

HOW CAN WE BEST SUPPORT EACH OTHER TO THRIVE IN OUR WORKPLACES?



A Lived Experience Workers Community of Practice pilot project The Social Space, Belong @ Moorooka 26 & 27 March 2019

We were 23 people, along with our hosts Jen, Mel and Pam from Campfire Co-op and Red Thread Stories. We came together, mostly feeling a little nervous, and not really sure what we were going to do. We learned that we came from different backgrounds and diverse experiences, living and working across the Brisbane South PHN region. We also learned that we shared our lived experience. Over two days, we used participatory processes, action methods and games to connect with each other, share and learn together, and create our next steps. We're excited to see what this Community of Practice could be. We are **CLEW: Community Lived Experience Workers - Empowering peers to thrive.**

Check in: What did the invitation spark in you?

To begin, we shared a little of who we are, and what the invitation to this workshop sparked in us.

- Asked to represent my organisation. We are all doing the best we can – we're showing up. That's all that matters
- To learn and hear from others with lived experience
- I've always felt powerless
- I'm here to help make my workplace and others as positive as possible. We're not alone, support from management to be here
- A good opportunity for me to learn about mental health issues. How can I serve people? Very grateful
- The fact I can use my recovery to support others
- To discover what workforce is out there
- I want to make a big difference and make an impact. Not sure how yet!
- Peer support and lived experience matters and we want to embrace it in our workplace
- I want to pass on the support I received, spread kindness everywhere! Hungry to learn how I can help
- Passion to learn and for supervision in workforce. Inspired
- I believe the future is communication and networking
- Keep it simple and do what I can
- To learn more, especially about mental health, to read the signs to help myself and others
- Talking about mental health issues is important to me and my family
- Combination of being able to learn from people in lived experience, and being able to take it back to my organisation
- It fits with our course. The way you're doing this already is how it needs to be done. No pressure!
- The word 'thrive' - to go really well and to hear about all groups here. We need to join up instead of being islands
- The word 'thrive'. I work in these ways. I'm interested in who isn't here today too.
- Lost some friends. Came to get information to help others in my community
- Sparked a lot of nerves in me – speaking up - also excitement a chance to beat stigma, and normalise it
- Great to network with people who really do understand
- I've lived with mental illness and support others. To cope better myself and be able to better help others
- I've been supported by community – a chance to support others is why I am here

Our Agreements

Collectively, we created a list of agreements for how we wanted to work together over the next two days:

- Be gentle with ourselves and each other
- Let's be honest and genuine
- It's okay not to be okay
- Respect confidentiality
- It's okay to share our feelings
- Listen to each other
- It's okay to stuff up - "OLE"
- Have fun - or not
- Take a pause when needed
- In disagreements – speak to the issue not the person
- Take care of ourselves and the group
- Focus on thriving
- Be mindful and respectful of feelings
- Suicide triggers – lets not talk about method or place

Let's have hope, respect and be authentic



A Recipe for Thriving at Work

In pairs, we shared stories of a time when we really thrived at work. Our partners listened for the key ingredients that made it possible. From these ingredients we created a recipe for thriving at work.

- Networking with each other
- Advocacy and empowerment
- Honest conversations
- Being real with yourself and your co-workers
- Learning from others
- Connect to chosen family (not isolated)
- Togetherness
- Flexibility
- Safe to be open and honest
- Communication
- Having on open heart
- Get into the other person's head space or world. Don't expect them to come into ours
- Lift people up. Affirm their strengths
- To overcome fears – share the fear within the group
- Helping each other
- Using peer experience in a meaningful way
- Recognition of the value of colleagues and other services
- Supportive family network
- Different stories and circumstances with positive outcomes because of the advocacy and supportive family network
- Using strengths e.g. empathy, storytelling and listening
- Passion for our work and for people
- Good supervisor/manager seeing potential in us and giving us the opportunities to pursue that potential. i.e. Promotions, encouragement to come to meetings & trainings like this
- Working together



- Collaboration
- Being supported to use your knowledge to navigate service systems to benefit others
- Empathy/passion for what you are doing
- Actually loving what we do
- Working to our strengths
- Support
- Advocacy
- Recognition of skills and abilities
- being friendly and honest
- Eye contact
- Expression
- Debriefing
- Body language
- Active listening
- Gentle personality
- Non-judgemental
- Inclusive of everyone
- Not giving up

Know that we all have gifts to share

World Cafe

We used a process called The World Cafe to have important conversations. We moved around tables over three rounds, answering the following questions to come up with insights together:

- 1: What support and resources do we need to thrive in our work?
 - 2: What support and resources do we already have?
 - 3: How can we build on what we have?
- What else is needed for us to thrive in our work?

