



ENIGMA

Otago Mental Health Support Trust News and views on mental health

Summer 2018 EDITION

This newsletter was put together by the staff of the Otago Mental Health Support Trust. Editor: Grant Cooper

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OTAGO MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TRUST

- Peer Support and Advocacy
- Peer Leadership
- Education and Information

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DISCLAIMER

The opinions and articles expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the Otago Mental Health Support Trust or anyone associated with the organisation

We welcome your feedback on our newsletter. See above for contact details. Like Enigma by email? Let us know.

Peer Support Options

Otago Mental Health Support Trust focus in recent years has been on one to one peer support and advocacy (although we still run our monthly women's group). In this edition we want to look at a sample of other mental health peer support groups that are in the Otago region. A lot of these groups are run by a group of passionate volunteers who want to support and be supported by people who have may have had similar experiences. There are of course many other peer support groups in the region that might not even call themselves peer support but still share their experiences of mental distress as a way of supporting each other.

At Otago Mental Health Support Trust, we would like to start up a peer support group for men. Currently we are thinking of having it once a week over 6 weeks on a variety of topics. Then see what feedback we get about where to next. If you are interested, please let us know. We haven't set dates or times yet but hope to start early next year

I have not focussed on addiction peer support groups (although some are mentioned) here in detail because I am going to focus on addiction in the next Newsletter in autumn next year.

As an aside to talking about groups we have included a piece by Michael Broughton about how artificial lighting at night can be detrimental to people's mental health.

And on a lighter note see below for our Christmas BBQ!

Grant Cooper

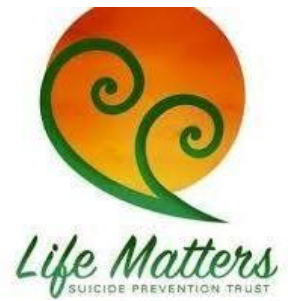
Christmas BBQ

Our end of year get together will be at Woodhaugh Gardens on Tuesday 11th December from 12 noon to 3pm. Please let us know if you want to come along for catering purposes.
Looking forward to seeing you all there!

Christmas Hours

We will close at 12 noon on Thursday 20th December and reopen on Monday 7th January.

Life Matters - Peer support at the Hope Centre



One of the first things we noticed when we started the Life Matters Suicide Prevention Trust was that people needed more support and could not always get the support they needed. Since the early days we fielded questions such as “How do we get clinicians to listen to us?”, “What happens now that my child/friend is discharged from services with no plan in place?”, “Why am I excluded from my loved one’s care”, “I can’t get counselling as I don’t qualify”, “The waiting list is too long and I need help right now”, “I’m suicidal but they don’t think I need to be hospitalised. I was discharged alone in the night. I didn’t even get to see a doctor” and “I lost my loved one to suicide and nobody has supported me except you”.

The questions all had common denominators. Our mental health services either couldn’t cope or they were not listening to us. So, from a person with no experience in this area I thought that since there are not enough clinicians to do the job that we as a community could step up and do the support that is needed. It wasn’t rocket science in my humble opinion. Surely it was better to offer some support to people whilst they wait for services to become available. That is where peer support comes into play.

As mentioned previously I had no experience working in mental health and my training is in Clinical Microbiology and Immunology as well as research. In clinical work and research, I learned many skills which I have now applied in the mental health area. If an experiment didn’t work, I would trouble shoot the problem repeatedly until I found the problem. Saying that, it didn’t mean that I would repeat the same experiment over and over expecting better results. I would go back to the manual and check whether I followed correct procedure and adjusted what needed to be done. I would do many checks and balances. Usually once all that was done the experiment would work well and the results would be good. This brings me to our mental health services and why they don’t apply the same common sense there.

On 1st June this year we opened the Hope Centre in Central Dunedin and have been working steadily on developing a bespoke peer support programme that will work specifically for our needs. We are grateful to have had many gifted University students working alongside us developing this programme. We hope to roll this out early in 2019 and at the moment are fine tuning the programme to perfection. We are now actively looking for people with a desire to help others to be part of our training programme. If you have lived experience and a willingness to help others please contact us through our website www.lifematters.org.nz or email us on lifemattersotago@gmail.com to arrange an interview and to sign up to become a peer support worker.

Corinda Taylor - Chair Life Matters Suicide Prevention Trust and Manager of the Hope Centre.

