise program, assessing safety and risk based on health history responses.

SMART: The acronym outlines setting specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-related goals.

Self-efficacy: refers to a person's belief in their ability to succeed in a specific situation or complete a task.



LIST OF ACRONYMS

SUD - Substance use disorder

BCTs - Behavioral change teachings

MI - Motivational Interviewing

PA - Physical Activity

This module provides an in-depth exploration of the theoretical underpinnings and practical applications of sport as an intervention tool in the recovery process of individuals with SUD. Through an interdisciplinary approach, students will critically examine addiction models, recovery frameworks, motivational dynamics, behavioral change theories, and life skills development in the context of SUD rehabilitation. The module emphasizes evidence-based practices and equips students with the competencies necessary to design, implement, and evaluate sport-based interventions tailored to individuals in recovery.

Module Aims and Intentions

The module aims to equip students with a comprehensive understanding of the role of sport in Substance Use Disorder (SUD) recovery, emphasizing its capacity to facilitate long-term behavioral change, social reintegration, and overall well-being. Drawing from contemporary research, this module integrates theoretical knowledge with practical application, enabling students to critically analyze and implement sport-based interventions within recovery settings. Students will explore key psychological, social, and physiological mechanisms underlying addiction and recovery, examining how structured physical activity can serve as a catalyst for personal growth, resilience, and social inclusion. The module will employ a range of pedagogical approaches, including case studies, experiential learning activities, and structured methodologies such as the RACE4LIFE protocol, to foster a deep and applied understanding of intervention strategies.

Additionally, students will develop the skills necessary to design, adapt, and evaluate sport-based programs tailored to diverse populations within recovery contexts. They will engage with ethical considerations, barriers to participation, and the role of interdisciplinary collaboration in maximizing intervention effectiveness. By the end of the module, students will be equipped with the knowledge and competencies required to contribute meaningfully to the field of SUD recovery through sport, whether in academic, clinical, or community-based settings.

Upon successful completion of this module, students will be able to:

1. Critically analyze the global prevalence, risk factors, and societal impact of Substance Use Disorder (SUD), integrating contemporary epidemiological data and theoretical models of addiction and recovery.
2. Evaluate the psychological and social determinants of motivation in the recovery process, examining the role of sport as a catalyst for behavioral change, engagement, and long-term adherence to recovery programs.
3. Explain and contextualize the stages of recovery, mapping the physiological, psychological, and social transitions individuals experience, and identifying how structured physical activity interventions can support and enhance each phase.
4. Identify and assess common barriers to physical activity among individuals in recovery, including psychological, social, and structural challenges, and develop evidence-based strategies to enhance participation, accessibility, and sustained involvement in sport.
5. Apply behavioral change theories (e.g., Goal Setting Theory, Self-Determination Theory, Social Cognitive Theory) to the design and implementation of sport-based interventions, integrating motivational, reinforcement, and self-regulation techniques.
6. Facilitate the development of essential life skills—such as resilience, self-efficacy, emotional regulation, and social inclusion—through structured sport and experiential learning methodologies.
7. Demonstrate proficiency in designing and proposing comprehensive, personalized sport-based intervention plans based on the RACE4LIFE protocol, ensuring alignment with individual recovery needs, program adaptability, and rigorous evaluation methodologies.
8. Critically reflect on ethical considerations, cultural sensitivity, and best practices in implementing sport-based interventions within diverse recovery settings, including clinical, community, and institutional frameworks.

Target Audience

This module is designed for undergraduate and postgraduate students in Sport Science, who seek to specialize in sport-based interventions for SUD recovery.

Total Duration

2 days (12 hours), structured as follows:

- Theoretical Lectures: Covering key concepts, addiction models, recovery frameworks, and sport-based interventions.
- Interactive Workshops: Case studies, barrier identification exercises, and intervention planning.
- Applied Learning Activities: Role-playing, experiential sport-based exercises, and program design simulations based on the RACE4LIFE protocol.

STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS

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The module includes eight interconnected lessons: Lesson 1 introduces Substance Use Disorders (SUDs) and their global impact; Lesson 2 explores the role of motivation in recovery; Lesson 3 outlines the stages of SUD recovery; Lesson 4 highlights the benefits of sport in the recovery process; Lesson 5 identifies key barriers and facilitators to sport participation; Lesson 6 presents behavior change theories and techniques relevant to sport-based recovery; Lesson 7 focuses on the development and role of life skills in recovery; and Lesson 8 guides participants in designing personalized sport-based interventions using the RACE4LIFE protocol.

Lesson 1: Substance Use Disorders and Global Impact

 **Duration: 45 min**

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, students will be able to:

- Understand the global prevalence of SUDs using current epidemiological data and reports from international health organizations.
- Identify and explain major theoretical models of addiction, including biological, psychological, and sociological perspectives.
- Critically compare and contrast different addiction models in terms of their underlying assumptions, implications for treatment, and effectiveness in various contexts.

Key Topics

A. Public Health Impact of SUDs

- Global and regional statistics (e.g., WHO, UNODC, **EMCDDA** data).
- Health-related consequences (e.g., overdose, comorbidities).
- Economic and social burdens (e.g., lost productivity, criminal justice involvement).
- Vulnerable populations and disparities in access to treatment.

B. Models of Addiction

- Biological model: Genetic predisposition, brain structure/function, neurotransmitters.
- Psychological model: Cognitive-behavioral theories, trauma-informed perspectives.
- Sociological model: Social learning theory, environmental factors, stigma, and marginalization.
- Integrated approaches: Biopsychosocial and ecological models.

Activities

A. Interactive Lecture and Discussion

Overview: Instructor-led presentation introducing global data on SUDs, followed by facilitated class discussion.

Objective: To familiarize students with key trends and foster critical thinking about their implications.

Tools: Slides with UNODC/WHO reports for real-time input.

B. Case Study Analysis

Overview: Students work in small groups to analyze real-world or hypothetical cases illustrating different experiences of SUD and recovery.

Objective: To understand the multifaceted nature of SUD and apply theoretical models to practice.

Structure:

- Case presentation.
- Guiding questions to assess contributing factors, potential interventions, and model alignment.
- Group presentations and peer feedback.

Lesson Supporting materials

Key text:

- Link: [Substance Use Disorders and Global Impact](#)
- Case studies

Other resources

- [World Drug Report 2024](#)
- [European Web Survey on Drugs \(EWSD\) 2024](#)

Presentation:

- [Introduction to Substance Use Disorders and Global Impact](#)



Lesson 2: The Role of Motivation in SUD Recovery

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🕒 **Duration: 1 h & 45 min'**

Learning Objectives:

Comprehend the pivotal role of motivation in the SUD recovery process.

Key Topics:

- Understanding motivation as a mediator of therapeutic outcomes.

Activities:

1. **Group Discussion:** Exploring Personal and External Motivators in Addiction Recovery

Objective: To identify and analyze various factors that influence motivation during the recovery journey.

Discussion Points:

- Personal (intrinsic) motivators such as the desire for improved health, personal growth, or re-establishing relationships.
- External (extrinsic) motivators, including legal obligations, family expectations, or societal pressures.
- The impact of these motivators on initiating and sustaining recovery efforts.
- Strategies to enhance intrinsic motivation, considering its association with more sustainable recovery outcomes.

