



BPD COMMUNITY

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The newsletter of
BPD Community Victoria Ltd.



To join our email list, email:
barb@bpdcommunity.com.au

Foundations for Change 2nd Edition: The results of the recent Australia wide survey undertaken by the Private Mental Health Consumer Carer Network based in SA, were recently released. The results when compared with the earlier survey in 2011 are interesting. 424 'consumers' participated almost three times as many as in 2011. 168 'carers' participated this year compared with 128 in 2011.

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Building a future

What exciting times for those of us in the BPD Community. We can feel change in the air and the hard work we are engaged in is beginning to have an effect.

We have just experienced a very busy BPD Awareness Week (the first week of Oct): our own AGM and Celebration Night were a part the activities held Australia wide.

The Board of Directors for the next two years ahead, have joined those who still have a year to go. Your Board now numbers 7 talented people committed to our mission to replace stigma and discrimination with hope and optimism and our purpose to create a community to support recovery. There is much to be done by the Board and their efforts are focused on mak-

ing this a sustainable organization so we can continue with the work we do and build upon it.

While there has been change for BPD wafting in the air, there is so much to do and the need is great. In just over 2 years, we number over 350 people with lived experience, their families, those who work with them and a dedicated handful of supporters. With you all behind the Board, it gives us credibility to speak out on behalf of those affected by BPD.

Our focus on providing up to date accurate information on BPD, our Family and Friend's Group development, the planning for our Recovering Club has been achieved without any significant funding. Imagine

what we could do if we had the funding?

The story of hope and optimism is based on the knowledge that recovery is possible. Yet for so many access to appropriate, research based treatment is denied. Stigma and discrimination still permeates the mental health system. With the introduction of the NDIS, the needs of people who have 'psychosocial disorders' (the NDIS description for people with BPD) are not easily met. Some of our more seriously ill might qualify under the NDIS but so many more will not qualify. And those programs that once supported them are no longer being funded. This is why BPD Community is so important today.

Thank you team!

We have the Better Health Channel Murray to Moyné bike team to thank for adopting us to raise funds for this year. With their financial support we have been able to have some stability.

This support has also provided us with a strong sense of support for the

work we are doing. The money they have raised not only helps pay the insurance, it has contributed to the employment of a Family and Friends Activities Coordinator.

The year's fundraising drew to a close with a Bunnings BBQ and cake stall that together raised just under



two and a half thousand dollars.

The grand total raised by these intrepid bike riders is over \$8,000.

A great big thank you to all!



It's about willingness



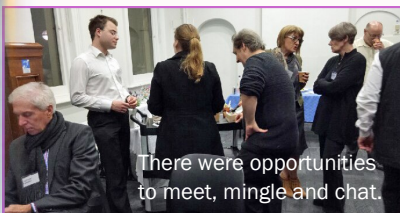
Lisa's talk promoted questions and discussion



There is always something to learn



Waiting for the cakes to come!



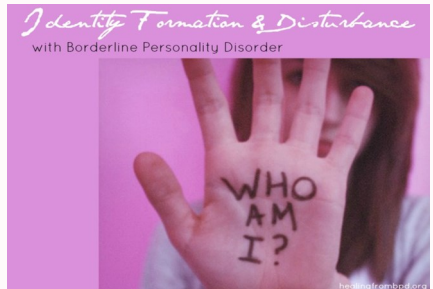
There were opportunities to meet, mingle and chat.

Lisa Webb was inspiring. For the BPD Community Celebration Night, Lisa told a moving story that began with the deeply distressing childhood sexual abuse by a neighbor.

When Lisa found out there were other allegations of abuse, she decided to speak out. Then began a nightmare of 4 years of legal activity. Lisa's mental health reached a rock bottom. She described the guilt of not speaking out earlier, the fear of the alleged perpetrator taking revenge, the distress of watching her family suffer and the shame of it all. In all, Lisa was hospitalized

or in a care facility to keep her safe on 14 separate occasions, including a CAT team intervention, and being overmedicated in an Emergency Dept for 22 hours.

It was on her 3rd hospitalization that Lisa was diagnosed with BPD, Complex PTSD and Dysthymia (a form of depression). She began what turned into three and a half years of treatment, including with a private psychiatrist. Then followed two and a half years at Spectrum. This was however not enough for Lisa to feel



well. She describes it as having all these tools but not really practicing them. It was a new case manager who provided the clear guidance for Lisa on how to move forward. She selected a few tools and worked at mastering them, this was what began the current stage of her recovery.

What does it feel like?

How does it feel to be living in a state of recovery? Lisa Webb says she feels lighter, she understands now that she is capable, loved and worthy.

Lisa has felt pain of having to go through years of an insensitive legal system that saw the perpetrator of her sexual abuse go free

and the effect of that on both herself and her family. She has lost the grandmother who was her strength and support and with whom she was especially close. But she describes her mental illness as the hardest fight she has had to ever go through.

Today Lisa says that to feel so well, "makes all the hard work well worth it."

Amongst her achievements in recovery, Lisa is living independently for the first time ever.

Acceptance

The first step towards recovery was accepting that she needed the guidance of professional support. It was many years of treatment working with multiple therapeutic programs that built Lisa's self-awareness and her willingness to get well. Until finally a shift occurred in her

thinking and she adopted a disciplined approach to implementing a few of the tools from her toolkit. This led to the development of those skills and greater understanding of the concepts behind them.

Now Lisa is in a position to take advantage of all that is available to her to rebuild her life. It is recovering that is important, it can be a long lonely battle in spite of the supports there may be. Lisa describes recovery as not an end goal but an ongoing process to build a life and a future worth living.

