

Comments from group members

“it’s such a relief to know I am not the only one feeling this way”

“being part of the group helps my confidence, helps me to look on the positive side and have understanding support”

“this is just what I have been looking for”

How to make the first step...

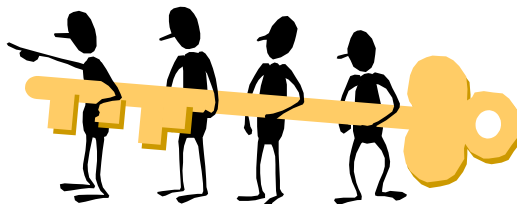
1. Telephone or e-mail us. Contact details are on the front.
2. We will arrange for one of us to meet with you informally to talk about how Peer Support may help you.
3. Where there is a group that you would like to join, we can introduce you to them.
4. Or you could simply stay in touch with us as part of the Peer Support Network.

You are welcome to be part of Peer Support whether or not you are currently receiving support such as counselling or other therapies

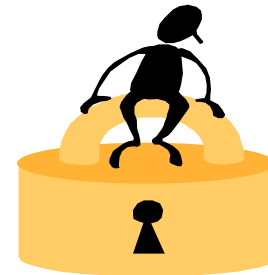
- ◇ if you are, then Peer Support could complement this
- ◇ it could offer some interim support while you are waiting for other services
- ◇ it could provide some ongoing support afterwards

We may also be able to provide some information about other sources of help.

“We look forward to hearing from you”

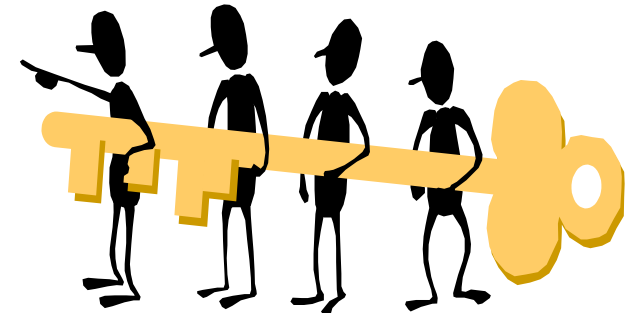


Feeling low or anxious?



Think you are on your own?

Think again!



**You can meet others who feel like you do
to share support in finding ways forward**

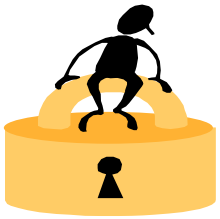
Peer Support Groups

Contact the group on
or 01305 257172 between 9.30 & 3.30
peersupport@dorsetmentalhealthforum.org.uk

“Perhaps it’s just me?”

It isn’t, and there is no need to feel embarrassed about how you are feeling or to be reluctant to seek help.

- ◆ 1 in every 4 people experience mental health difficulties, such as feeling depressed or anxious, according to national statistics.
- ◆ Many people put off seeking help, so the real numbers may be even higher.
- ◆ A large part of GPs’ work is now mental health-related.



What is Peer Support?

“It means sharing our vulnerabilities and our strengths and finding value in each other’s help.” MacNeil and Mead (2003); *Discovering the fidelity standards of peer support*

“Peer support is not like clinical support. In peer support we understand each other because we’ve ‘been there’, shared similar experiences.” Copeland, Mary Ellen and Mead, Shery (2004); *Wellness Recovery Plan and Peer Support*

“Peer support is a system of giving and receiving help, founded on key principles of respect, shared responsibility and mutual agreement of what is helpful.” Mead, Shery and MacNeil, Cheryl; *Peer support, a systemic approach*

“... peers don’t see each other as ‘patients’.... as peers we can remind ourselves that we are people first. Because we have all ‘been there’ we can help each other change our patterns and get out of ruts that we may be stuck in.” Balance New Zealand (2007); *Helping each other: Peer Support Groups*

Why Peer Support could help...

- ◆ It is reassuring to meet others who are experiencing just the same kinds of feelings; to know you are not the only one.
- ◆ When everyone is ‘in the same boat’ it is easier to feel trusting, accepted and understood; the support is relaxed and mutual.
- ◆ There is the opportunity to give as well as receive support, which can help you to feel better about yourself.
- ◆ It is encouraging to hear about self-help tips that have worked for other people and to have the support of the group to try them out for yourself.
- ◆ It can be easier to socialise in a supportive environment and being part of the peer network means there can be people within reach that you can contact.
- ◆ There isn’t any pressure; it is ok to participate in whatever way you are able, knowing it is very likely that others will understand any difficulties.