2. **Interactive Exercise:** Brainstorming Strategies to Enhance Motivation for Individuals with SUD

Objective: To develop practical approaches that can bolster motivation in individuals undergoing SUD recovery.

Exercise Steps:

- Divide participants into small groups.
- Each group will identify potential barriers to motivation in recovery.
- Brainstorm and propose strategies to overcome these barriers

Supporting materials

Key text: Link: [The Role of Motivation in SUD Recovery](#)

Activity

- Brainstorming Strategies to Enhance Motivation for Individuals with SUD

Presentation:

- [The Role of Motivation in SUD Recovery](#)

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

- Identify and describe the distinct stages of Substance Use Disorder (SUD) recovery, including early recovery, middle recovery, and late-stage maintenance.
- Recognize the psychological, emotional, physical, and social challenges associated with each stage.
- Understand the evolving role of motivation throughout the recovery process, and how internal and external motivators influence progress.
- Apply stage-specific strategies to support individuals in recovery through physical activity and sport-based interventions.

Key Topics

The Stages of Recovery

Early stage of Recovery:

- Characteristics: Detoxification, physical withdrawal symptoms, emotional volatility, high relapse risk.
- Needs: Stability, structure, medical and emotional support.
- Role of sport: Gentle reintroduction to physical activity, establishing safe routines, improving mood and sleep.

Middle stage of Recovery:

- Characteristics: Emotional repair, rebuilding relationships, gaining education, managing triggers.
- Needs: Coping strategies, identity rebuilding, self-efficacy, community support.
- Role of sport: Building resilience, life skill development, supporting identity change, developing social bonds through team activities.

Third stage of Recovery / Reintegration phase:

- Characteristics: Long-term lifestyle change, sustaining healthy habits, community reintegration, life purpose.
- Needs: Continued motivation, meaning-making, relapse prevention tools.
- Role of sport: Goal setting, long-term health benefits, mentoring others, engaging in community-level involvement.

Supporting materials

Key text: Link: [Stages of SUD Recovery](#).

Presentation:

- [The Stages of Recovery from Substance Use Disorders](#)

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

- Understand the biopsychosocial benefits of physical activity and sport in the context of SUD recovery.
- Explain the mechanisms through which exercise contributes to relapse prevention, emotional regulation, and improved quality of life.
- Identify and analyze how sport participation fosters the development of life skills essential for sustained recovery and reintegration.
- Evaluate evidence-based practices that integrate sport into therapeutic interventions for individuals with SUD.

Key Topics

1. The Therapeutic Benefits of Physical Activity:

- Neurobiological impacts (e.g., dopamine regulation, brain plasticity)
- Stress and anxiety reduction through physiological and psychological pathways
- Improved sleep, cardiovascular health, and body image

2. Sport as a Tool for Psychological and Social Rehabilitation:

- Boosting self-esteem, self-efficacy, and confidence
- Social integration and reestablishing pro-social behaviors
- Building resilience and enhancing emotional regulation

3. Exercise and Relapse Prevention:

- Understanding the craving–stress–relapse cycle
- How regular exercise modulates mood and reduces triggers
- The role of structured routines and goal-setting in maintaining abstinence

4. Life Skills and Behavior Change through Sport:

- Discipline, teamwork, time management, and coping strategies
- Role models, mentorship, and supportive peer environments
- Embedding behavioral change theories into physical activity

Learning Activities:

1. Lecture & Guided Discussion:

- Presentation of key research findings (e.g., from RTS+ or RACE4LIFE projects) demonstrating the impact of sport on recovery pathways
- Open-floor discussion on students' perceptions of sport as a therapeutic tool

2. Reflective Practice (Activity: "Sport and Change")

- Students individually reflect on a personal or observed experience where sport impacted their well-being or behavioral habits.
- Prompt: "What elements of sport (e.g., routine, teamwork, challenge, joy) supported change, and how could these be applied in SUD recovery?"

3. Quick Debate:

- "Sport should be considered a core therapeutic element in every SUD recovery program." Students are divided into 'agree' and 'disagree' sides and debate using evidence-based arguments.

Supporting materials

Key text: Link: [The Role of Sport in SUD Recovery](#)

Activity

- "Sport and Change"

Other resources:

- [What about sport and physical exercise in substance use disorder recovery? Perceptions of individuals undergoing SUD recovery. Life Skills Development](#)
- [RACE4LIFE Sport-based behavior change protocol for people under SUD recovery. Health Professionals Needs Assessment](#)
- [RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION The Role of Sport in Substance Use Disorders Recovery](#)
- [Empowering substance use disorders treatment through physical exercise. An overview of studies](#)
- [RACE4LIFE Sport-based behavior change protocol for people under SUD recovery. Health Professionals Needs Assessment](#)
- [Enhancing Substance Use Disorder Recovery through Integrated Physical Activity and Behavioral Interventions: A Comprehensive Approach to Treatment and Prevention](#)

Presentation:

- [The Role of Sport in Substance Use Disorder \(SUD\) Recovery](#)

Lesson 5: Barriers and Facilitators to Sport and Exercise in SUD Recovery

15

⌚ **Duration:** 45'

Learning Objectives

- Gain a foundational understanding of the role of sport and exercise in SUD recovery.

Key Topics

- Benefits of exercise for physical, psychological, and social well-being.
- Role of sport in relapse prevention and quality of life improvement.

Activities

- Lecture and Discussion: Key research findings on sport's impact on SUD recovery.

Supporting materials

Key text: Link: [The Role of Sport in SUD Recovery](#).

Other resources:

- [What about sport and physical exercise in substance use disorder recovery? Perceptions of individuals undergoing SUD recovery. Barriers & Benefits](#)

Presentation:

- [Barriers and Facilitators to Exercise in Substance Use Disorder \(SUD\) Recovery](#).



Lesson 6: Behavior Change Theories and Techniques in Sport-Based SUD Recovery

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⌚ Duration: 1h & 45 min

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Understand and critically evaluate key behavioral change theories relevant to recovery and sport-based interventions.
2. Identify how specific psychological constructs (e.g., self-efficacy, motivation, autonomy) relate to SUD recovery.
3. Apply Behavior Change Techniques (BCTs) in the planning and delivery of sport-based activities.
4. Integrate Motivational Interviewing (MI) strategies into sport sessions to foster participant engagement and sustained behavior change.
5. Design intervention components grounded in theory and adapted to client needs in recovery contexts.

Key Topics

1. Overview of Behavioral Change Theories
 - Social Cognitive Theory: Observational learning, self-regulation, self-efficacy.
 - Self-Determination Theory: Intrinsic motivation, autonomy, competence, relatedness.
 - Theory of Planned Behavior: Attitudes, norms, and perceived behavioral control.
2. Behavior Change Techniques (BCTs)
 - What are BCTs? Overview and taxonomy.
 - Examples: Action planning, feedback on performance, reinforcement, goal setting, problem solving.
3. Self-Efficacy and Goal Setting
 - SMART goals in sport for recovery.
 - Strengthening self-efficacy through mastery experiences and verbal persuasion.
4. Motivational Interviewing in Sport Settings
 - Principles of MI: express empathy, develop discrepancy, roll with resistance, support self-efficacy.
 - Adapting MI to physical activity and sport-based coaching environments.