Dunedin Mums’ Postnatal Depression (PND) Support Group

Dunedin Mum’s PND group started due to feeling that there was a lack of support in Dunedin. I moved down from Christchurch in 2013 and was struggling with severe postnatal depression. In Christchurch I had the support of the Mothers and Babies Mental Health Unit and PND Canterbury support group. On finding a good GP I was referred to a community mental health team but there was a huge wait. In the interim I had support from Plunket, my GP and home help organised through Miramare Needs Assessment. When I was finally picked up by community mental health I found out that I could no longer have the support of Plunket as well. I felt that there needed to be a support group for Mothers with Postnatal Depression so I set one up. Our group is run by mums for mums. We meet fortnightly and support each other on our journey to recovery. I received Intentional Peer Support Training with the support of Otago Mental Health Support Trust.



The group is quite informal as we chat over a cuppa and it is a safe environment for kids to play. I have met some amazing people through the group and have enjoyed supporting each other. We also have a Facebook Page where members can have online discussions

In the future I would like the group to grow larger and have speakers on various topics like mindfulness, healthy eating and parenting.

If people would like to find out more about the group, please contact them via Facebook and search for Dunedin Mums PND group

Tash – Dunedin PND Group Facilitator

Waitaki Mental Health Support Group

The group was established over four years ago through input from Otago Mental Health Support Trust (OMHST) who had identified need in the Waitaki Community.

Initially we met in an un-windowed room at Community House in Oamaru. With the support of OMHST we soon shifted to our current location at Dean O'Reilly Lounge in Oamaru- windows, spacious and has its own kitchen. At first we met monthly only, on the third Thursday for two hours in the evening. This gathering has an established routine and is quite formal in nature as it includes an educational component for guided discussion. Coffee and Tea is available throughout the session.

We have found this to be a successful formula. Although numbers attending vary due to changing needs or wellbeing status, we have run successfully monthly apart from two weather related cancellations. The key facilitator for this group travels in from Kurow so extreme weather patterns can impact. Two other members have since developed their skills and confidence, and being based in Oamaru can lead the group if necessary.

As needs became apparent, we added a monthly afternoon session: second Thursday of the month, which is less formal and often involves people bringing a craft activity with them or playing around with colouring books that we provide. Ideas and experiences are unpacked in this session.

This year we have added a group called FLOW, which is an opportunity to connect and explore art materials. It is a social occasion. This meets on the First Thursday of the month in the afternoon.

Funding is an annual problem. We are supported by OMHST in the hire of one meeting room a month. COGS has funded the afternoon room hire. A local business has given us meeting room hire for six months for the Flow Group. COGS also allows refreshments to be bought for all groups and for fuel vouchers to be gifted to those who provide transport to others or for whom cost is an issue.

Attendance at all meetings is entirely free, although a Koha if possible is asked for the Flow group to allow more art materials to be bought. There is no funding in place as yet for this.

A major difference to the group after the first year of running was the training in IPS organized by OMHST for the key facilitator. This has transformed the group. It allows appropriate interactions beyond the scope of the group in the form of a Facebook page, one to one sessions and texts on an as needed basis. It has given the facilitator the confidence needed to grow the group. This is also aided by mentoring by Grant from OMHST. He is a source of inspiration.

We hope to bring IPS training to Oamaru in November to grow our group and support our outreach to others in the community. Although informal in nature, there are currently five of us that act as the committee who are working towards establishing a permanent and staffed base in Oamaru. We see needs and possibilities, and remain hopeful.

Contact Carron on 027 282 0615 if you would like more information.

GROW – A Proven 12 Step Mental Wellness programme

For over 50 years, GROW has been supporting the mental wellbeing of New Zealander's through a unique mutual help Program. GROW is weekly meetings of small groups of people who have experienced depression, anxiety or other mental or emotional distress, and those who have a mental illness diagnosis, who come together to help each other deal with the challenges of life. Some people come to GROW while struggling with a life crisis such as the loss of a loved one, a job or a relationship. Sharing a problem can be a very liberating and affirming experience, especially with others who are supportive and accepting, and facing similar issues. GROW meetings are run by the members themselves, according to a well-structured and routine format. During the meeting, members can share their problems, learn how to re-build their lives and report on their own progress. GROW'S program of personal growth is based on changing negative thinking and behaviour. It offers strategies on how to:

- Deal with an emotional crisis,
- Manage feelings,
- Think by reason,
- Realise personal worth, and
- Improve relationships.

