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homeless's open dialogue

The HOOD methodology. Toolkit

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Toolkit

tool kit

Premise

HOOD is a three-year project in which practitioners from over 5 different countries have worked together to support over 80 people experiencing homelessness. Through a field research approach, we sought to adapt Enabling Co-planning, a methodology theorised and piloted by UNITO to support people with intellectual and cognitive disabilities, so that we could use it to work with people experiencing homelessness.

This toolkit is intended to give you an immediate impression of the steps that can be taken to work differently with a capacity-building approach to transform social practice. The HOOD experiment in this sense focuses in particular on the educational relationship and the daily actions of the individual worker, but it requires that the whole organisation is involved and participates in the ongoing change, ready to transform itself.

This is because the changes proposed below, using the HOOD methodology, are very challenging and life-changing in professional work with people experiencing homelessness. As they are applied, their transformative scope will become apparent. However, as will be argued below, for change to be effective, it does not need to affect the individual social worker, but necessarily the whole team and organisation.

It is up to the individual reader to judge whether the proposed change is sustainable/acceptable. In some cases, social workers do indeed have exclusively a prescriptive role or are part of a regulatory system to which they have no choice but to refer. But be careful not to risk the alibi, as HOOD urges, of saying that one's organisation has always done it this way, or that there is a pre-defined regulation to refer to. If the focus remains on giving power back to the people, it is possible to transform organisations and their procedures.

HOOD goals

The HOOD project aimed to empower individuals by placing them at the center of the educational process. We, as the whole HOOD's project team, sought to achieve these **outcomes**:

• **Redistributing power in the helping relationship**: shifting power from the practitioner to the individual. This means that the person has the freedom to make their own decisions about their care and goals, without needing to comply with predetermined objectives set by the professional. The practitioner provides guidance and expertise, without exerting authority over the individual's choices or timing.

• **Making practitioners more aware of their mindset and actions:** The HOOD methodology helps practitioners recognize their biases and power dynamics in the helping relationship. By reflecting on their work, they can identify how entrenched practices keep power in their hands, hindering the person's self-determination and active participation in the decision-making process.

TO:

• **Empowering recipients, giving the power over their life back to the person**: The HOOD methodology aims to empower individuals by supporting them in making their own choices, recognizing the right of the person to steer their life project in the direction they feel is the most natural for them.

❗ *This means supporting the person even when the professional disagrees with some choices, or when they believe the person is failing in addressing certain aspects that the practitioner might perceive as issues, or even when they perceive the direction as dangerous.*

SEE FAQ N.1 AND N.2

• **Turning the educational process into a learning process, building a new-found sense of self-efficacy**: The HOOD methodology views the educational process as an opportunity for individuals to learn and grow, rather than just a set of prescribed actions to comply with. By involving individuals in the decision-making process and encouraging them to take an active role in their own care, the methodology aims to help individuals develop a greater sense of self-efficacy, competence, and independence.

1 HOOD goals

How do we do something HOODY?
The HOOD methodology step by step

1. Theoretical premises

First things: the theoretical premises! We had some serious references, here you will find our three main ones.

• Recovery paradigm - for a right-based approach to social working
The recovery paradigm replaces the biomedical one. The recovery paradigm focuses on building pathways that support individuals in acquiring their full citizenship rights, rather than on achieving a minimum level of cognitive, social, or physical performance. It represents a shift away from a deficit-based approach to mental health and social work, and towards a more rights-based and person-centered approach. By focusing on the individual's goals and needs, rather than on their limitations, this approach supports individuals in achieving their full potential and leading fulfilling lives as active citizens in their communities.

Greenwood, R. M., et al. (2020), Homeless Adults' Recovery Experiences in Housing First and Traditional Services Programs in Seven European Countries, "American Journal of Community Psychology", 65 (3-4), pp. 353-368.

• Dialogical Practices
The Dialogical Practices, including the Open Dialogue technique, is a psychosocial and therapeutical approach developed to better support individuals with mental health issues. This approach involves a multiplicity of voices in an equal relationship with each other, rather than a single authoritative voice defining the discourse's object. By building authentic dialogical relationships involving all stakeholders in the therapeutic process, Dialogical Practices aim to redistribute power, so that it is no longer the practitioner who defines the best path for the person, and expects their loyalty.

