



## **Mind in Camden's London Paranoia Groups Project Information for Potential Partners**

The London Paranoia Groups Project is Mind in Camden's London-wide project to develop peer support groups for people experiencing paranoia and/or overwhelming or distressing beliefs. The aim is to create safe, supportive groups where people can make sense of their beliefs for themselves and regain some control of their experiences. Groups will provide people with an opportunity to learn to cope with, and recover from, distressing beliefs.

**We are currently seeking expressions of interest from a range of community and statutory organisations who would like to work in partnership with us to develop, and host groups. If you, or your organisation, is interested – please read this information and contact Molly Carroll (her contact details are on the final page).**

### **The History of the project**

This project was developed out of the success and expertise of the London Hearing Voices Project, which has helped train and support people to facilitate Hearing Voices Groups in a range of settings, building a thriving network of over 42 groups across Greater London. In collaboration with the National Paranoia Network, who have run a thriving Paranoia Group in Sheffield for over 10 years, Mind in Camden are committed to developing this approach throughout London. Just coming out of our pilot phase we now have 9 groups running across London in a variety of statutory and voluntary settings.

### **What is a Paranoia Group?**

A Paranoia Group is basically a peer support group, based on a strong ethos of self help. It is widely accepted that fear, distress, isolation, stigma and hopelessness are barriers to recovery. We reduce this by ensuring that Paranoia Groups are:

- Non-judgmental, based on mutual respect, empathy and acceptance
- A safe space to explore the meaning and content of experiences
- Beliefs are seen as real to the person
- Based around the needs and interests of the members
- Recovery-focussed, in seeing current distress as temporary and eventually understandable

- A supportive social network, embracing the diversity of views and experiences
- Open to people whether or not they have a diagnosed mental health problem
- Hopeful, in that people can lead meaningful, fulfilling lives.
- Voluntary and confidential
- Where everyone has expertise to contribute to the group

### **They are not:**

- A treatment or therapy group.
- A place to pathologise or medicalise people's thoughts and feelings

### **How might people benefit from attending a group?**

We are all unique, and different people will want different things out of attending a group. However, we expect that benefits may include:

- Increased number and range of coping strategies
- A reduction of distress and anxiety
- Increased confidence and self esteem
- Increased awareness of own triggers and protective factors
- Increased awareness and understanding of emotions
- Increased social connection and sense of empowerment
- Increased ability to take advantage of social, educational and occupational opportunities

### **How will it benefit my organisation?**

- This is an economical and successful way to increase support for your clients.
- It will increase your range of expertise
- It is a recovery-focussed, peer support project – something commissioners and charitable funding have as a priority
- It is innovative, pioneering work
- It is non-coercive and champions self-empowerment.

### **What will Mind in Camden contribute to the partnership?**

If you are interested in becoming our partner, we can discuss this in more detail in person. However, as a starting point we expect to be contributing:

- Training and support for your group facilitators
- Support in developing and sustaining the group
- Regular network meetings for peer learning and support from other facilitators
- Support identifying people with lived experience to co-facilitate the group, where possible
- Awareness training for staff/volunteers of your organisation where possible
- Templates for promotional materials, publicity through our websites and publications

## What will partner organisations be asked to provide?

Again, the exact details of this are flexible – however, as a rough guide we would like you to:

- Be committed to developing the approach
- Provide staff/volunteers to facilitate the group
- Enable them to attend our specialist 4 day group facilitation training (places are FREE to people with personal experience of paranoia; £150 for voluntary organisations; £200 for statutory organisation) and follow-up support
- Provide a venue for the group
- Work with us to develop, publicise, monitor and sustain the group

## We run a Hearing Voices Group - do we need a Paranoia Group too?

Voice hearing and other sensory experiences are tangible, whereas paranoia deals exclusively with feelings, perceptions and beliefs. As such, the content of the group and the coping strategies discussed will differ. Moreover, whilst some people who struggle with paranoia hear voices, many don't and would feel uncomfortable accessing a group where voices are the focus. Paranoia Peer Support Groups will provide people who struggle with overwhelming beliefs to get a similar level of peer support and community that voice-hearers obtain from a hearing voices group.

We have developed a specialist course in partnership with the National Paranoia Network and My Beliefs group facilitators at Mind in Camden to meet the specific needs of those wanting to set up and facilitate a Paranoia Peer Support Group.

## About Us

Mind in Camden is a charity with over 20 years' experience of providing support to people who are experiencing mental distress. We have considerable expertise in training and supporting people to set up, facilitate and sustain peer support groups, with over 40 groups across London, working collaboratively with a wide range of voluntary and statutory sector organisations. In recent years we have pioneered new projects working with children and young people who hear, see or sense things that others don't (Voice Collective) and developing Hearing Voices Groups for people in London's prisons.

Our Funders and Partners:



the  
**Tudor**trust



National Paranoia Network

**For more information, or to express your interest, please contact the London Paranoia Groups Project:**

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