**What gets us through hard times?**

**Exercise developed by David Denborough**

This exercise is about focussing on strengths. It is about making the preferred stories of our lives ‘thicker’ and stronger. By strengthening these stories and bringing them to the fore we can draw on them more often in hard times.

1. Please describe something (a particular value, belief, skill, or knowledge) that gets you through hard times.
2. Share a story of a time when this special value, belief, skill, or knowledge has made a difference to you or to others.
3. Please speak the histories of this skill, knowledge, practice, or value … Two different histories - How long have you done this? Who did you learn it from/with? (history of origin) AND – How have you stayed connected with this? Who has recognised this / acknowledged this? (history of connection)
4. Is this linked in some way to any particular groups, family, communities or cultural histories of which you are a part? Is this linked in some way to collective traditions (familial/community) and/or cultural traditions? Are there proverbs, sayings, stories, songs, images from your family, community and/or culture (including popular culture) with which these skills and knowledges are linked?

Try to elicit particular details

Where appropriate try to elicit information about all the senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell)

Pay attention to metaphors and word images