Arnkil T. and Seikkula J. (2006), Dialogical Meetings in Social Networks, Routledge, New York

• Enabling Co-planning
It draws on dialogic methodologies, such as the Open Dialogue and Anticipation Dialogue approaches, but differs in its focus on socio-educational planning and coaching rather than therapy. In fact, the Enabling Co-planning aims to ensure that people with disabilities can live their lives in a full and unrestricted way exercising their citizenship rights. It involves professionals cooperating to find goals, support networks, and actions to develop a person's

How do we
do something
HOODY?

2.
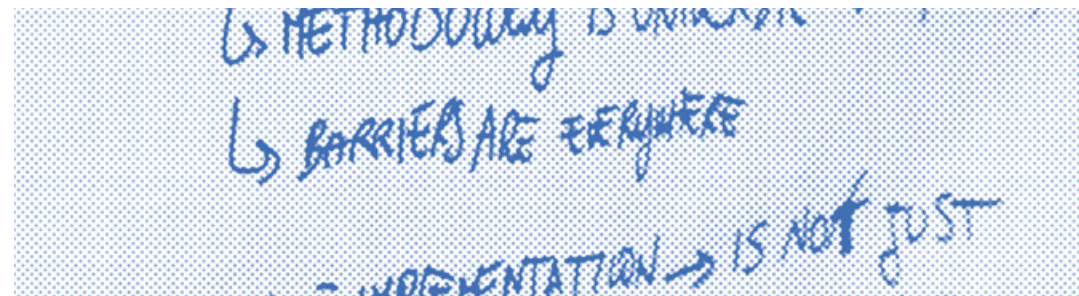
full potential.

The process involves a personalized project document that runs parallel to the thorough co-planning process that collects and monitors all the intangible work of the professional. This project collects a dreamscape where the person pictures themselves in a positive future distant enough to be free of the worries of today, surrounded by their networks of meaningful relationships, and with the support of the practitioner, the person is invited to work backwards from that dream to establish what are the steps they can take today to get there. Therefore, the dreamscape becomes the individual project's "mission" and the steps become their operative goals.

Marchisio C. (2019), Percorsi di vita e disabilità. Strumenti di coprogettazione, Carocci, Roma.

🛈 *Remember that HOOD is not only about doing different things but rather doing things differently! Some may seem pretty similar to something you are already doing in your own organisation, at least at the very first glance.*
BUT IT IS THE CONTINUOUS AND AWARE EFFORT OF DISMISSING POWER THE REAL SIGNATURE MOVE OF SOMETHING HOODY.

Among us, the first appreciable change we noticed was a difference in the way we talked about the people we were working with and how this impacted our everyday job, and the way we reacted to our colleagues and organisations.

HOOD methodology is a direct spin-off of Enabling Co-planning, in these three years, we tried to adapt it to work with people experiencing homelessness.

In the next section, you will find a step-by-step guide summarizing the adaptation.

1. Changing the professional mindset

The professional mindset sits at the very core of the HOOD methodology. The key shift in mindset involves moving away from trying to change the other person, to focusing on the concrete steps to change ourselves as professionals and even our own organization, when necessary.

The first operative step should be equipping ourselves with practical tools or "a new pair of glasses" to recognize the professional gaze and how power is exercised in our daily work routine: analysing practices, spaces, papers, and even our own words and jargon.

The HOOD methodology aims to dismiss these traditional lenses. We, as professionals, need to be aware of our biases and actively work to create a space free of judgment and preconceived notions. To do this, we need to listen with an open mind and imagine ourselves as an "**empty pot"**, avoiding immediately interpreting and evaluating what we are told. Only by doing this can we see the person's point of view and co-create new meanings.