Activities

Interactive Group Activity: "Breaking the Cycle"

- Learners are divided into small groups and assigned real-life personas (e.g., a young adult recovering from addiction).
- Each group maps how sport could influence that person's experience of:
 - Stress and anxiety management
 - Craving reduction
 - Self-esteem development
 - Social reconnection
- Groups present their strategies, followed by a plenary discussion.

Supporting materials

Key text: Link: [Behavior Change Theories and Techniques in Sport-Based SUD Recovery](#)

Activity

- "Breaking the Cycle"

Other resources

- [Effects of an exercise theory-based intervention program on craving during the early stage of adults' SUD treatment](#)
- [Application of a theory-based exercise promotion program \(RACE\) to adults in therapy for substance use disorders: A longitudinal interventional study.](#)
- [RACE4LIFE. Sport-based behavior change protocol for people under SUD recovery. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK](#)
- [RACE4LIFE Sport-based behavior change protocol for people under SUD recovery.](#)
- [BCT Taxonomy \(v1\): 93 hierarchically-clustered techniques](#)

Presentations

[Goal-Setting Theory](#)

[Self-Determination Theory](#)

[Self-efficacy](#)

[Social Cognitive Theory](#)

[Motivational interviewing](#)

Lesson 7: Life Skills: Foundations, Development, and Role in Substance Use Disorder Recovery

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 **Duration: 1h & 45 min**

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Understand the concept and importance of life skills as defined by global health organizations (WHO, UNICEF) and their application in SUD recovery.
2. Recognize the link between life skills development, sport participation, and psychosocial outcomes during recovery.
3. Identify key life skills (e.g., emotional regulation, communication, decision-making) that can be cultivated through sport.
4. Design and implement sport-based activities that intentionally integrate life skills training.

Key Topics

1. What are Life Skills?
 - WHO/UNICEF definition: “Abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life.”
 - Core life skills domains: decision-making, problem-solving, creative and critical thinking, communication, interpersonal skills, self-awareness, empathy, coping with emotions and stress.
2. The Role of Life Skills in SUD Recovery
 - How SUD impacts cognitive, emotional, and social functioning.
 - Life skills as protective factors against relapse.
 - Enhancing autonomy, self-regulation, and social reintegration.
3. Sport as a Medium for Life Skills Development
 - Evidence linking structured sport participation to improved psychosocial outcomes.
 - Embedding life skill learning into sports drills, team tasks, leadership roles, and reflective practices.
 - The role of coaches and facilitators in reinforcing intentional learning.
4. What Is Experiential Learning?
 - Experiential learning is an educational approach that prioritizes hands-on experiences as a powerful means of acquiring knowledge, developing skills, and fostering personal growth. Unlike traditional methods that often emphasize the passive absorption of information through lectures or readings, experiential learning is dynamic, participatory, and rooted in practical engagement.
5. Practical Examples from Recovery Programs
 - Case studies of life skills-oriented sport interventions (e.g., RTS+, RACE4LIFE).
 - Testimonials from participants on personal growth through sport.

Activities

Role-Play: “Coach the Life Skill”

Objective: To practice teaching and modeling critical life skills in sport-based settings, particularly focusing on their application in Substance Use Disorder (SUD) recovery.

Supporting materials

Key text: Link: Life Skills: [Foundations, Development, and Role in Substance Use Disorder Recovery](#)

Link: [Experiential Learning in Sport-Based Recovery Interventions](#)

Activity

- Coach the Life Skills

Other resources

- [Empower +. A toolkit for empowering SUD treatment through sport and physical exercise](#)

Presentation

[Life skills development through sport](#)

[Experiential learning](#)

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Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the structure, principles, and evidence base of the RACE4LIFE Sport-Based Behavior Change Protocol.
- Design a personalized, inclusive, and theory-informed sport-based recovery intervention plan.
- Critically evaluate and adapt sport-based strategies to suit diverse populations within SUD recovery contexts.
- Collaborate effectively in multidisciplinary teams to propose and refine intervention plans.

Key Topics

1.Introduction to RACE4LIFE Protocol

- Theoretical foundations (behavior change theories, life skills, recovery capital)
- Core components and structure of the protocol
- Evidence from implementation in diverse European contexts

2. Needs-Based Tailoring of Sport Interventions

- Assessing clients' stage of recovery and readiness for physical activity
- Addressing barriers: physical, psychological, social, and environmental
- Identifying motivators: autonomy, mastery, relatedness (Self-Determination Theory)
- Inclusion and diversity considerations (e.g., gender, age, cultural background)

3. Intervention Design Essentials

- Selecting appropriate sport modalities and intensity levels
- Incorporating life skills and experiential learning strategies
- Monitoring progress and adapting the intervention over time
- Collaborating with healthcare professionals, coaches, and community stakeholders



Activities:

Interactive Workshop: Designing a Tailored Intervention Plan

Objectives

- To collaboratively design a sport-based intervention that enhances clients' capabilities and skills.
- To integrate Behavior Change Techniques (BCTs) purposefully into the intervention design.
- To align sport activities with sport and therapeutic goals, focusing on the early stages of substance use recovery.

Supporting materials

Key text: Link: [Designing Personalized Sport-Based Recovery Interventions Using the RACE4LIFE Protocol](#)

Activity

- Design of a Sports-Based Intervention for the Early Recovery Stage
- Design a sport-based intervention to enhance capabilities and skills

Other resources

- [RACE4LIFE Sport-based behavior change protocol for people under SUD recovery](#).
- [RACE4LIFE. A Capacity Building program for sport trainers and health professionals on delivering tailored sport-based interventions for SUD recovery. Capacity Building Program Evaluation](#)

Presentation

- [Race4Life protocol](#)
- [Stage #1. Readiness: "Let's get physically active"](#)
- [Stage #2. Arousal: "It feels good"](#)
- [Stage # 3. Competencies: "What have I learned"](#)
- [Stage # 4. Engagement: "What will be my next sport experience"](#)



The proposed agenda, encompassing both online and face-to-face sessions, has been designed with a flexible framework to allow for adjustments based on specific timing constraints or logistical requirements. Adaptations to the duration, scheduling, or format of individual sessions may be made to better fit the needs of participants, facilitators, or hosting organizations. However, it is crucial that the overall sequence of activities remains unchanged. The structure has been deliberately organized to ensure a coherent progression of learning, maintain the integrity of the program's pedagogical approach, and maximize the impact and effectiveness of participant engagement and skill development. Any modifications should, therefore, preserve the intended logical flow, as each session builds systematically upon the previous ones to support the achievement of the program's learning objectives.

