

Judith Douglas

03/20/2022

SWK 658

### **Support Group Meeting**

My community meeting group was done on 02/22/2022@12:00PM Virtually. This group is situated in Los Angeles, named Project Returns Peer Support Net Work Los Angeles, Taking Charge together, for people with mental health issues, to help individuals reach their personal goals such as living independently, going to school, getting a job, having friends, and enjoying life in the community/ advance in their recovery. Presently PRPSN offers 150 in person groups throughout Los Angeles/ have 3 online platforms. Each group is individualized/self-directed, activities/ curriculum are created by the facilitator/ group participants, some groups direct conversation on specific recovery based, while others focus on physical wellness/ it's connection to mental health, building socialization skills and the exploration of varying coping methods, ranging from arts and music to writing and much more.

Peer support goal is to improve lives through innovative technology/ high quality services.

Peer support has become recognized by expert as a high impact and cost effective path for improving quality of life, delivering favorable health care outcomes/ reducing health care costs.

These peer groups - is a place people can come and encourage each other with a variety of life issues. They also offer Depression recovery groups which help thousands of individuals from over 120 countries 95% of their participants would recommend the services to others. In a study report there is a large reduction in symptoms, use of emergency services /hospital stays. Founder of support groups (Vince Caimano Ph.D.)

The group meeting commenced with technology problems, but eventually was solve. The program coordinator introduced the group of nine members and the staff involved, the leader of the group is a peer support specialist, she is dedicated uses music to bring healing to the group members. Today the meeting is led by a group member supervised by staff. The group consists of 9 participants Spanish, white /blacks females, one male between the ages 20/ 45. The leader asked each member to introduce themselves also including me. Afternoon each person gives their names most of the members is on site. Each person shared their stories, testimony, followed by an affirmation. First member stated she received a good report her testing she did is cancer free, all in the group was happy for her and express words of encouragement others spoke how the group help them to overcome substance abuse, depression, health issues obesity, diabetes, how they can cope / manage their daily lives. members asked each other to pray about concerns they had for families/ friends who may be going through difficult times, to conclude their stories an affirmation is made, which was motivating as follow:

1. Happy to know you have no cancer hang in there, God answers prayers.
2. Having a bad day looking better than yesterday.
3. Keep striving don't matter how hard it gets pray for my both sisters.
4. You are enough, I try to challenge myself now / then, but you can get burnt out trying to get things done.
5. Keep moving don't give up, life is just beginning

Another client first time in the group, stated I am doing okay now, used some water colors painting project, have not done this for a while, feel good to do that.

Fall down 7 times stand up eight, hope all in the group maintains their wellness this group meetings have help me.

I am doing okay, anxiety struggles with certain stuff, her affirmation, I am brave, tell myself help me to do better.

At the end of the meeting some members requested prayers, by then I realize most of the member is trusting God to heal their life. No one volunteer to pray, the leader asked me to pray, I shared words of encouragement for Group and dismissed in prayer.

This meeting was interesting, emotions I observed on the faces of some members, happy, sad, anxious, worried. Other members send words of encouragement, shared their life experience and how they got help from the group, for me I felt sad at times, also share words of hope.

What did I learned from this meeting, and how self-help groups are effective.?

From this meeting I learned, there are so many hurting people globally, this is an ongoing process, some many issues that challenges lives daily, as a worker your hands can be full, impossible to reach all people. but do your best where you currently serve, and changes can be made to improve some services. During the time I spent at the meeting, observing the members, listening to their stories / testimonies, looking at the literature I believe self-help group is needed/ effective.