Today Lisa says that to feel so well, "makes all the hard work well worth it."



At the third annual Celebration Night for BPD Community, a large crowd warmly embraced the sense of belonging to a community that understands. Old faces and new ones mingled together catching up and discussing the events of the night. It was a great night!

It feels so good to be amongst people who understand, where no explanations are necessary, where acceptance and caring is automatic.



Animated discussions

As Victoria's BPD Awareness Week event, the positive message of hope and optimism that recovery is possible and that change is happening in the world of BPD, was happily received.

Barb Mullen spoke briefly of how much BPD Community has achieved over the year and how far the community has come in just over two years.

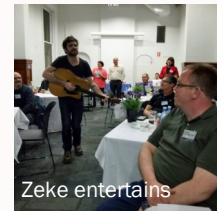
Lisa Webb told her story of recovering which was moving. The many people with lived experience present were given hope and inspiration to continue with their own journey of recovery.

The night ended with the thrilling entertainment of

Zeke Ox. Zeke held the audience in the palm of his hand as he told and sang of his personal struggles and his determination to not just survive but also to thrive. Zeke has now

sung for BPD Community for three years and his commitment to our community and work is inspiring.

We hope that with each year the effect of creating a community to support recovery grows more and more and the message of hope and optimism spreads and the support to make this possible increases.



Zeke entertains

Lisa's words to those with BPD

As one who has come through the struggle Lisa has some words to share for those with BPD. She wants you to :

- * Be willing and committed to accept professional help;

- * Work on self awareness— understand your triggers and emotions;
- * Know there is a reason to feel as you do;

- * Give yourself a break and tell your inner voice to shutup ;
- * Listen to your body;
- * Remind yourself it's baby steps;

- * Be kind and treat yourself as you would treat others.

Lisa's words of wisdom are worth listening to, she knows how hard the struggle is.

Lisa's words to family and friends

Families can feel helpless in the face of BPD and there are many people with BPD who feel deeply hurt by the responses of those who they are closest to, their families. Lisa says that the support, love, presence and patience of family was essential for her.

With the insight of her experience Lisa's message is:

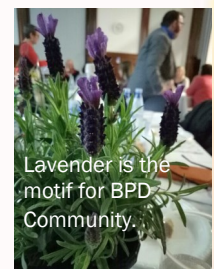
- That you are the most important person in your life;
- Your health and wellbeing will be pushed to the limits;
- Setting boundaries is essential for you;

- Learn to accept non judgementally what you have no control over;
- Honest, open validating communication is the key.

Relational dysfunction is a key domain of BPD and of course this means that those who are closest, feel

it most. Sadly, many families are ill equipped to provide support.

BPD Community's F&F Group provides support to families and encourages learning in the skills and techniques that make a difference.



Lavender is the motif for BPD Community.

What doesn't work

Doing it alone: In a world where it seems no-one understands it is tempting to think you are alone. There are people who care and there are people who can help. BPD is not something that you can resolve on your own.

Not accepting help or support from loved ones: People with BPD can have difficulties with maintaining healthy relationships so this can lead you to rejecting the ones who love you dearly and who want to help.

Believing everything you think or feel: Having BPD means seeing the world differently to others. You may be intelligent, caring and loving and your feelings or thoughts might not be based in the reality shared by other people.

Thinking that BPD is forever: Full recovery from BPD is possible, look at Marsha Linehan. Nothing stays the same and you have control of yourself and your life; if you can accept the work of treatment and the support of those who care and love you, recovery can be real.

What does the NDIS mean to us?

Change can feel destabilising when it is imposed upon us. And the National Disability Insurance Scheme is a big change. For those who are accepted into the scheme, it has the potential to be a game changer. So what does it mean for our BPD Community?

For a start, the NDIS is being introduced in stages throughout Victoria, some places are in full swing, others are just getting started. So we all have different experiences based on when it comes to our part of the world.

The NDIS was initially designed for those with physical disabilities and the mental health sector was added to the scheme. The influence of this in planning is evident in how it is being implemented. The particular requirements of a person with a mental illness are not as easily translatable from the world of physical disability.

For our community the NDIS presents a few particular challenges.

We know that recovery is more than just treatment. Supports for the person with lived experience to be able to live a completely independent life are required. Support comes from the many who work in this field, for example supporting someone to return to work. Support may come from family who could provide a level of financial stability. Moral support can come from the BPD Community.

BPD Community has joined with Carer's Vic to bring you this Info Night. The presentation will have a 'Carer's Perspective' but it is open to all in our BPD Community—there is always something to learn. How we can work with the NDIS is out topic for Tues, 20 Feb, presented by Sonia Savanah at Star Health in Sth Melbourne. Book your seat now!

TITLE: The NDIS
PRESENTED BY: Sonia Savanah

TIME: 6.30pm
DATE: Tues 20 Feb, 2018

PLACE:
Star Health
341 Coventry St
Sth Melbourne

Please RSVP to:
barb@bpdcommunity.com.au

Sonia Savanah



Sonia Savanah has a wealth of experience. She has spent over 20 years working in a voluntary capacity for variety of organisations, as a carer for people with disabilities and mental health issues, alongside her paid employment.

Currently Sonia works at Carers Vic as a member of the Education and Training Team. There she facilitates workshops for both carers and service providers. Her interest in mental health has seen her

undertake a Bachelor in Behavioural Studies.

BPD Community is proud to have Sonia present to us on the NDIS, her background, interests and experience are just right for the job.