To achieve this "empty" state, we needed to focus on three objectives:

• Being aware of our own gaze.
The way we look at people organizes our perception of the person, of their story, and their narration. It helps us make sense of the world and feel more in control. Hence, these traditional lenses put the professional in a predictive and evaluating position concerning the person's life and choices. It is always important that during and after the meetings we observe ourselves, our reactions, and why we feel or think certain things. *Why is this dream not sitting ok with me? Why have I felt scared and mad when the person was talking about the fact that they do not care about their papers now?*

SEE FAQ N.1 AND N.2

• **Overcoming the "traditional" professional role**: We need to move away from the idea that our job is to orient, evaluate, and assess the person's performance and judgment. This traditional role is based on the belief that we have a more objective and correct view of the situation than the person we are helping, and an enabling helping relationship is not compatible with this assumption. The kind of relationship adopted is the foundation for the whole process of Enabling Co-planning.

If the approach is still strategic - for instance, the social worker might say something like: "to get the person to understand they should…"; "to persuade them to…" - then any HOODY efforts and tools adopted will be in vain. The practitioner must actively and intentionally shift from a strategic relationship to a genuine, supportive, and enabling one.

• **Dismissing the power**: We need to let go of the power to define, to include or exclude, to give or deny opportunities, and to establish who deserves what and when. A relationship cannot be empowering when one of the parties involved is holding the power to decide over the other one

It is impossible to provide a one-size-fits-all adaptation of the enabling co-planning mindset since it heavily depends on our education, experience, and the context we are working in.
This includes factors like our own cultural background, the country we are working in, relevant binding institutions, legal frameworks, organisational structure, established practices, and the mission of the service we are working in.

💬 *In the following phases, you will find some practical suggestions and examples, marked by this icon, of how to adopt this mindset for each step of the methodology. These are implementations that practitioners can experiment with on an individual level in their daily work.*

⚠ ***However, it's important to understand that our efforts to dismiss power need the support of the organization we work for. If an enabling approach does not align with the service's structure, practice, and mission, it won't be effective and can lead to frustration for both us and the person we are working with. Having an enabling approach to the helping relationship isn't a miracle solution, and it's not about being a "good" social worker. It's not enough for us to change; our surroundings must change with us and actively invest in and promote the change we are fostering.***

2. Asking for the person's participation

HOOD's methodology requires informed consent and an understanding of the process before participation, hence professionals propose participation to support achieving dreams and active involvement in the project, explaining the project and how it was different from their usual line of work.

💬 *People may not be interested in receiving help or thinking about the future, and that is OK. An empowerment process can also be a tiring one, it takes a lot of energy and security. If a person is not ready, we need to respect that and move on to help them in other ways that are more viable for them.*

💬 *HOOD is about enabling people to make their own choices, therefore the person cannot be assigned to this project or find themselves in it because they have been sent there, Consent and willingness to participate are necessary prerequisites, not facilitators.*

3. Setting the meetings: time, location, and concrete setting

Empowerment and choice are central so the location and time of meetings should be chosen by the person. This can convey the message that their preferences matter and that they are in control of the process.

Some concrete supports, like water, coffee, or tea, can aid the process and work as a mediator to help put the person at ease.

⚠ ***Organizational structure and rigidity of each body, may make it harder to implement these principles in practice.***

⚠ ***To honour the person's choice, the meeting can be held in various informal locations, such as the person's housing solution, a park, or a café. The important thing is to make the setting's choice feel empowering and comfortable for the person.***

⚠ ***Ideally, if the setting is still an office: it should have a circular seating arrangement and no desk between the person and the professional, to create a more informal and equal space.***

💬 *Personal rigidity may also make it challenging to schedule meetings flexibly, these principles may lead to sudden changes in our agenda, unusual meeting times and places and to be available "on-call" occasions.*

4. During the first meetings: Collecting the dream - HOOD's Anticipatory Dialogues

During the meeting, the person is supported in "remembering the future": thinking of a joyful future, far enough away not contaminated by a difficult present where, perhaps, one feels stuck. The professional guides the person to go backwards, tracing the good things that will make their lives happy in that wishful future. In this way, the present – which is charged with worries and doubts – is "approached from the future" and considered a condition that is not only surmountable but something that has already been overcome. It needs some time to go through the whole process, and more than one session might be needed.