Then we took what we had learned, sorting those insights into these 3 headings (some belonged in 2 or 3 places).



3. Workplace wish list

- Empowering staff through mentoring
- Protocols for mentors to do mental health work
- Right person, right skills, right position
- Culture-positive, inclusive, non-judgemental
- Mental health friendly policies
- Mental health WHS audit/ independent person to check
- Good management processes eg: succession planning
- Follow evidence based practice for wellness and productivity
- Portable long service to help leaving workplaces
- Duplicate successful models in other locations
- More PR – websites, promotional days to share resources
- Sharing stories, team building, sport, social activities
- Cultural awareness, sensitivity training
- Positive discrimination
- Inclusion and Reconciliation Action Plans
- MH First Aid, EAP
- Peer support - go to other workplaces to educate (like Mates in Construction)
- Provide time for practical wellbeing activities
- Collaborative management style
- Equal pay for equal work (peer workers working outside job roles)
- Safe secure friendly environment. A designated person to talk to
- Access to all types of resources
- Excellent debriefing and supervision

1. What is mine to do?

- Purpose
- Setting boundaries
- Collaborative approach
- Self care: time for self, access to what we need
- Connection
- Networking with partners & peers (workers, community members)
- No discrimination
- Support co-workers, get to know them personally
- To be heard, listened to, understood. Understanding
- Open communication. Self advocating
- Educating people about access to help services - identify barriers

2. What is ours to do together?

- Support co-workers. Equip & upskill workmates to have conversations and refer to support
- Connection
- No discrimination
- Awareness and access to resources - identify barriers
- Interagency work – wellness representatives, meetings. Lets not work in silos
- Peer support workers go to other workplaces to educate
- Education system – free workshops and training
- Sharing stories, self help groups, team building, sport, activities, social activities
- Legal protections: EEO, anti-discrimination, safety, positive discrimination
- Ourselves, our own inner resources and life skills
- More PR – websites, promotional days, share resources
- Duplicate successes in other locations
- Define supportive workplaces – what do they look like and how do we get there?
- Networking- self advocacy, with partners/stakeholders
- Educating people about access to services
- Sharing resources, facilities, knowledge and stories
- Monitoring and evaluation of policies and procedures
- Provide time for practical wellbeing activities
- Culture-positive, inclusive, non-judgemental
- Contractual obligations of supportive management

Check out: What are you taking away from today?

- Inspiration
- Information
- Gratitude
- Inner peace
- Hope
- Thoughts and knowledge

We can fix this!

- New friends
- Connections
- Grateful and inspired
- Reminder of what's possible
- Acceptance & a full stomach



The Four Fold Practice

After sharing a movement and sound of how we were showing up, we began the second day with an introduction to the Four Fold Practice, which comes from The Art of Hosting Conversations that Matter. It's a way of practicing being in communities, teams, families and in life.



A name for this community

Yes, we do want to continue as a group - we have strong commitment! We needed a name, so we worked in groups to create some ideas for names, and then presented these back to the group. There were a lot of fantastic, creative names. We voted on them, and we combined the two most popular choices.

So our name is:

CLEW
Community Lived Experience Workers
 empowering peers to thrive

Our gifts, skills and qualities

We played a game called Who else? to speak what our individual gifts, skills and qualities were, creating a great list of our collective qualities.

- Advocacy
- Gift of love
- Joy
- I notice things
- Good at writing
- Showing up in the world (with support)
- Painting
- Determination
- Courage
- Empathy
- Im creative
- I am generous
- Design and sewing
- Being content
- Knowing when to be quiet and meditate
- Getting people together and working together
- See the hope in people even if they don't
- No matter what life throws at me I carry on with a smile
- Helping others get involved and enjoy themselves

Passionate about people and their problems

- I'm a nurturer
- Resilience
- Working with people to work out their vision
- See skills in others to form a team
- I like to help people be the best they can be
- Forgiving
- A natural leader
- Attention to detail
- Encouraging others
- Try new things and new ways and new situations
- Proactive at solving issues
- Celebrating little wins
- I like ideas and I like to create
- Open and honest with people around me
- Listening to and understanding people
- I can find positive things in anything
- Making people happy
- People feel comfortable opening up to me
- Raising awareness
- Bringing people together with food



Co-creating our next steps

A few steps were taken to reach a shared decision on where to go next. What is it that we need or want this Community of Practice to be?

