

Peer Support 2 Day Course

Glasgow Drug Crisis Centre, Turning Point Scotland, Glasgow

Day 1 Programme All About You

11.00am – 4.00pm Friday 28 November 2008

11.00am – 11.30am **Introductions** & workshop agreement

11.30am – 12.00am **Recovery & Peer Support**

12.00noon – 12.15pm **Comfort Break**

12.15pm – 1.00pm **Confidence-Building**

1.00pm – 1.45pm **LUNCH**

1.45pm – 2.00pm **Afternoon Intro**

2.00pm – 2.45pm **Telling Your Story**

2.45pm – 3.00pm **Comfort Break**

3.00pm – 3.45pm **Keeping Well**

3.45pm – 4.00pm **Summing Up**

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Report

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Introduction

On Friday 28 November 2008 the first day of a 2 day Peer Support Training course was held in the Glasgow Drug Crisis Centre. There were 8 participants, 5 men and 3 women, 6 from Midway services, 2 from SEA and the other from the Moving On project. Bashee Sumal-James also took part. Two of the group had not attended an introductory PS day and therefore did not have all the information and experience of the others who had already discussed the meaning of PS, benefits, risks, boundaries etc.

The aim of this day was to concentrate on the person, looking at their strengths and how they might increase their self-confidence, underpinning this again with discussion around recovery and the peer support role. Other areas included practising the telling of their story, how they had got to this place in time, and tips on doing this. And finally to stress the importance of keeping well, looking at the Wellness Toolbox and finding out what everyone did to keep in good mental health. The facilitation style was participative, inclusive and hopefully empowering, and the reported points and comments are from participants, **in their own words**.

The comments in brackets [] are from the facilitator.

Workshop Agreement

Revisited as required

- Mobile phones off/silent
- Respect for everyone's opinions
- Non-judgemental
- Confidentiality
- One singer, one song
- Offload when necessary

Recovery	Peer Support
In recovery / recovering	Mutuality
'never be done'	Training
Not like fixing something that's broken	Qualifications
Substance misuse / mental health – the link between them	How feeling after it – support & supervision
'something keeping me back' – doctors? Sectioned	Systems & procedures
Different stages	

Handouts - Recovery & Peer Support definitions from 18 Sep/14 Nov (Appendix A)

[we started off by looking again at Recovery, what it could mean to different people from different backgrounds, participants mentioning that for most if not all it was ongoing, also discussing the peer support role – someone commented that it was only when their substance misuse was dealt with that the mental health issues surfaced – they started misusing substances because of mental health issues and abuse]

Confidence-Building

Exploring our strengths



[we used the Pathways to Recovery workbooks, some of the exercises from p 73-100, 'Exploring our Strengths' – encouraging participants to think of the things they are good at – coming from a place of strength rather than weakness – building up confidence and a belief in self]

Telling Your Story

Participants prepared and practised telling their story of recovery

“Only tell what you feel comfortable with – degree of safeness”

Their talk or presentation was to last around 10 minutes, given from their seat at the table

Questions asked to build their story around:

- ↳ What led to / got you into recovery?
- ↳ What setbacks, detours and how did you deal with them?
- ↳ What are some of your accomplishments or achievements?
- ↳ Hopes and dreams for the future?

Handouts – list of things to consider & a story example (Appendix B)

[this exercise gave participants an opportunity to practise putting together their story around the questions given – they found it useful to have a structure to 'hang' their story on – one person was already preparing to speak about their life at a group they attended, using Powerpoint – all were willing to do this activity and to share their experiences of recovery]

Keeping Well

Doing some exercises from the Wellness Recovery Action Plan

Wellness Toolbox

- ☺ Stick to routine eg shower at night, wash hair in morning
- ☺ Keep calm – relaxation – saying to yourself 'I can do anything'
- ☺ Keep thoughts & feelings diary – patterns (Triggers)
- ☺ Keep open-minded, non-judgemental
- ☺ Watching TV – documentaries
- ☺ Have some sort of structure
- ☺ Try & get a good sleep
- ☺ Meet family every day
- ☺ Keep motivated
- ☺ Listening to music
- ☺ Be in company daily
- ☺ Running
- ☺ Cat
- ☺ Cooking
- ☺ Shopping
- ☺ Reading
- ☺ Glass of wine