As practitioners, during the first and the following meetings, we need to take precise notes and report the exact words the person is using. We should avoid using professional language or interpretations, and instead, try to capture the person's own words as much as possible.
This can be a powerful way to empower the person, as it shows that we value and respect their perspective.
To ensure accurate note-taking, we suggest having two practitioners present during the conversation, with one taking notes and the other conducting the interview. If this is not feasible, we can ask the person if they would be willing to record the conversation.

Often during meetings, we automatically assess the situation and make assumptions about what would be best for the person's present and future. This doesn't leave much room for the professional to empower the person they are working with. We need to accept the choices and dreams of the people we work with. To do this, it's important to raise awareness that neither the person nor the practitioner holds the ultimate truth. Instead, they need each other to shape the meaning of what is happening.

During the meeting, the person should also be able to see the notes taken by the professional. This is important to foster transparency and trust. The individual project is not set in stone! The person has the right to add, remove, or modify any of the notes taken by the practitioner about the dream at any time. It is important for the person to feel that this is their project and that they have a real say in what goes into it. This sense of ownership and agency is essential to driving action and engagement in the present, and to achieving the person's desired outcomes.

The dream does not have to be feasible! We have encountered absurd, "dangerous", or unattainable dreams.

5. Individual Project - Documentation

The dream becomes the mission of the project. Together, the professional and the person translate the dream into concrete goals, as shown in the following table.

DREAM	HOW DO WE GET THERE?
Becoming a PC engineer	Enrolling in the university
Moving to China	Having the papers and the money for the flight tickets Having a job to stay in China
Living in the fancy neighborHOOD	Having a job or the money for the rent Renting a house

For each objective, the professional identifies a series of strategic actions to move towards the goals, as shown in the following template. This project template is then presented to the person for approval, and they can request modifications at any moment

GOAL	STRATEGIC ACTIONS	PROCESS INDICATORS
Enable the person to enrol in the university	1. Sustain the person to get information on the admission tests and timeline	1. By the DATE, a meeting with the university info area has been organised
	2. Support the person in finding books to get ready for the test	2. By the DATE, books and materials for studying have been gathered
	3. Talk with the person to see if tutoring is needed and where to find it	3. By the DATE, a meeting to discuss the tutoring possibililty has been held
	4. ...	

! *Also in the project sheet, we should use the person's own words, and avoid using technical jargon which can be a barrier and make the person feel disempowered.*

! *The goals focus on the professional's role (enabling, allowing, facilitating, etc.); the strategic actions are steps the professional takes to support the person (supporting, accompanying, talking with..., discussing); and the process indicators are neutral and don't measure the person's performance.*
To assess if the project is working, we can evaluate the professional's support work, not the person's results. So as a professional, we should focus on evaluating our support work rather than evaluating the person.

! *At any time it is possible to modify goals and, consequently, concrete actions. This happens all the time as dreams collide with reality.*
For example, after talking to a tutor, the person understands that he doesn't want to study at university for five years. It is possible to imagine other options together, helping them to find a new dream underneath the first one, and opening new windows of possibilities for the person to explore.

! *The individual project is a tool for the person, so prioritise their needs over the respect of the structure of any grid, ideally there are as many grids as there are people.*

HOOD is a very page-heavy site that needs to be used in a flexible way to adapt to the person and the services we are working in. Consider using different tools - these sheets have been designed to facilitate the process of empowering and strengthening the sense of agency and self-efficacy of the people we work with, keep this in mind as your aim when adapting HOOD's tools, looking for new digital tools or creating brand new ones.

6. Networking

In our first meetings, we try to gather information about the person's environment. We take into account both professional contacts and informal relationships, both 'positive' and 'negative', and we try to collect all the information in the individual project.

! *When working with people experiencing homelessness, it's important to remember that their support network is often very limited or consists only of professionals. It's important to ask them about all the people who play a role in their lives, both positive and negative.*

From a power redistribution perspective, the traditional dynamic of the social worker dictating the best path for the person and expecting compliance is no longer acceptable. Instead, the person is empowered to set their own goals and priorities, to steer the direction of their own life project, while we support their perspective.