Online sessions

Day 1

Session	Title	DURATION	TIMING
1	Team introduction, Project presentation	30 min	
2	Lesson 1: Substance Use Disorders and Global Impact	45 min	
Break			
3	Lesson 2: The Role of Motivation in SUD Recovery	1h & 45 min	
4	Lesson 3: Stages of SUD Recovery	45 min	
Break			
5	Lesson 4: The Role of Sport in SUD Recovery	1h & 45 min	
6	Wrap-up and evaluation of Day 1 Brief summary of learning. Participants to mention activities or takeaways. Ask for additional questions, comments, and feedback.	45 min	

Face to Face sessions

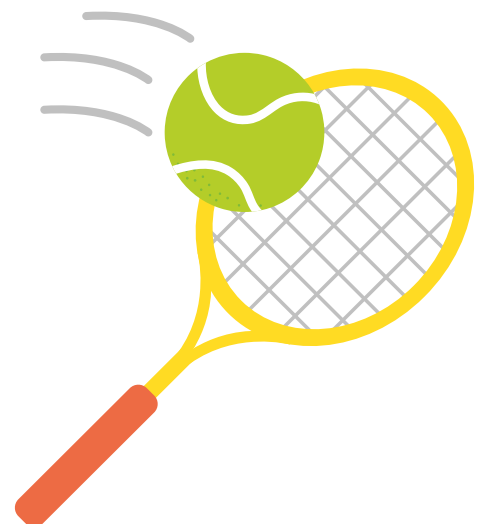
Session	Title	DURATION	TIMING
1	Lesson 5: Barriers and Facilitators to Sport and Exercise in SUD Recovery	45 min	
Break			
2	Lesson 6: Behavior Change Theories and Techniques in Sport-Based SUD Recovery	1η & 45 min	
Break			
3	Lesson 7: Life Skills: Foundations, Development, and Role in Substance Use Disorder Recovery	1η & 45 min	
Break			
4	Lesson 8: Designing Personalized Sport-Based Recovery Interventions Using the RACE4LIFE Protocol	1η & 45 min	
Break			
5	Wrap-up and evaluation of Day 2 Brief summary of learning. Participants to mention activities or takeaways. Ask for additional questions, comments, and feedback.	10 min	



KEY CONSIDERATIONS

This summary provides a list of essential keys for facilitators to consider when preparing the module:

- **Understand the Recovery Context:** Familiarize yourself with the fundamentals of Substance Use Disorders (SUDs), including their psychological, social, and behavioral dimensions, to deliver content with sensitivity and relevance.
- **Foster a Safe and Inclusive Environment:** Create a respectful and stigma-free learning space that encourages open dialogue, reflection, and active participation—essential when discussing vulnerable topics like addiction and recovery.
- **Emphasize Experiential Learning:** Integrate case studies, role-playing, reflective activities, and storytelling to help students connect theoretical content with real-world scenarios and deepen empathy for individuals in recovery.
- **Balance Theory and Practice:** Ensure the module blends conceptual understanding (e.g., behavior change theories) with practical application (e.g., designing personalized sport interventions) to align with sport science students' competencies.
- **Coordinate Online and Face-to-Face Components Seamlessly:** Structure the blended delivery so that online sessions introduce concepts and stimulate reflection, while in-person sessions reinforce learning through interaction, collaboration, and practice.



Case Studies

Case Study 1

Ahmed, 22, Male, Cocaine Use Disorder

Background Information

- Name: Ahmed
- Age: 22
- Gender: Male
- Substance Use Disorder (SUD): Cocaine Use Disorder (stimulant use)
- Length of Substance Use: 5 years
- Primary Substance Used: Cocaine (intranasal, with occasional smoking of crack cocaine)
- Current Recovery Status: Recently admitted to an outpatient recovery program; abstinent for 6 weeks

Current Health Condition

- Physical Health:
 - Ahmed presents with symptoms of chronic fatigue, irregular heart rate, and nosebleeds due to prolonged intranasal cocaine use.
 - He has lost considerable weight and suffers from insomnia, frequent headaches, and high blood pressure.
- Mental Health:
 - He has been diagnosed with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in adolescence but was not consistently treated.
 - Ahmed shows symptoms of impulsivity, agitation, and occasional paranoia, especially when sleep-deprived.
 - He also experiences depressive episodes during withdrawal and early abstinence.

Recovery Journey

- Stage of Recovery:
 - Ahmed is in very early recovery and is still stabilizing both physically and emotionally. He is attending outpatient counseling three times a week and living at home with his parents.
- Motivation for Change:
 - His recent overdose experience and hospitalization served as a turning point. Although initially resistant to treatment, he now expresses a strong desire to avoid a repeat of that traumatic experience.
 - He has a desire to return to university and repair strained relationships, especially with his mother and younger brother.

Challenges

- Psychological:
 - Struggles with impulsivity, poor emotional regulation, and frequent mood swings.
 - He used cocaine both to self-medicate ADHD symptoms and to enhance social confidence, especially in party environments.
- Social and Environmental:
 - Ahmed's peer group includes individuals still using cocaine and other stimulants.
 - He dropped out of university in his second year and has lost most of his previous social structure.
- Biological:
 - Family history of addiction (maternal uncle with stimulant dependence) and untreated neurodevelopmental issues (ADHD) may have contributed to vulnerability.
- Environmental:
 - Grew up in a high-pressure academic environment where performance was prioritized over emotional well-being, contributing to perfectionism and stress-related substance use.

Strengths

- Support System:
 - Ahmed's parents are emotionally supportive and have arranged for private counseling and psychiatric care.
 - He has one close friend who is in recovery and has become a peer mentor.
- Insight and Intelligence:
 - Ahmed is intellectually gifted and has a strong capacity for self-reflection. He is curious about psychology and has started journaling his experiences during recovery.
- Engagement in Treatment:
 - He attends both individual counseling and stimulant-specific group therapy.
 - He is open to psychiatric medication to manage ADHD symptoms and support mood stabilization.

Goals for Recovery

1. Short-term Goals (1–3 months):

- Physical Health: Restore sleep hygiene and nutritional balance to counteract stimulant-related depletion.
- Psychological Stability: Begin consistent ADHD treatment and learn coping strategies for impulsivity.
- Relapse Prevention: Identify triggers such as party environments and high stress, and develop actionable avoidance and coping strategies.
- Daily Structure: Build a daily routine including rest, study, support group meetings, and physical activity.

2. Long-term Goals (6 months–1 year):

- Academic Reintegration: Reapply to university and begin part-time coursework aligned with his interests.
- Emotional Intelligence: Continue building emotional regulation strategies through cognitive-behavioral and dialectical behavior therapy.
- Social Rebuilding: Form new peer relationships in sober environments, join university societies and community groups.
- Independent Functioning: Transition into independent living while maintaining a strong support network.

Case Study 2

Elena, 46, Female, Alcohol Use Disorder

Background Information

- Name: Elena
- Age: 46
- Gender: Female
- Substance Use Disorder (SUD): Alcohol Use Disorder (severe)
- Length of Substance Use: 18 years (progressive increase in last 6 years)
- Primary Substance Used: Alcohol (primarily wine and spirits, daily use)
- Current Recovery Status: Completed a 30-day inpatient detoxification; now in second month of outpatient therapy and peer support group

Current Health Condition

- Physical Health:
 - Elena exhibits signs of liver damage (early-stage cirrhosis), elevated blood pressure, and persistent gastrointestinal issues.
 - She reports chronic fatigue, poor sleep quality, and reduced physical stamina.
- Mental Health:
 - She has a long history of untreated trauma related to domestic violence during her first marriage.
 - She has been diagnosed with generalized anxiety disorder and major depressive disorder, which were both exacerbated by alcohol use.
 - Elena often used alcohol as a means of numbing emotional pain and managing social isolation.