When I'm Well I am

Confident	Positive	Contented – room for improvement	
Laid back		More interests	Witty
Challenging	Motivated	In control	Assertive
More aware of self-care		Good person to be around	Happy

Handout – pages from WRAP Plan, Kansas University adapted materials (Appendix C)

[we dipped into some of the WRAP course – it was easier for participants to discuss what they did each day to keep well – not as easy to think about their personality and character when well, and that it was alright to be eg grumpy or quiet or sarcastic]

Feedback

on Post-its

- ↳ more insight
 - ↳ good sharing
 - ↳ learnt how to structure 'my story'
 - ↳ I could've had more input to the group
 - ↳ confidence building exercises
 - ↳ really enjoyed the group thoroughly
 - ↳ sleeping habits
 - ↳ thought the group was interesting & beneficial, top notch!
- ↳ very good opportunity to hear other people's views & stories

Conclusion

The first day of the 2 day follow-on PS training went well, participants seemed to enjoy the experience and were keen to share their recovery stories. There was a willingness to learn and to help others. People showed respect for each other and made great efforts to do the activities to the best of their ability.

The participants showed great potential to both move on individually in their own lives and to work with others in their recovery.

Appendix A (1)

Introduction to Peer Support

18 September 2008

Recovery

what is it?

- Getting life back in order
- Time-bound – focus – not forgetting where you came from – goals
- Changing behaviour
- Longer away from drugs, easier to be in recovery
- Still recovering – how you cope with it – positive strategies
- A journey – continuing
- External / internal
- Acceptance & letting go of past, guilt – taking, or being in, control
- Forgiveness – self
- Maintenance
- Fear of losing recovery
- Confidence

[for some people recovery was ongoing, a journey, for others it was complete, they had recovered; it was more about forgiving oneself and letting go of guilt]

Appendix A (2)

Introduction to Peer Support

14 November 2008

Recovery?

in recovery

- Different for everybody but end result same
- Live a life with stability & peace of mind
- Responsibility without panicking
- Making right choices or having choices
- Taking back control
- Building relationships
- Trust
- Institutionalised – dependency
- Maintaining recovery
- Risk – depends on type – positive risk-taking
- Resilience
- Being on own in house
- Having positive attitude
- Putting yourself first
- Power
- Regain respect, control, self-esteem

recovering

[there was some discussion about 'risk' and how this was involved in one's recovery, what it meant, for some it might be greater than others]

Appendix A (3)

Introduction to Peer Support

18 September 2008

Peer Support

definitions

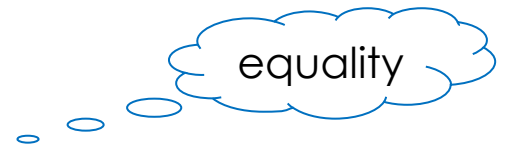
- Listening & sharing
- Giving & receiving
- Sharing – 2 way – compromise
- Bouncing off each other
- Similar circumstances
- Theory, practice & experience – sharing STORIES
- Understanding
- Feeling comfortable
- Confidence builder
- Guidance – information – formal/informal
- Right place, right time & mindset



trust



respect



equality

Befriending

Advocacy

Mentor

Sponsor

Appendix A (4)

Introduction to Peer Support

14 November 2008

What is Peer Support?

- Supporting others – listening, guidance – showing options
- Let them know your experience, benefits
- Depends on reason for support
- Empathy – understanding, not patronising (been there, done it)
- Knowing where people are, how they are feeling
- Awareness of circumstances, what people are going through
- Weighing up pros & cons – mutual
- Being there for them
- Not taking on problems
- Can't do recovery for someone
- Be in right place to do it – stability, mentally
- Role model – aspire
- Responsibility
- Different levels of peer support

Appendix B (1)

Some Things to Consider in Preparing Your Story

There is no set way to create and tell a recovery story. There are probably as many stories of recovery as there are people experiencing recovery! You can be as creative as you want to be and tell your story however you want to tell it. The following list includes some things you may want to think about or include in your story:

- What led to your desire for recovery?
- What got you into recovery?
- What was the turnaround experience like? Was it a gradual awakening or a sudden (Eureka) experience?
- Was there a point when you knew you were on the road to recovery?
- What happened?
- How did you overcome inactivity and get going?
- What or who motivated you?
- What were some of the first steps you made toward recovery?
- What strengths allowed you to move toward recovery and keep going?
- Who helped you along the way? Were there informal supporters who helped, like family members, peers and friends? Did formal helpers boost your recovery? How?
- What did you do for yourself that gave rise to learning, growth and change?
- What detours, barriers or setbacks have you experienced? How did you deal with these?
- How did you find hope and meaning?
- How have your personal values and beliefs, including spirituality, supported your recovery?
- What wellness strategies did you use?
- What are the most vivid memories or most profound times of your recovery?
- What has the journey been like for you?
- What are some of your accomplishments so far?
- What lessons have you learned about yourself and about life on your recovery journey so far?
- What gifts did your journey give you that you would like to share with others?
- What is your life like now?
- What are your hopes and dreams for the future?

[from *Pathways to Recovery* workbook, p 389]

Appendix B (2)

A Story

“When I thought about writing about my strengths I did not hesitate. At this point in my life, I know that I am strong in some areas and weak in others. This is an old term, but I am a ‘survivor’. I have survived my family, rape, beatings, verbal abuse, shame of my family, numerous jobs, cancer, living with little or no money, being in the state hospital, shock treatments, losing a child, almost losing my husband, my husband’s family shunning me, numerous suicide attempts and losing my mind. This was all a lot to live with and to process.

How did I manage? I barely did at times. One of my strengths was my faith that things would eventually get better. My faith has been strong at times and not so strong at other times. I believe in a higher power with all my heart and believe things happen for a reason, however some things that have happened in my life have spread that notion very thin. Life is an experience and that’s how I look at it now. I believe people have dark and light sides and the degree determines what course they will take.

Along with faith, I have a very strong will. It has helped me fight through the dark times. I would will myself to overcome physical illnesses and to go out and find a job. I lost large amounts of weight and this was done strictly with willpower. I willed my life to become better and it did become better but not without a fight. I wanted some things so badly and believed I could have others if I insisted and used willpower.

Another of my strengths is laughter. I love to laugh and have a good time more than anyone I know. I have a sharp wit that can be misunderstood. Sometimes my humour is so good it will pull me out of a dark mood. I love funny movies, comedians and watching my two dogs tease one another. Even at some of my most down times, I could find things to laugh about. One time I went to see my doctor and told him someone had told me to ‘pull myself up by my bootstraps.’ We both cracked up over that one. Do I ever wish it were that easy! The bootstrap idea is fine if you have wrecked your Volvo and Mercedes on the same day and find out you have no insurance.

Another strength that has come in handy is being able to communicate with different people on almost any level. I can add ‘charming’ to my list of strengths. I can make all kinds of friends, until they hear I have a mental illness. I have two friends that don’t care and like me anyway. In general, dogs give me more pleasure than most people. I have created a world for myself that I love. I have no evil people in my life. I create art. I love music. I have the love of my husband, dogs and a few friends. I love gardening, crafts and travelling. I have been very lucky in some areas of my life. I am calling the score in life even-Steven. I am not lonely, bored or afraid anymore. I have strengths, a very good-hearted doctor and, most of all, my husband.”

Anonymous, Kansas Consumer (service user)

[from *Pathways to Recovery* workbook, p 384]

Appendix C cont'd

Building My Daily Maintenance Lists

You may have discovered certain things you need to do every day to maintain your wellness. This plan helps you recognise those things which you need to do to remain health, and then plan your days accordingly. When you are starting to feel out of sorts, you can often trace it back to not doing something on your Daily Maintenance List.

This is how I am when I am feeling good (or how I'd like to be when I'm feeling well):

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These are the things I know I need to do for myself **EVERY DAY** to make sure I stay well:

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These are the things I need to do **WEEKLY** to make sure I stay well:

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