The Project sheets should be handed over to the person, so they become a tool for them, even more than for the professional. That is why the process indicators focus on the professional's actions because, from an accountability perspective, the person should be able to check our work for them. It can be weird and uncomfortable at first, but it is necessary to enable the power switch in the social work practice. Therefore, all documents should be shared with the person and accessible to the person we are working with.

The development of a life project is not solely determined by achieving every single operational goal, but rather by the process itself. So, let's not stress too much about achieving every single goal - it's more of an engine driving us forward than a hard deadline.

Gathering information about their informal network may be something that can be postponed until later when the person is in a more stable situation, trust us and does not feel threatened by this request. However, we have found that some people may see this mapping as intrusive.

One way we have used the network in HOOD is to involve the person more in their relationships with social professionals, inviting them to network meetings, making phone calls together using a speakerphone and deciding together what the professional should say. We actively work with the other professionals to involve them in the HOOD enabling process. Moreover, we reiterate the importance of obtaining the person's consent before sharing their information or discussing their situation with other professionals. We have found that involving the person in their relationships with social professionals is beneficial to the empowering and capacity-building process.

Involving the person in a professional network means actively involving and informing other professionals about the empowerment process and asking for their cooperation so that we can work together to achieve positive outcomes for the person and share the meaning of the HOOD methodology..

7. Considerations on frequency, teamwork, and workload

An ideal practice would be to have one or two weekly meetings where the practitioner and the recipient work together to follow up on the steps they have agreed, or to follow up on these actions and reflect on the steps already taken. This helps to make the support plan effective, helps the person to achieve their goals and learn from the ongoing process.

Of course, the frequency of meetings will vary according to the situation and the specific moment of each project. Every three months, a quarterly review of the plan is carried out with the person, and those who may be closely involved in their life project should occur: what steps have been taken, what has not been taken and why? Is there a need to change anything in the plan? Has the person's perspective changed and does the project need to change to reflect this?

Everyone has different support needs. Some may want to be accompanied every step of the way, while others may prefer more autonomy. It's important to respect these needs and always ask people how they prefer to proceed.

Supporting a person daily through a capacity-building methodology requires practitioners to have the time, focus and stamina to do so. They cannot be spread too thinly over many individual projects; it is important to allocate enough human resources so that the workload is still manageable for everyone involved.

In addition to direct work with recipients, it would be crucial to have a space and time where practitioners experimenting with the HOOD methodology can reflect on their actions and reactions as individuals and share them with the whole team, ideally guided by an expert who can guide their gaze in the process. In HOOD, after the first phase of supervision with the UNITO team, we have also adopted the Intervision approach: a structured way to develop peer-to-peer support.

For a deeper understanding of the Intervision
SEE TOOLS AND RESOURCES

3. Tips and tricks. Lessons we have learned

1.1. We began by thinking that HOOD would work well as an early intervention policy. We moved early from this recipient-centred intuition to a broader organizational perspective. The main conclusion we draw from these three years is that the HOOD methodology is a **very useful socio-pedagogical tool that has the potential to complement Housing First and Housing Led projects** that are flexible in their organization and day-to-day practice and have no hard deadline for the housing solutions they offer. This organizational framework is best suited because this rights-based approach to social housing is very much in line with HOOD's foundations and provides the physical, financial and mental security for the person to embark on an empowering educational journey.

1.2. The flip side of the same coin is that HOOD is **not suitable for organizations or practitioners who have a mandatory or prescriptive role or commitment**. Where recipients need to demonstrate that they deserve the support they are receiving, and where standards of performance and behaviour are highly valued and necessary in order for the person to continue to be supported or to access more permanent housing solutions (e.g: "they need to stop drinking in order to..., they need to keep a steady job so that they can..."), HOOD is not appropriate for these contexts. The same is true for **institutionalized residential services, shelters or housing solutions where the organizational needs of the context take precedence over the individual's right to self-determination** and where rules are enforced to facilitate these organizational needs (e.g. respecting strict times for entering and leaving the premises, no guests allowed, the person needs to come back to sleep).

