

HEARING VOICES GROUPS

Setting up and Supporting Self help and Peer Support Groups for People who Hear Voices

Finding a safe place to talk about voices can be the first step to recovery.

“.. a fellow voice hearer who, at my very first hearing voices group asked me if I heard voices. When I replied that I did, she told me that they were real. This does not sound like much but that one sentence has been a compass for me showing me the direction I needed to travel and underpinning my belief in the recovery process.”

Ron Coleman

In a society that stigmatises hearing voices many voice hearers naturally keep silent about what they are experiencing. To address this problem, hundreds of self help groups have been established throughout the world, groups that meet regularly to enable voice hearers to share their experiences and to learn more about how to cope. Research has shown that sharing the experience of voice hearing not only reduces isolation but is also one of the most successful ways to reduce anxiety and distress. **Paul Baker**, the coordinator of the international hearing voices movement will lead this participative workshop where we will learn about setting up and supporting groups, based both on the experiences of groups from around the world and harnessing our own ideas and experiences.

Topics:

An overview of the philosophy, research and practice of the hearing voices movement

Why set up a hearing voices group?

How to Promote, develop and support a group

Different kinds of groups

Problem solving

Groups from the inside – how do they work?

Activism, Empowerment and Recovery

What next? – beyond the group

Who is it for? This workshop is aimed at mental health workers and managers, members of voluntary groups & people who hear voices - who - are running or supporting a group; are members of a group; are thinking of setting one up; are managing services that support groups.

Learning Outcomes

A firm grasp of the principles and practice informing the work on hearing voices

A clear understanding of the function and goals of hearing voices groups

A working knowledge of the steps to take in planning and setting up groups

The development of a personal plan for the establishment and/or development of hearing voices groups

Facilitated by Paul Baker

Paul Baker is the coordinator of INTERVOICE, the influential coordinating body for the international hearing voices movement, working closely with Professor Marius Romme. He is a community development and group worker, specialising in working with people with mental health problems. He has a special interest in working with groups of people to find ways of help themselves overcome difficulties and problems. Paul was one of the founding members of the Hearing Voices Network in England and helped to set up the first hearing voices group in Manchester in 1989. He is currently the coordinator of INTERVOICE, the influential coordinating body for the international hearing voices movement, working closely with Professor Marius Romme.

This Training Workshop is aimed at initiatives and organisations across the world. For more information about the workshop, costs and scheduling contact Paul Baker at admin@intervoiceonline.org