

ASPIRATIONS GROUP

The aspirations group uses ideas from Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Anxiety Management to help people move on with their life. The course is for one day each week and is expected to run for twelve weeks. The main indication for anyone being suitable for this course is that the individual has applied to do so by their own, reasoned, informed, voluntary choice.

We sensitively encourage communication and social skills in order to get on and work with each other in the group, while we all help each other to tackle obstacles to individual progress. The whole group encourages each person to develop a more active, reasoned approach towards the problems they may suffer from. We aim to provide a good, positive and quite enjoyable experience of working together. This can help some people overcome feelings of isolation and low self-esteem which they may suffer from.

Individuals choose what personal outcomes they may want to work towards. They are encouraged to appreciate their own personal qualities and be more able to acknowledge and productively work on personal difficulties. People develop clarity and understanding of any problems they face; then strive to nurture habits enabling them to become more self-helping and self-supporting. We work to assist individuals to take more control over their own lives and increase their ability to manage on-going problem areas. Participants are encouraged to adopt realistic, achievable goals; then identify and choose effective steps to move forward. The aim is to improve the quality of life rather than perpetually dwell on worries and be all-consumed with emotional upsets.

We focus on understanding each individuals' stage in their personal cycle of motivation; working to build on ways that serve to motivate and help them achieve. We nurture self-helping abilities which move beyond automatic, negative thoughts and learn to utilise more positive, constructive ways of thinking. We aim to increase both self-determination and the flexibility required in order to bring about change. We strive towards improving the quality of relationships with other people around us and some may wish to work on improving the way they mix with friends and family. We are working towards outcomes which increase each individual's participation in the wider community around us. Progress is indicated by individuals moving on to partake in more activities which they find worthwhile and meaningful. This may involve differing types of work experience, further education and vocational pursuits.

To maintain individual improvement each person is encouraged to improve the way they structure their day to day life. Whilst being aware of what everyday habits may be required for maintaining mental health, we also look to find, or re-discover, experiences that are pleasurable and rewarding. Consideration is given to how people occupy their personal time in accordance with their personal values and their priorities in life; striving for a direction of accomplishment and sense of achievement.