Recovery Journey

- Stage of Recovery:
 - Elena is in the early recovery phase (post-detox), where she is learning to navigate emotional distress without using alcohol.
 - She is adjusting to a new identity as someone in recovery and actively participating in a women's recovery support group.
- Motivation for Change:
 - The tipping point was an incident involving a blackout episode during a family gathering, which caused a major rupture in her relationship with her adult daughter.
 - Elena realized that alcohol had taken control over her personal, social, and professional life and was determined to rebuild her relationships and reclaim her sense of self.

Challenges:

- Psychological:
 - Elena struggles with unresolved trauma and guilt, particularly around parenting during the years she was drinking heavily.
 - Her anxiety increases in social situations, which were previously “buffered” by alcohol use.
- Social and Environmental:
 - Elena lives alone, having divorced twice, and works remotely as a freelance editor, which contributes to her isolation and lack of daily structure.
 - Most of her previous social circles revolved around alcohol consumption, and she finds it difficult to establish new, sober relationships.
- Biological:
 - Family history of depression and substance use (her mother was treated for alcohol dependence in her 50s).
- Environmental:
 - The pandemic contributed to her increased alcohol use due to social isolation and lack of accountability.

Strengths

- Self-Awareness:
 - Elena has demonstrated strong insight into the emotional roots of her drinking and is committed to therapy.
- Support Network:
 - She has started rebuilding her relationship with her daughter, who now accompanies her to some therapy sessions.
 - A mentor from the recovery group has become a key ally in her journey.
- Professional Skills:
 - As a freelance editor, Elena has maintained cognitive functioning and now uses journaling as a therapeutic tool in her recovery.
- Engagement in Treatment:
 - She participates in weekly trauma-informed therapy sessions and uses cognitive-behavioral strategies to address relapse triggers.

Goals for Recovery

Short-term Goals (3–6 months):

- Physical Health: Continue medical monitoring for liver function, improve hydration and nutrition, and gradually reintroduce physical activity.
- Emotional Regulation: Learn mindfulness and grounding techniques to manage anxiety and shame.
- Relapse Prevention: Create a structured weekly schedule with coping strategies for evenings and weekends, which were peak drinking times.
- Social Connection: Build a new, sober support network through peer groups and community engagement activities.

Long-term Goals (6 months–1 year):

- Sustained Sobriety: Maintain abstinence and strengthen coping strategies for emotional and social triggers.
- Rebuilding Relationships: Continue repairing the bond with her daughter and develop new, healthy friendships.
- Career Development: Take on part-time mentoring or editing roles that involve social interaction to reduce isolation.
- Self-Efficacy: Increase her confidence in living a fulfilling, sober life by setting personal milestones and engaging in hobbies.

Karim, 29, Male, Opioid Use Disorder

Background Information

- Name: Karim
- Age: 29
- Gender: Male
- Substance Use Disorder (SUD): Opioid Use Disorder (severe)
- Length of Substance Use: 9 years
- Primary Substance Used: Prescription opioids initially (oxycodone, hydromorphone), later transitioned to street opioids
- Current Recovery Status: In a residential rehabilitation program for the past 6 weeks

Current Health Condition

- Physical Health:
 - Karim is underweight and suffers from chronic constipation, persistent fatigue, and low immunity. He has experienced withdrawal symptoms such as muscle pain, restlessness, and gastrointestinal distress.
 - He has developed signs of sleep disturbances and frequent headaches associated with long-term opioid use and withdrawal cycles.
- Mental Health:
 - Karim has been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) related to violence he experienced growing up in a neighborhood with high gang activity.
 - He also exhibits symptoms of an undiagnosed attention deficit disorder, which may have contributed to impulsivity and early risk behaviors.
 - His opioid use functioned as a coping strategy to manage emotional distress, flashbacks, and prolonged anxiety.

Recovery Journey

- Stage of Recovery:
 - Karim is in the early phase of recovery and adjusting to a drug-free, structured environment. He is gradually engaging in individual therapy, psychoeducation, and group sessions.
- Motivation for Change:
 - Karim's decision to seek treatment was catalyzed by a near-fatal overdose and the sudden death of a close friend from fentanyl-contaminated opioids.
 - He has expressed a desire to live a life not dominated by fear, anxiety, and isolation and hopes to become a positive role model for his younger brother.

Challenges

- Biological and Psychological:
 - Karim's brain reward pathways have been altered by long-term opioid exposure, making natural rewards less satisfying.
 - His PTSD and attention difficulties make it harder to maintain focus and emotional stability, particularly during stress or interpersonal conflict.
- Social:
 - Karim lacks consistent familial support. His father is incarcerated, and his mother has withdrawn from involvement due to years of mistrust and emotional strain.
 - His previous peer network revolved around substance use, and he currently feels disconnected from any non-using social group.
- Environmental:
 - Karim grew up in an underserved area with limited access to mental health resources or youth engagement programs.
 - Exposure to prescription opioids began following a sports injury during his teenage years, and their accessibility escalated his use.

Strengths:

- Resilience:
 - Karim has demonstrated notable perseverance, repeatedly seeking help after relapses and maintaining hope for a different future.
- Insight:
 - He is increasingly aware of the connections between trauma, substance use, and his emotional dysregulation. He is able to articulate these connections during therapy.
- Engagement:
 - Karim is participating actively in structured group activities and has shown interest in expressive therapies such as theater and sports.

Goals for Recovery

Short-term Goals (3–6 months):

- Physical Health: Rebuild strength and stability through improved nutrition, daily routines, and light exercise.
- Trauma Support: Begin working with a trauma-informed therapist to reduce hyperarousal and avoidance behaviors.
- Relapse Prevention: Identify personal triggers and establish coping mechanisms to replace opioid use in managing stress.
- Social Skills: Build healthy, drug-free relationships within the recovery setting to increase trust and reduce isolation.

Long-term Goals (6–12 months):

- Sustained Abstinence: Maintain opioid abstinence with continued use of MAT and therapy, while building autonomy in relapse prevention.
- Employment and Purpose: Enroll in a vocational training program or secure employment that aligns with his interests and strengths.
- Emotional Well-being: Continue therapy to manage PTSD symptoms and develop healthier emotional regulation strategies.
- Family and Community Reconnection: Gradually reestablish contact with family members (when safe and constructive) and engage in community activities to restore social belonging.

Case Study 4

Maria, 28, Female, Alcohol Use Disorder

Background Information:

- Name: Maria
- Age: 28
- Gender: Female
- Substance Use Disorder (SUD): Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD)
- Length of Substance Use: 9 years
- Primary Substance Used: Alcohol (daily binge drinking, primarily wine and spirits)
- Current Recovery Status: In early recovery, having completed a 6-week inpatient rehabilitation program and now participating in outpatient support groups for 3 months.

Current Health Condition

- Physical Health:
 - Maria has developed early signs of liver dysfunction, gastrointestinal problems, and persistent migraines.
 - She experiences sleep disturbances and fatigue, which are common post-acute withdrawal symptoms.
- Mental Health:
 - Maria has a history of trauma, including emotional abuse during adolescence.
 - She was diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and co-occurring Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD), both of which she had previously self-medicated with alcohol.
 - She is now receiving integrated dual-diagnosis treatment.