We brainstormed, shared and developed ideas together, and sorted these into three parts: things we could do immediately, things we could work on over the next 3 months of this pilot project, and things that needed longer term attention.

We know this list will change over time, and it was a great place to start.

Immediate

- Share our experiences with each other
- Self-care – helping ourselves, time for self, access to what we need to self-care
- Peer buddy
- Professional development
- Consultation and feedback
- To have gratitude every day
- Support and celebrate achievements
- Positive mentoring
- Slow down
- Brisbane South PHN monthly communication highlighting one or two real, positive stories where someone with MH lived experience has been supported and shares what was most helpful.

3 months

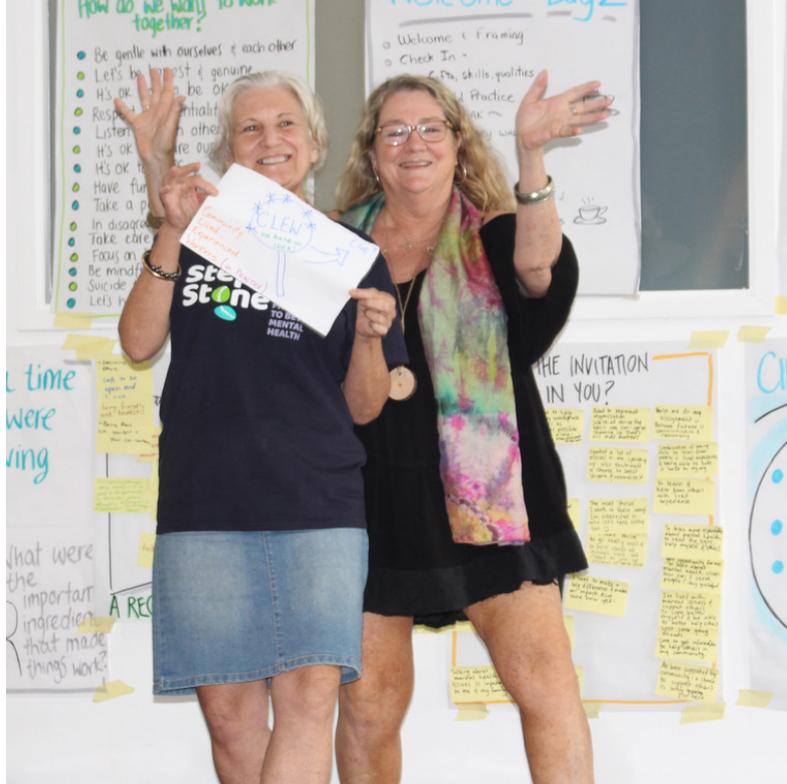
- Workplace workshops to raise awareness for staff and management
- Share facilities/resources
- Interagency meetings - In-Service to other organisations
- Be assertive – not passive/aggressive
- Lived experience speakers go to community organisations
- Sharing stories, self help groups, team building sport, activities, social activities

Longer term

- Fight my own self stigma
- Engage management in changing policy
- Wellness supporter
- MH First Aid officer
- EAP

Questions we still have

- How do we be sustainable after 30 June?
- Should we invite others without lived experience into the CoP?
- Would CoP members be willing to offer help to others e.g. workshops we have done here?



Our next events

As part of this pilot project is a commitment to hosting 5 more events, this is what we decided was what we most wanted and needed. They will take place between April and 30 June, preferably on Wednesdays between 9.30am-12.30pm. Dates will be confirmed soon.

- Event 1 - Co-design our community of practice
- Event 2 - Speaking up – assertiveness, find my voice
- Event 3 - Project Co-Design, time to develop projects
- Event 4 - Hosting a meeting in a participatory way
- Event 5 - Celebration & storytelling

We came up with ideas of who else we wanted to invite, and how to invite them:

- People on the original (& growing) invitation list
- Send newsletter harvest for these 2 days to the wider invitation group
- Belong website, other online spaces
- Set up events through Facebook to share
- Talk to people we know
- Buddy system for newcomers (Koda-Jo, Shaz, Lesley, Anna, Nazira, Julian)



Check out: What are you taking away with you from these past 2 days?

To end our first two days together, we sat in circle and share our thanks, appreciation and what we will take with us from the experience.