2. Since the beginning of the HOOD project, we realized that **primary emergencies** (e.g. shelter, food, mental health crises) **had to be dealt with before any kind of dreamscape and long-term perspective** could be approached. If someone is rough-sleeping or hungry, they may not be able to think about the future or make plans for their personal project.

Short-term, life-threatening issues need to be addressed before moving on to long-term goals with HOOD. The person must have the mental and physical security to first recognize and later express their dreams in order to actively participate in the construction of their existential project.

This is particularly true at the intersection of homelessness and mental health issues, where a therapeutic and multidisciplinary approach is strongly recommended to complete HOOD's socio-pedagogical focus.

3. When working with people experiencing home-lessness, it is essential to **establish a relationship of trust before delving into their dreams and as-pirations**.

The HOOD Project is not a therapeutic approach, so asking directly about their aspirations can be counterproductive if there is no prior relationship of trust. Professionals need to be aware of how their questions may be perceived and potentially trigger distrust of social workers. It may be necessary to delay discussing dreams and wishes until the person feels comfortable and secure in their relationship with the professional. **Building trust and adapting to individual situations is key to successful support.**

4. Building trust is crucial and so is security to dream. Without these building blocks, HOOD cannot be implemented successfully. But when **working with rough sleeper people**, trust in the goodwill and motivation of professionals is often very low, also because of negative previous experiences with social services, and the basic needs of security of the person are hardly met. When presented overtly with an enabling project, rough sleepers may become defensive, triggering mistrustful and even paranoid reactions, endangering the relationship that street unit professionals have worked very hard to establish. As a result, we concluded that the overt asking for participation, lengthy individual project documentation, and gathering of the person network must be done very carefully in this context and oftentimes not done at all. However, we still found that the tools offered by HOOD, such as considering the professional mindset and dismissing power in the relationship, can be helpful for these services. Overall, while the HOOD approach as presented here **may not be the best fit for street units and low-threshold services, it can still offer valuable insights and guidance** when adapted carefully to this context.

5. **Working with young people**, we realized that a slight adjustment for the future horizon might be useful. For some longer and for others maybe shorter. At the same time, it is a crucial time in life when one is expected to build oneself. Minors who have grown up in institutions need even more time to start deciding for themselves because they have always been accustomed to adapting to social services and professionals' requests.

6. We focused early on the need to acknowledge that **people from different cultural backgrounds** may have diverse views and attitudes towards the concept of dreams and discuss them openly. Therefore, when applying the HOOD methodology, professionals must take cultural diversity into account and adapt the approach accordingly.

This includes finding ways to overcome language barriers and finding mediators to ensure that individuals can fully participate in the process and have access to their Individual Project documentation in their own language.

7. In HOOD's experience, we have come to real-ize that **we have to observe our educational style** from the first phases and ensure that we are there to support the person and not replace them. According to the recipient's features, to the phase and develop-ment of the individual project, supporting them could mean different things. Some will need closer accom-paniment and other will want to move more indepen-dently. It is important to always agree at each stage with the person how and how far to support them.

By doing so, we can help the person develop their in-dependence and confidence while also ensuring that they have the necessary support when needed.

1. WHAT IF THE DREAM IS NOT POSSIBLE OR REALISTIC?

If the dream is not possible, it should be accepted without judgement, even if it is not feasible.

It becomes a motor and a goal, and reality will help the person readjust the dream, not the professional. The professional accompanies and supports the person in this process.

This also helps to maintain trust and creates that engine we talked about that helps the person to move towards a future they want for themselves. *"I want to be an engineer"* in the examples in the documentation might be a good example of an unlikely dream, wouldn't it? Maybe the person will never graduate as a fully-fledged engineer, but in the meantime, they have done all the work to get the papers, to get the information, and maybe in the meantime they have found a vocational training that they are passionate about.

2. WHAT IF THE DREAM IS DANGEROUS?

This is a concern/opinion of the professional, not necessarily of the person (in fact it may be their dream). It is important to share this with the person as our concern, not as a fact of reality, from a dialogical perspective, and then let the person respond.