Recovery Journey

- Stage of Recovery:
 - Maria is in the transitional stage between early and active recovery. She has completed detox and primary rehabilitation and is now reintegrating into her daily life with structured outpatient support.
- Motivation for Change:
 - Maria decided to seek help after a serious car accident caused by driving under the influence. This incident, along with losing her job, served as a major wake-up call.
 - Although initially motivated by external pressures (legal and family), she now expresses genuine internal motivation to heal, recover, and rebuild her life.
 -

Challenges

- Psychological:
 - Maria struggles with managing PTSD symptoms without alcohol, often experiencing flashbacks and nightmares.
 - Her anxiety spikes in unfamiliar social situations, making reintegration difficult.
- Social and Environmental:
 - She previously lived in a shared flat with peers who regularly drank, and now lives alone, which can increase feelings of loneliness and potential relapse risk.
 - Lack of stable employment contributes to financial insecurity and low self-esteem.
- Biological:
 - Family history of alcohol dependence (father), suggesting genetic predisposition.
 - Hormonal imbalances and vitamin deficiencies linked to prolonged alcohol misuse.

Strengths

- Support System:
 - Maria's older sister and a close friend are supportive and actively participate in family recovery sessions.
 - She attends weekly women's recovery support groups and has found a mentor in recovery who provides emotional support and practical guidance.
- Motivation for Personal Growth:
 - Maria is passionate about art and wants to return to painting, which previously served as a healthy coping outlet.
 - She has expressed interest in learning yoga and mindfulness-based stress reduction techniques.
- Treatment Engagement:
 - She consistently attends outpatient therapy sessions and is compliant with her psychiatric medication.

Goals for Recovery:**Short-term Goals (3–6 months):**

- Psychological Health: Stabilize PTSD and anxiety symptoms through trauma-informed therapy and daily routines.
- Physical Health: Improve nutrition and sleep hygiene; reduce physical withdrawal-related discomfort.
- Social Integration: Build sober connections through support groups and creative art classes.
- Relapse Prevention: Identify high-risk situations and develop a relapse prevention plan using cognitive-behavioral tools.

Long-term Goals (6 months–1 year):

- Employment: Return to part-time work or pursue vocational training in a creative field.
- Mental and Emotional Resilience: Develop long-term strategies to cope with trauma and emotional triggers without substances.
- Lifestyle Change: Create a structured, balanced routine that includes self-care, artistic expression, and physical activity.
- Social Rebuilding: Reconnect with extended family and form a new network of sober friends.

Case Study 5

Sofia, 41, Female, Opioid Use Disorder

Background Information

- Name: Sofia
- Age: 41
- Gender: Female
- Substance Use Disorder (SUD): Opioid Use Disorder (moderate to severe)
- Length of Substance Use: 7 years
- Primary Substance Used: Prescription opioids (primarily oxycodone and morphine, orally and nasally)
- Current Recovery Status: Recently transitioned to outpatient recovery after completing a 90-day residential treatment program

Current Health Condition

- Physical Health:
 - Sofia suffers from chronic back pain due to a workplace injury, which initially led to her opioid prescription. Over time, her tolerance increased, and she began misusing the medication.
 - She currently experiences gastrointestinal discomfort, poor sleep quality, and weight gain related to inactivity and emotional eating.
- Mental Health:
 - Sofia has a long history of generalized anxiety and persistent depressive symptoms, both of which intensified during active addiction.
 - She frequently struggles with feelings of guilt and shame, especially regarding the impact of her addiction on her two teenage children.

Recovery Journey

- Stage of Recovery:
 - Sofia is in the transitional phase of early recovery, adjusting to life at home after leaving a structured residential program.
 - She attends weekly outpatient counseling sessions and participates in an online support group for women in recovery.
- Motivation for Change:
 - Her primary motivation stems from her desire to be a better mother and regain the trust of her children.
 - Sofia also wants to become financially independent again and return to meaningful employment.

Challenges

- Biological and Psychological:
 - Managing chronic pain without opioids is a constant challenge.
 - Sofia struggles with low self-esteem and often compares herself unfavorably to peers or past versions of herself.
- Social:
 - Her support system is limited. Her parents live out of state, and she has a strained relationship with her ex-husband.
 - Fear of judgment and stigma makes her hesitant to rejoin community activities.
- Environmental:
 - Living in a suburban area with limited access to specialized recovery services and public transportation adds stress and limits her mobility.
 - Financial strain as a single parent adds further pressure.

Strengths

- Insight and Willingness:
 - Sofia shows strong insight into the underlying causes of her addiction and is open to building healthier coping mechanisms.
- Maternal Drive:
 - Her role as a mother remains her greatest motivator. She is committed to rebuilding trust with her children.
- Therapeutic Engagement:
 - She is fully engaged in therapy and exploring new strategies such as mindfulness, assertiveness training, and non-medical pain management.

Goals for Recovery:**Short-term Goals (3–6 months):**

- **Pain Management:** Develop and follow a pain management plan using physical therapy and cognitive-behavioral strategies.
- **Emotional Regulation:** Strengthen emotional resilience through journaling, breathing exercises, and continued counseling.
- **Routine Establishment:** Create and maintain healthy routines related to sleep, nutrition, and parenting.
- **Support Building:** Join a local peer support or parent group to foster connection and accountability.

Long-term Goals (6–12 months):

- **Sobriety Maintenance:** Sustain abstinence from opioids and manage environmental and emotional triggers.
- **Family Healing:** Rebuild a positive relationship with her children through trust-building and shared experiences.
- **Employment Reintegration:** Return to part-time employment in a less physically demanding role that aligns with her capabilities.
- **Community Engagement:** Become involved in local recovery advocacy efforts to inspire others with her story.

Activity 1

Title: Expectations & Concerns

Duration: 30 minutes

Objective: This activity aims to align students' expectations with the course's goals, address any concerns, and emphasize the importance of individual contributions in the learning process.

Materials Needed:

- Whiteboard or flip chart
- Markers (different colors)
- Paper and pens for each group

Activity Structure:

Step 1: Form Groups

- Divide trainees into three groups.
- Provide flip charts or large paper sheets and markers to each group.

Assign the following discussion categories:

- **Expectations:** What do they hope to learn during the course?
- **Concerns:** What are they afraid might happen, or what do they hope won't happen?
- **Contributions:** What skills, experiences, or knowledge can they bring to the course?

Step 2: Share and Discuss

- Each group presents their findings to the rest of the trainees.
- Encourage open discussion to validate shared experiences or address unique insights.
- Acknowledge and record recurring themes (e.g., on a visible flip chart).

Activity 2

Title: Brainstorming Strategies to Enhance Motivation for Individuals with SUD

Duration: 60 minutes

Objective: To collaboratively explore and develop practical, evidence-informed strategies that enhance intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in individuals undergoing recovery from SUD.