- Deep connection
- Gratitude
- Connection with people
- Learned about services
- Knowing I can affect change as an individual
- Smiles
- Happy to know you all
- Proud of myself
- Confidence building
- Hope
- Implementing change in work
- Information received
- Friendships
- Thankful
- I learned many things
- I don't feel alone
- New contacts
- Possible friendships
- Networking
- Thank you to everyone for coming
- It's okay to be me - it's okay to be you
- Amazing ideas
- Compassion
- Enthusiasm
- People have faced incredible challenges to get here – a role in looking after others
- Knowing support is here changes everything
- Taking hope that services are going to be more inclusive and accepting
- Synchronicity
- Facilitators are awesome
- Amazing people who came
- Excitement to continue my participation after today
- Light-headedness
- Direction and purpose
- Create environment based on non-judgement
- Proud to be part of the seed group
- Leadership takes on different forms
- I feel valued by each and every one of you
- Meeting people with lived experience
- Being understood by others
- Proud of everyone
- Growth and potential
- Share learning in workplace
- More confidence in speaking
- Understanding
- Inspired



HOW CAN WE BEST SUPPORT EACH OTHER TO THRIVE IN OUR WORKPLACES?

Day 1: 26 March 2019
WELCOME!
THE SOCIAL SPACE, MOOROOKA
Lived Experience Workforce Community of Practice

WHAT DID THE INVITATION = SPARK = IN YOU?

How can I learn more to help myself & others?

Hear & learn from others with lived experience
I want to help make my workplace as positive as possible
I want to make a difference. I'm not sure how yet
Peer support & lived experience matters
I want to use my recovery to support others
Spread kindness everywhere?

A RECIPE FOR THRIVING AT WORK

- Passion for our work & people
- Working with people's gifts & strengths
- Honest & clear communication
- Advocacy
- A safe space to be real & honest
- Supporting & learning with & from each other
- Supportive family network
- An inclusive workplace
- Supportive manager who sees my potential
- Working together / collaboration

HOW DO WE WANT TO WORK TOGETHER?

LET'S

- be honest & genuine
- listen to each other
- be hopeful, respectful & authentic
- be mindful & respectful of feelings
- focus on thriving
- Have fun... or not :)

IT'S OK
to share our feelings
to stuff up 'ols
not to be OK

Shh... RESPECT CONFIDENTIALITY
Take a pause when we need to

Be gentle with criticism & each other
Take care of yourself & the group

IN DISAGREEMENT, SPEAK TO THE ISSUE, NOT THE PERSON
BE AWARE OF TRIGGERS - LET'S NOT TALK ABOUT METHOD OR PLACE

WORLD CAFE

ROUND 1: WHAT SUPPORT & RESOURCES DO WE NEED TO THRIVE IN OUR WORK?

- Flexibility
- A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH
- CONNECTION
- SELF-CARE
- PURPOSE
- BEING HEARD & UNDERSTOOD
- POSITIVE SUPPORTIVE CULTURE
- ACCESS TO RESOURCES
- A PERSON TO TALK TO
- A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

ROUND 2: WHAT SUPPORT & RESOURCES DO WE ALREADY HAVE?

- ACCESS TO SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE - EDUCATION
- MENTOR & SOCIAL ACTIVITIES
- PEER SUPPORT
- TECH - ACCESS TO RESOURCES
- GROUPS, MUDS, COMMUNITY ORGS
- ME FRIENDS & FAMILY
- LEGAL PROTECTIONS
- CONSELLING
- SHARING STORIES
- EMPLOYEE SUPPORT
- MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

ROUND 3: HOW CAN WE BUILD ON WHAT WE HAVE? WHAT ELSE IS NEEDED FOR US TO THRIVE IN OUR WORK?

- NETWORKING
- SUPPORT CO-WORKERS
- AWARENESS & ACCESS TO RESOURCES
- LET'S DO MORE OF WHAT WORKS
- RIGHT PEOPLE, RIGHT SKILLS, RIGHT JOB
- PEER EDUCATION IN OTHER WORKPLACES
- LET'S NOT WORK IN SILOS
- HIGHLIGHT GREAT WORK PLACES
- MENTOR
- MENTAL HEALTH AIDERS

WHAT IS MINE TO DO?

WHAT IS OURS TO DO TOGETHER?

WORKPLACE WISHLIST

Connections
Hope
Inspiration
Thought & Information
A reminder of what's possible
Acceptance
Value
New Friends

HOW CAN WE BEST SUPPORT EACH OTHER TO THRIVE IN OUR WORKPLACES?

