

COUNTIES MANUKAU ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG CONSUMER NETWORK

Personal Network members Testimonial.

Back in June 2007 I was completing the Salvation Army Bridge programme when I was given a flyer inviting people to a meeting at Papatoetoe. All you had to be was a consumer of alcohol or other drugs.

“What’s this about?” I thought.

Well I didn’t want to go on my own, so I encouraged others that were on the Bridge programme to come along as well, so about five of us went along.

It was a really encouraging meeting, seeing that there is ongoing support for people with addiction issues and even better still it is peer support, which is great, because the people who are there to help, know and understand what we go through as addicts.

The best thing I found though was that I was able to help others myself and contribute to the setting up of the network, from helping to design the logo, setting up of protocol, distributing flyers, promoting the network and finding a venue that we could hold the weekly meetings, which is Nathan Homestead Manurewa.

We meet there every Friday and now Mondays and there is a Women’s support group held at Pukekohe and a combined men’s and women’s group held there fortnightly. Through the network we have access to training through Abacus training and it is so good to see network members go on into full time employment within the A O D . The training is at no cost to the network members and the variety of training is great. At the meetings we all have a chance to co-facilitate and everyone is an equal.

The social side of things is what is also very important as it gives the members a chance to socialize and learn new social skills and enjoy life without the need for alcohol and drugs. The outings include trips to Hunua falls, lunches, train trips at the Waitakeries and much more. These outings come from suggestions from members and they are subsidized by the network.

The peer support is what is the most important though. Through our recovery we all will still have issues to deal with and with the support of our peers we are given some very real advice and the tools to deal with things as they arise. With the network one is never alone all you have to do is reach out and ask, this I know from my own experience. There is always someone who you can relate to in regards to issues that arise.

I had slipped back in my own recovery and when I decided to reach out for help and support, no one was judgmental or condemning, but very encouraging and supportive with lots of very wise advice and caring. I have even had one on one discussions with other members when I didn’t want to share with all the other members what I was going through. There is always someone there who understands what other members may be going through with the challenges of recovery. We are in a way like family. Some members have common interests and it is good to share these with each other, like motorcycling, fishing, walking, arts and crafts, health and fitness etc

I have seen people join the network and bring in new ideas that have been successful. Everyone gets their chance to have an input and it gives you a sense of purpose when you contribute and see it happening.

All I can suggest is to come along and have a look for yourself, you may be surprised at what doors may open for you. The contact numbers are on the website. Check out the times for the meetings or ask to go on the mailing list. Everything is confidential within the network.

Give it a go!

Paul B