Learning Outcomes

- Deepened understanding of motivation in the recovery process
- Ability to identify and analyze motivation barriers
- Creative development of solutions grounded in practice
- Enhanced collaborative and communication skills

Materials Needed:

- Flipchart paper or whiteboards
- Markers and post-its
- Pens and worksheets with guiding questions

Activity Structure:

Warm-up & Framing (10 minutes)

- Group discussion:
 - What does "motivation" mean in recovery?
 - What influences a person's motivation in this context?

Group Formation (5 minutes)

- Create small groups of 3–5 participants.

Phase 1: Identifying Barriers (15 minutes)

- Each group lists barriers to motivation in recovery, such as:
 - Internal: low self-esteem, anxiety, trauma
 - External: family conflict, housing instability, unemployment
 - Structural: stigma, lack of resources, rigid systems
- Cluster barriers into categories: Personal, Social, Structural

Phase 2: Brainstorming Solutions (10 minutes)

- For each barrier or category, groups brainstorm strategies. Examples:
 - Emotional: storytelling, peer role models
 - Cognitive: journaling, visualizing future goals
 - Environmental: daily routines, positive spaces
 - Empowerment: self-authored plans, autonomy in choices

Gallery Walk (10 minutes)

- Groups display their strategies
- Participants walk around and leave comments or sticky-note ideas

Debrief & Collective Synthesis (10 minutes)

- Discuss as a whole group:
 - Which strategies were most creative?
 - How do they support autonomy, purpose, and connection?

Activity 3

Title: Sport and Change

Duration: 60 minutes

Objective

To encourage students to explore the transformative potential of sport by reflecting on real-life experiences and connecting these insights to principles of SUD recovery.

Materials Needed

- Reflection worksheet or journal (printed or digital)
- Flip chart or whiteboard
- Markers or pens
- Sticky notes (optional)

Step-by-Step Instructions

Individual Reflection (10–15 minutes)

Each student is invited to silently reflect and write about a personal or observed experience in which sport had a meaningful impact on their well-being, habits, or behavior.

Reflection Prompt:

- *“Think of a moment in your life—or in the life of someone you know—where sport or physical activity played a positive role in personal development or behavior change.*
- *What specific elements of the sport experience (e.g., routine, teamwork, challenge, joy, structure, support) contributed to this change?*
- *Now, imagine how these same elements could be used to support recovery in someone with a SUD. What would need to be adapted, emphasized, or avoided?”*

Encourage students to use the following structure:

- Brief description of the experience
- Identified elements of sport that influenced behavior
- Reflections on relevance to SUD recovery

Small Group Discussion (15–20 minutes)

Students break into groups of 3–4 to share their reflections and discuss common themes.

Group Questions:

- *What were the most impactful elements across your stories?*
- *Did any of the elements create barriers for change as well as benefits?*
- *How might sport need to be adapted to be safe and meaningful for individuals in recovery?*

Encourage students to take brief notes on shared insights and questions that emerged during the discussion.

Whole-Class Sharing & Thematic Mapping (15–20 minutes)

Each group presents 1–2 key insights from their discussion. The facilitator writes down recurring themes on a whiteboard or flip chart (e.g., structure, belonging, goal-setting, accountability).

Optional: Use sticky notes where each group writes keywords and places them on a “Sport & Recovery” thematic board.

Debrief Questions:

- *How did reflecting on personal experiences help you understand sport’s potential in SUD recovery?*
- *What new questions do you have about designing sport-based interventions?*
- *How can these insights guide future professionals in the field?*

Activity 4

Title: Sport and Change

Duration: 60 minutes

Objective

To deepen learners' understanding of the multifaceted role of sport in SUD recovery by applying theory to practical, real-life inspired scenarios. The activity promotes critical thinking, teamwork, empathy, and strategic planning.

Materials Needed

- Persona handouts (1 per group)
- Flipcharts or whiteboards for mapping strategies
- Markers and sticky notes
- Evaluation sheets for group feedback (optional)

Activity Structure

Introduction (10 minutes)

The facilitator introduces the purpose of the activity:

- *To explore how sport can support individuals in recovery.*
- *To identify barriers and facilitators to behavioral change through sport.*
- *To collaboratively develop personalized sport-based strategies addressing recovery needs.*

A brief refresher is given on key concepts:

- *The psychological and social benefits of sport*
- *Theories of behavioral change (e.g. Self-Determination Theory)*
- *The recovery stages*

Group Formation & Persona Assignment (5 minutes)

Participants are divided into small groups of 4-5.

Each group is given a detailed persona profile, based on real-life inspired case studies (see Case Studies). Each persona includes:

- Background information (age, gender, cultural context)
- History of substance use
- Current stage of recovery
- Psychological and physical health
- Social and family circumstances

Group Task (25–30 minutes)

Each group discusses their persona and collaboratively creates a Sport-Based Support Strategy, mapping how sport could positively influence the following domains:

1. Stress and anxiety management
2. Craving reduction
3. Self-esteem development
4. Social reconnection

Groups are encouraged to:

- Identify possible barriers (e.g., stigma, physical limitations, motivation) and propose solutions.
- Consider cultural and gender sensitivity.
- Integrate sport with other forms of support (e.g., therapy, vocational training).

Group Presentations (15–20 minutes)

Each group presents their strategy (3–4 minutes each), answering:

- Why did they choose this approach?
- How does it address their persona's unique needs?
- What challenges do they foresee and how would they overcome them?

Plenary Discussion (10–15 minutes)

Facilitator leads a debriefing session:

- *Common themes across strategies?*
- *Any unexpected insights?*
- *How do these strategies align with current evidence and theories?*
- *How would this approach look in practice within a real treatment setting?*

Optional: Learners vote for the most innovative, realistic, or inclusive strategy.

Activity 5

Title: Coach the Life Skill

Duration: 60 minutes

Objective:

To practice teaching and modeling critical life skills in sport-based settings, particularly focusing on their application in Substance Use Disorder (SUD) recovery.

Materials Needed:

- Scenario cards (optional for inspiration)
- Life skills checklist
- Reflection sheets for feedback

Target Skills:

- Assertive communication
- Stress management
- Emotional regulation
- Conflict resolution
- Building resilience
- Teamwork and cooperation

Structure:

1. Group Organization:

- Divide participants into pairs or small groups (3-4 people maximum).
- Assign roles: Coach and Athlete/Participant. Rotate roles so everyone has the chance to practice coaching and being coached.

2. Scenario Assignment:

- Each group is given or selects a sports-based scenario where a real-world challenge occurs.
- Examples:
 - A teammate criticizes you harshly during a game.
 - You miss a critical shot and feel overwhelmed by guilt or frustration.
 - Two team members are arguing and disrupting the group.
 - You are feeling anxious before a competition.
 - You feel excluded by stronger players during practice.

3. Focus Life Skill:

In each round, the coach focuses on teaching and modeling a specific life skill related to SUD recovery.

For example:

- Assertive Communication: Helping the athlete express feelings respectfully.
- Stress Management: Breathing exercises or positive self-talk before a match.
- Emotional Regulation: Techniques for calming down after losing a point.

4. Role-Play Process:

- The Coach introduces the life skill and its importance in both sport and recovery.
- They demonstrate or model the life skill using the scenario.
- The Athlete/Participant reacts in character, allowing a dynamic interaction.
- The Coach guides the Athlete through using the skill effectively.
- After a few minutes, switch roles so everyone practices coaching.

