

# Facilitator Guide: Explore New Passions and Pursuits

## Introduction: Why This Tool Matters

### You Say:

"When we're in recovery, we're not just stopping something, we're creating space for something new. Exploring new passions and pursuits can bring meaning, joy, and connection back into life. This tool is about helping you reconnect with old interests or discover new ones."

### Key points to highlight:

- Finding purpose and enjoyment is a key part of sustainable recovery.
- New pursuits can reduce boredom and isolation, which are common relapse triggers.
- You don't need to find a 'perfect' passion—just something you're curious to try.

## Step 1: Group Brainstorm

**You Say:** "Let's start with a brainstorm. What are some things that bring people joy, energy, or purpose—whether big or small?"

Prompt with examples:

- Creative: art, writing, music, cooking
- Physical: hiking, biking, dancing, gardening
- Social: volunteering, clubs, church, classes, support groups
- Mental/emotional: meditation, reading, puzzles, spirituality

### Facilitator's Role:

- Write responses on a whiteboard or shared screen.
- Encourage a wide range of ideas, including low-cost or free options.

## **Step 2: Quiet Reflection**

**You Say:** "Let's take a few minutes to reflect on what used to bring you joy—especially before your behavior of concern became more central in your life. What activities or hobbies did you enjoy back then? What parts of those still matter to you?"

"Take a moment to reflect: Are there things you used to enjoy that you've set aside? Are there things you've always wanted to try, but haven't yet?"

Invite participants to write down or think about:

- A hobby or interest from the past they'd like to revisit
- One new activity they're curious about trying
- Something small they could do this week to explore that interest

### **Facilitator Quick Tips:**

- Remind the group that this isn't about finding a new identity overnight.
- Encourage experimentation—it's okay to try something and decide it's not for you.

## **Step 3: Sharing and Planning Next Steps**

**You Say:** "If anyone's comfortable, feel free to share something you're thinking about trying—or something you've recently enjoyed."

**Ask:**

- "What's one small step you could take this week to explore a new or old interest?"
- "What would help you stay open to trying new things?"

### **Optional Prompt:**

- "How does this connect to your values or goals?"

## **Summary**

The **Explore New Passions and Pursuits** tool supports long-term recovery by helping participants reconnect with joy, curiosity, and personal meaning. Trying new things, even small ones, can make a big difference in building a full and rewarding life.