For example, we were dealing with the dream of a woman who wanted to have a family; this dream would have required her to stop the medical therapy that was very important for her well-being as a person affected by schizophrenia. The professionals involved did not condone the person's choice, but they did express their concern to the person about the therapy, while still welcoming her dream of having a family and supporting her in seeking information and alternative solutions: *"I'm worried because I care about you and I want you to get all the information you can when you make these kinds of decisions, maybe we can go together to see your psychiatrist and talk about it?".* Expressing our concerns in this way allows us to continue to support the person and perhaps build a new dream if the first one ends up collapsing, leaving us with the possibility of staying with the person and finding new dreams underneath the first one: *"What does it mean to have a family? When you talk about it, who do you see with you? Maybe having children is difficult at the moment, but are there other options?".*

! *What is crucial is that the 'reality check' is not provided by the social worker who anticipates the outcome, but by reality itself, whether that be the meeting with another professional in a prescriptive position (e.g. psychiatrist, bureaucrats of the social housing, etc.), or the person experiencing something for themselves, only to find that it's not what they wanted or that they don't have the resources to do it. Only in an ecological situation where we are given the space to make serious mistakes can failure become an effective learning mechanism that remains empowering. Not to experience this limit vicariously through the experience and expertise of a social worker, but to experience it for ourselves. Only by allowing a genuine experience of failure and disappointment can we create an empowering helping relationship where the person can trust that we will support them whatever they decide.*

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3. WHAT IF THE PERSON CHANGES THEIR MIND?

Sudden changes in direction should be seen as a positive element, as they may be signals that the person is becoming active, discovering parts of themselves and initiating self-determination. Therefore, they should be supported even and especially when they deviate from the original path we have agreed upon. This is particularly difficult when we feel that we have set the best possible path, and if we don't enforce it, we may even feel that we are doing a bad job, or no job at all. But we cannot stress enough that it is of the utmost importance to stop trying to redirect or transform the person. This involves changing their minds and attitudes, or persuading them to do something they agreed before but may no longer want to do. As we have said, we can still express our genuine concerns and explain our point of view in a dialogical way. It is not about silencing ourselves as professionals, but we need to be aware of the power we carry in the helping relationship and avoid using these concerns as a control lever to steer the life projects in the direction we see fit. Removing power means changing the aim from promoting a particular change to supporting and enabling the person to take the lead in deciding their direction and how to get there, even if we don't agree with the direction they take

4. WHAT IF WE DO NOT ACHIEVE THE SET RESULTS?

As social workers we need to feel we are achieving results to feel that we are doing a good job. It can feel counter-intuitive, but it is better to focus on the steps of the process rather than the results. It is more important that the process is "enabling" than achieving tomorrow's goals (see the question above). In other words, the process itself is what enables progress not solely the concrete objectives or the mission. While the dream serves as an engine to get the person moving toward a different future, the core of the methodology lies in the way we conduct ourselves during this process so that the person has the possibility to acquire a new sense of self-efficacy and control over their life project.

(!) *ACCOUNTABILITY: it is important to acknowledge that despite the efforts made to provide possibilities and support for a person, there may be times when they do not follow through or change their mind. However, as professionals, our role is not to make choices for the person but to empower them to make their own decisions. By fostering a dialogical relationship, we can provide the necessary conditions and opportunities for the person to choose for themselves. Our job is to open as many windows of possible worlds as possible, but it is ultimately up to the person to take that step and be accountable for their own life. Understanding and respecting this principle is essential in creating a healthy and empowering helping relationship.*

5. WHAT IF THE PERSON DOES NOT FIT INTO THE PROJECT TIMELINE?

Respect their process and their time.
There may be difficulties with predetermined project timelines. There is a need to negotiate greater flexibility in the project/organization and consider accompanying a part of the person's journey, not the entire journey, to refer them to a new and more flexible resource.