5. Reflection and Feedback:

- After each round, the group reflects:
 - What went well?
 - How did the life skill help manage the situation?
 - How can this be applied beyond sports (e.g., in real-life recovery challenges)?
- Peers provide constructive feedback to each other.

6. Debrief as a Whole Group:

- Discuss the experience:
 - Which life skills were easiest/hardest to coach?
 - What strategies helped the most?
 - How did it feel to apply a sport scenario to broader recovery challenges?

Tips:

- *Encourage creativity but also realism in scenarios.*
- *Remind participants that "coaching" in this context is about empowerment, not fixing or lecturing.*
- *Emphasize linking the sport experience to real-world recovery skills after each role-play*

Activity 6

Title: Design of a Sports-Based Intervention for the Early Recovery Stage

Duration: 90 minutes

Objectives

Design a tailored sports-based intervention for individuals in the early stages of recovery (15 days – 3 months post-substance use) aimed at enhancing motivation for exercise engagement by utilizing behavior change techniques (BCTs).

Materials Needed:

- A3 Paper (one sheet per group)
- Markers in different colors
- BCTs list (accessible through an App or printed handout)
- RACE4LIFE Sport-Based Protocol Summary (optional, for quick reference)

Procedure

1. DESIGNING THE ACTIVITIES

Instructions to Participants:

- Form groups of four members with a mix of professions (e.g., sport trainers, therapists, social workers) to ensure interdisciplinary perspectives.
- Each group receives paper, markers, and the BCT list.
- Task: In 15 minutes, design a sports-based intervention for individuals in early recovery by addressing both sport and therapeutic goals, using the RACE4LIFE protocol as a guide.

Participants must address:

1. Participant Profile:

- Recovery days: 15 days to 3 months
- Past use: Illegal substances
- Gender: Women, men, or mixed group

2. Facilitators/Professionals Involved:

- Sport trainers, SUD therapists, both, or others (e.g., peer mentors)

3. Sport Activity Selection:

- Individual sports (e.g., running, swimming, cycling)
- Team sports (e.g., basketball, football)
- Indoor fitness (e.g., circuit training, functional fitness)
- Other creative options

4. Duration of the Sport Activity:

- Program length: 1–2 months
- Frequency (e.g., 2–3 sessions per week)

5. Key Considerations:

- Physical health needs (e.g., cardiovascular health, strength)
- Mental health aspects (e.g., anxiety, depression symptoms)
- Social functioning deficits (e.g., isolation, lack of teamwork skills)
- Low motivation (e.g., anhedonia, ambivalence toward activity)

6. Sport-Based Intervention Process Outcome:

- Define the chosen sport(s) and justify the selection.
- Identify the facilitator(s) roles and responsibilities.
- Define sport-specific goals (e.g., improving endurance, promoting fun).
- Define therapeutic goals (e.g., building trust, increasing self-efficacy).
- Identify key intervention elements (e.g., warm-up, structured play, reflective closing).
- Select and justify Behavior Change Techniques (BCTs) used.
- Outline the sequence of activities (session structure: opening–main activity–reflection).
-

2. JUSTIFYING THE ACTIVITIES

Each group presents their design briefly:

- Present the intervention plan.
- Explain why they chose the specific sport, structure, facilitators, and BCTs.
- Highlight how the intervention addresses physical, mental, and social recovery needs.

Open discussion after each presentation:

- Peers provide constructive feedback:
 - What works well?
 - What could be adjusted or improved?
 - Would another choice of sport, BCTs, or facilitation style better meet the goals?

Facilitator's Role:

- Ensure time discipline.
- Prompt deeper reflection with questions (e.g., "How does this intervention ensure engagement for someone with low motivation?", "Which BCTs are critical at this stage and why?").
- Summarize common strengths and innovative ideas across all groups.

Activity 7

Title: Design a sport-based intervention to enhance capabilities and skills

Duration: 90 minutes

Objectives

- To collaboratively design a sport-based intervention that enhances clients' capabilities and skills.
- To integrate Behavior Change Techniques (BCTs) purposefully into the intervention design.
- To align sport activities with sport and therapeutic goals, focusing on the early stages of substance use recovery.

Materials Needed:

- A3 Paper (one sheet per group)
- Markers in different colors
- BCTs list (accessible through an App or printed handout)
- RACE4LIFE Sport-Based Protocol Summary (optional, for quick reference)

Procedure

1. DESIGNING THE ACTIVITIES

Participants will be divided into small groups of four, ensuring interdisciplinary diversity (mixing sport trainers, therapists, and others).

Each group must complete the following design tasks:

a) Define Basic Parameters:

- Participant profile:
 - Recovery duration: 1-3 months
 - Substance: Illegal substance use
 - Gender: Women, men, or mixed groups
- Facilitator/professional role:
 - Choose between sport trainer, therapist, co-facilitation, or other professional roles.
- Select sport activity:
 - Individual sports (e.g., running, cycling)
 - Team sports (e.g., basketball, football)
 - Indoor fitness (e.g., gym circuits, CrossFit)
 - Other activities (e.g., dance, yoga)
- Duration:
 - Plan for 1-2 months of engagement.

b) Address Key Considerations: Ensure the intervention responds to:

- Physical health needs (e.g., strength, endurance, injury prevention)
- Mental health challenges (e.g., stress, anxiety, mood stabilization)
- Social functioning deficits (e.g., teamwork, communication)
- Motivation barriers (e.g., lack of self-efficacy, ambivalence)

c) Define Sport-Based Intervention Process:

On the A3 paper, groups must clearly outline:

- Chosen sport activity and rationale
- Profile of participants targeted
- Facilitator roles and responsibilities
- Clear sport-based goals (e.g., improve stamina, develop resilience)
- Clear therapeutic goals (e.g., enhance emotional regulation, boost social skills)
- Selected BCTs (at least 3), with justification of why and how each will be applied
- An activity sequence (e.g., warm-up, main activity, cool-down, reflection)

Reminder: Encourage creativity but ensure structure and goal alignment.

2. JUSTIFYING THE ACTIVITIES

Each group presents their designed intervention.

Presentations should briefly cover:

- The main concept and objectives of their intervention.
- How the selected sport, facilitators' roles, and BCTs serve the needs of the participant profile.
- Key expected outcomes.

Discussion:

After each presentation, the rest of the participants are invited to:

- Offer constructive feedback.
- Discuss alternative strategies or different choices they might have made and why.
- Reflect on how the activity could be adapted for different recovery stages or different populations.

Facilitator Notes:

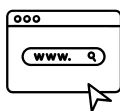
- Encourage practicality: The designs should be feasible in real-life settings.
- Highlight the connection between sport and therapy.
- Stress BCT integration: Ask guiding questions like "How exactly does this activity support behavior change?"
- Support reflection: Help participants articulate the "why" behind their choices.

Optional Enhancements:

- Provide example BCTs commonly used in sport-based recovery (e.g., goal setting, feedback on performance, social support).
- Give a template to help structure their A3 paper if needed (boxes or flowcharts).
- Conclude with a short summary linking their work to best practices in sport and SUD recovery programs.



rtsportproject@gmail.com



www.race4life.rtsport.eu



www.facebook.com/ketheasport/

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