Developing understanding, acceptance, confidence, control and love is at the heart of the GROW program. Many people have been able to rebuild their lives with the help of GROW and are ready and willing to share their realisation of an enhanced and happier life through a testimony for others to hear in group. Meetings are supportive, non-threatening, positive and constructive. Members in the group Need only be known by their first name and make a commitment to confidentiality. No fees are charged, however a small donation to meet group expensed is usual and voluntary.

A variety of training and social activities backs up the essential group process.

Contact us at 2growdunedin@gmail.com or ring the Grow Rooms at 477 2871 or visit www.grow.org.nz

Starless and Bible Black

by Mike Broughton

Our precious night with its natural darkness, the Moon and the myriad stars of the Milky Way is vital to our well-being and spirituality, but we are being denied this fundamental human right. For me Starless and Bible black,

which are lyrics to a song by King Crimson (below) adapted at the end of the poem by myself is a metaphor for the installation of night destroying artificial outdoor lights.

Artificial light is harming vulnerable people, the homeless and the mentally ill. Artificial lights cause us to see much less stars, and we are being harmed mentally, physically and spiritually. Bright lights make the sky appear black. We are indeed Starless and Bible Black.

*Sundown dazzling day Gold through my eyes
But my eyes turned within Only see*

Starless and bible black

*Old friend charity Cruel twisted smile
And the smile signals emptiness For me*

Starless and bible black

*Ice blue silver sky Fades into grey
To a grey hope that oh yearns To be*

Starless and bible black

*Sundown dazzling day Gold through my eyes
But my eyes turned within Only see*

Starless and bible black

*Old friend charity Cruel twisted smile
And the smile signals emptiness For me*

*Dunedin
night sky city
starless and bible black*

Women's Group is held on the last Friday of every month.

This is a friendly informal meeting giving an opportunity for women to make new friends, and share experiences.

1-3pm meet at our rooms, Queens Building, 109 Princes Street Dunedin.

Some Other Peer Support Groups...

Wanaka Mental Health Peer Support Group - For more information, contact them through:

Email: peersupport@mentalhealthwanaka.org

Facebook: Mental Health Peer Support Group (Wanaka)

Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse Otago - We provide support for individuals 24/7, peer and group support for male survivors of sexual abuse, both historic and recent. Oamaru Ph 021 106 4598 or Email mssatoamaru@outlook.com For Dunedin Ph 021 198 7878 or Email mssatdunedin@gmail.com

Silverline Otago - The struggle is real. Challenge the struggle.

Silverline is a tertiary student-led pilot to challenge how we engage with student mental health & wellbeing @ Otago. See

www.silverlineotago.nz

Oamaru Mens' Wolfpack - a support network for men suffering from anxiety, depression or general hardship. See

www.oamaruwolfpack.co.nz

Alcoholics Anonymous - Ph 0800 2296757 or go to www.aa.org.nz for local meetings

Narcotics Anonymous - Ph 0800 628 632 or go to www.nzna.org for local meetings

Gamblers Anonymous - Go to www.12steps.nz/12-step-programs/gamblers-anonymous/ga-meetings/ for meetings

Overeaters Anonymous - See <http://www.12steps.nz/12-step-programs/overeaters-anonymous/> for more info

OMHST Annual General Meeting

We are holding our AGM on Tuesday 15th January at 1pm at our offices hosted by our Board of Trustees. All welcome

Mental Health Advanced Preferences (MAPS)

The SDHB Mental Health Services are promoting a Mental Health Advance Preference Statement (MAP) which is a way for you to let people know what you would like to have happen if you experience an episode of mental distress and are unable to communicate your preferences. It can give you a voice when you might not normally be heard because you are too unwell or not in a position to speak for yourself. There will be a 1-hour meeting at OMHST on **Thursday 29th November at 3pm**. If you are interested, please contact us. More information can be found on

<https://www.southernhb.govt.nz/pages/mental-health-advance-preferencesadvance-directives/>

We wish to thank the following for their financial support:

Bendigo Valley Trust, COGS Coastal Otago/Waitaki, Dunedin Casino Charitable Trust, Dunedin City Council, HealthCare Otago Charitable Trust, Lotteries Otago/Southland Community, Ministry of Social Development, Otago Community Trust, Otago Masonic Charitable Trust, Southern District Health Board