Day 2: 27 March 2019
THE SOCIAL SPACE, MOOROOKA
Lived Experience Workforce Community of Practice

IDEAS TO ACTION

Co-Create
Community of practice

Host Others
Step up

Be hosted
Participate

Host Self
Be present

FOUR FOLD PRACTICE

OUR GIFTS

- CREATIVITY
- EMPATHY
- VISION-SEEKER
- NOTICING THINGS
- BEING CONTENT
- RESILIENCE
- FORGIVING
- QUIET TIME
- WORKING TOGETHER
- PROACTIVE IDEAS GUY!
- ENCOURAGING OTHERS
- CELEBRATING WINNERS
- BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER
- POSITIVITY
- RAISING AWARENESS
- BEING THERE
- PEACE TOGETHER WITH FOOD
- SHINE UP
- ADVICACY
- JOY
- COURAGE
- DETERMINATION
- DESIGN & SEX
- LISTENING TO OTHERS
- LOVE
- WRITING
- PAINTING

from Jen, Pam & Mel
RED THREAD STORIES & CAMPFIRE CO-OP...

A BIG thank you!

WE ARE CLEW
Community Lived Experience Workers
'empowering peers to thrive'

thank you BELONG
for hosting us in this space!
BRISBANE SOUTH PTIN for making this happen!

Co-creating our next steps together

- DESIGN OUR COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE
- SPEAKING UP ASSERTIVELY FIND OUR VOICE
- PROJECT CO-DESIGN
APRIL-JUNE 2019
3 hours each
LET'S WORK ON PROJECT IDEAS TOGETHER
- HOSTING A PARTICIPATORY MEETING
WHO ELSE & HOW DO WE INVITE THEM?
- CELEBRATING OUR FIRST PHASE & STORYTELLING

What am I taking with me from these 2 days?

- Creating a safe & non-judging environment
- Inspired. We all faced incredible challenges to make it here
- Knowing support is here changes everything for me
- Courage to be me and own my lived experience
- Thankful to everyone
- I learned so many new skills & I don't feel so alone
- Proud to be part of the seed of this group
- Leadership takes many different forms
- New direction of purpose
- It's okay to be me, it's okay to be you
- Knowing I can affect change as an individual
- New contacts with others & being understood
- Possibility of new friendships, connections & network of like-minded people

Next wise steps

These are the next steps the project team has committed to supporting, before we meet next.

- Share email contact list – check with people who left early if they are okay to share
- Google group – send out to everyone on the list
- Email list – use name of group in the subject box
- Peer buddies for newcomers
- Newsletter within a week
- Harvest on website – send the link to group
- Share the video interviews
- PHN will distribute an update through the networks

What did you find most useful about this workshop?

- Group work with lived experience peers. Funner and easier to explore ideas together. *Steph*
- Meeting different people and being involved. *Julian*
- To hear the commonality of our lives and stories. *Trish*
- Finding other networks that were unknown to me. *Donna*
- Learning from others lived experience. *Demee*
- (The workshop) was a lot of fun and also uplifting. It gave me more confidence to speak up and not be afraid to voice my opinions. *Nazira*
- The techniques used to get everyone involved and keep them motivated. I can use these in Stepping Stone clubhouse. *Lesley*

Sharing stories, more knowledge and developing my knowledge and skills. *Parvin*

What might you do differently as a result of what you learned at this workshop?

- Continue learning and participating. *Sharon*
- Openly communicate and listen more to colleagues. *Demee*
- Provide updates to my colleagues and create healthier workplace culture "Its ok to be ok. Its ok not to be ok". *Brett*
- I will be more inclined to speak up and express my opinions and share ideas. I will be more open to others opinions and ideas and I will have more confidence. *Nazira*
- Communicate with my supervisor about my needs. *Lara*
- To be more confident about bringing my whole self to work and advocating for mental health awareness and support at work, knowing I have an external support network. I will also for the first time actively contact external colleagues made here, to support, share and ask for resources. *Anna*

See strengths in myself differently & also strengths in others. *Lesley*

Thank you

A big thank you to:

- Brisbane South PHN for the support and funding - making this project happen!
- Trish and the whole team at Belong, for your support by allowing us to use the fabulous Social Space for our first workshop.
- Amber, for all of your great support with the food, all done with a smile.
- Belinda, for your hard work when we needed it the most in the kitchen.
- Karalee, for stepping up to help Mel with the graphic harvest, and to those who helped us clean up.
- Anna and Maverick for being so kind and gentle with your filming, and bringing out the best in us.

The biggest thank you is to all participants - for your contributions and for making it so much fun. You are creating something wonderful here.

Jen, Mel and Pam



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