6. HOW DO I IMPLEMENT HOOD IN MY OWN ORGANISATION?

This toolkit is a way to learn about this methodology and get a sense of what an empowering and rights-based approach to social work can be. To put it into practice in your own organization, we recommend embarking on a more in-depth training programme, which could include contacting HOOD partners. You can find their contact details in the Tools and Resources section.

To partially answer your question, the most effective approach is certainly training on the job. For example, we began with a small team in each organisation that started experimenting with pilot projects under the direct supervision of two experts in empowerment and capacity-building approaches to social work. Once this first team had started working and experimenting, after a year and a half of practice, direct supervision and ongoing reflection, the original teams were ready to bring the desired change to other professionals and teams within their own organization, organizing internal training events and new training on the job for even more professionals, creating new teams where the expert was the one who had participated in the original pilot phase.

On the HOOD methodology

• **FACTSHEET 1, "Introducing HOOD":** brief description of the HOOD project *

• **FACTSHEET 4, "The HOOD methodology: Enabling Co-planning with homeless people":** an overview of the methodology for pedagogical co-planning we have adapted for the homelessness area *

• **BITES n.1 - n.7**: brief papers on the pillars of the Enabling Co-planning (eng)

• **BITES n.9, n.10**: ongoing experiences of Enabling Co-planning with persons with disability in Italy (eng)

• **BITE n.13**: homeless people perspective on the HOOD methodology (eng)

• **BITES n.15 and n.16:** insights and reflections that came up from the international teamworks implementing the HOOD methodology (eng)

• **REPORT "Enabling Co-planning and Open Dialogue: review of the literature"**: review of the literature available on the Enabling Co-planning and the Open Dialogue approach (eng)

• **REPORT "IO2 Intermediate Toolkit on Enabling Co-planning and Open Dialogue"**: heavy-page document that presents the theoretical foundations of the HOOD methodology and describe all the steps adopted in the HOOD project to test and adapt the Enabling Co-planning approach*

• **REPORT "LTTA description of the activities organized"**: detailed description of the activities and contents of the training on Enabling Co-planning organized in Turin in 2021 (eng)

• **REPORT "IO1 Grid of organizations' power elements"**: grid on power elements of services and organizations*

• **Epale Journal, "Per un welfare delle aspirazioni"**: scientific article on the HOOD methodology (ita)

• **Secondo Welfare Magazine, "Lavorare con il desiderio"**: article on the HOOD methodology (ita)

• **Projekt Udenfor Journal, "Empowerment i praksis"**: article on the HOOD methodology (dk)

• **Som singulars, "Presentem HOOD"**: article on the HOOD methodology (esp)

• **VIDEOCAST #1 - #5**: Videos on Enabling Co-planning pillars, by Centro Studi DiVI, University of Turin (ita, subtitles available in all the HOOD languages)

• **VIDEOCAST #8 - #11**: Videos on social workers' perspectives on the HOOD project (subtitles available in all the HOOD languages)

On the HOOD Intervision approach:

• **FACTSHEET 3, "Intervision"**: the Intervision methodology adopted in the HOOD project*

• **BITES n.11, n.12**: brief papers on the Altervision, an approach of Intervision developed by Professor Luigi Gui, University of Trieste (eng)

• **VIDEOCAST #12 - #17**: description of the Altervision approach, by Professor Luigi Gui, University of Trieste (ita, subtitles available in all the HOOD languages)

*available in all the HOOD languages

5. Practical tools and resources

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HOOD
partner's contacts

We hope this toolkit may have provided you with tools to imagine how to rethink social work from a capacity-building perspective, to turn transformations within your organization, or even just to trigger your curiosity about Enabling Co-planning. To learn more, do not hesitate to contact us!
At HOOD we use dialogical approach... we are always ready to chat with those who are interested!
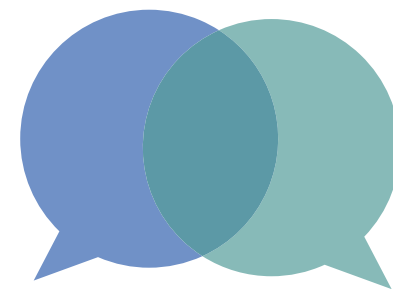
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