

All the latest info from Self Help Queensland

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Support 4 Support Groups!

Self Help Queensland supports people to find their own solutions to improve wellbeing. We connect people to support groups across a broad range of health issues, assist people to start new groups and work with support groups to build their capacity. SHQ promotes community awareness of the benefits of self help groups for the wellbeing of individuals coping with adverse life circumstances.

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What's new at SHQ

We had a great time and learnt a lot at our Wheel of Wellbeing workshop. If you couldn't attend the workshop, it's not too late. The WoW [website](#) has a DIY option, you can WoW yourself, just one framework to help you look after you!

How about learning Emotional CPR? There's a free [training workshop](#) on July 12 at Mount Gravatt. This workshop is all about communicating well with others when they are experiencing distress.

We have some new faces at SHQ, we welcome Seblework and Shiwei. Seblework is our new Project Officer for engaging emerging communities. She is working to connect support groups from different cultures to other groups and resources. (photo visiting the Sunnybank Men's Shed below) Where there is a gap and new group may be needed, we hope to help. Shiwei is a Masters of Social Work student from Griffith University on placement with us. She is attempting to teach us Mandarin, as well as researching and engaging with multicultural groups in Sunnybank area. There are already many resources available in other languages. One new resource that we'd like to share with you is "[How to use an ambulance](#)", it's in English plus nine other languages. It has a hover button to show you around inside an ambulance.

Every day at SHQ we connect with people looking for groups, and with groups looking to connect with people. So, this newsletter features just a few thoughts about communication. Think of it as a refresher!

The Self Help Queensland team

Q&A: What SHQ was asked about recently...

Q: One of our recent contacts said "I have no hope for the future" while yet another wanted a support group for depression.

A: This topic remains one of our most frequent calls.

Our approach to these contacts is to work through in stages. Firstly checking it's not an emergency, then asking about someone's GP and support networks. Then, referral to the [Suicide Call Back service](#) and to [Lifeline](#) for 24 hour options. Then, referral to a support group. We try to give some choices, both on-line such as the [SANE forum](#), close by like [GROW](#). Then, suggestions about other kinds of groups and volunteering to help the person to reconnect with something they like to do or could learn or connect with.



Notes and telegrams (of less than 280 characters)

Listening... it's not the same as waiting to talk

Perhaps the most critical communication skills is listening, more important than talking and not the same as waiting for your turn to talk. Have you done some careful listening lately? Or reflected on how you listen? Has your group talked about listening lately? Here's a few [Ted Talks](#) that might get you started.

Communication takes practice

Practice is important for learning nearly everything. [Anxiety Canada's](#) article considers communication and barriers to participating when you have anxiety.

And here's some [games](#) for learning and practising our communication skills.

A [song](#) a quote and a cartoon

“You never know when a moment and a few sincere words can have an impact on a life.” – Zig Ziglar

Judy Horacek's cartoons for [July](#) are out now...



Non Violent Communication

“Every criticism, judgment, diagnosis, and expression of anger is the tragic expression of an unmet need.”

— Marshall Rosenberg

Non-violent Communication (NVC), or Compassionate Communication was developed by [Marshall Rosenberg](#), to overcome learning difficulties, racial tension and conflict situations. NVC encourages listeners to empathise with the speaker, and to respond by unpacking a person’s feelings and needs in the situation they’ve described. It is a process that translates into the desire and ability to interact compassionately in the world.

The Four Components (Observations, Feelings, Needs, Requests) and Modes (Self-empathy, Receiving empathically, Expressing honestly) are the first practical steps that NVC learners encounter.

The international body for NVC is the [Centre for Non-violent Communication \(CNVC\)](#).

[Communicate2Connect](#) is a community organisation in Brisbane that runs some training and practice groups, including FaceBook groups. There are some [videos and written resources](#) which are a great place to start. Many of these resources are

Contributed by Kaja

Shhh... don't talk so loud, what happens when communication between cells goes wrong.

Most human beings love to chat with groups of like-minded people, and we form social networks where we interact directly or indirectly with many other people. Within the body there is lots of communication as well. Cells “talk” to each other and form networks to carry out a specific function and make sure an organ or tissue can do its job properly. And within the cell, different genes and proteins interact through a process called “signalling”.

One of the greatest cellular communicators is the protein called TGF-beta. It sits outside the cell and is kept out of the action because it is bound to another protein. But what if something changes? It might be some damage to the tissue or an invading germ. It might be the need to stop cells dividing or mark old cells for destruction. These are all triggers that cause the release of the TGF-beta molecule from its guardian protein.

Once it is released, TGF-beta binds to another protein on the cell surface, called its receptor. That activates the receptor, which communicates with molecules inside the cell. Within the cell a number of other proteins change and then they change more proteins. Eventually the message gets through to the DNA which starts a process to make yet other proteins as a response. So by simply binding to its receptor on the cell surface, TGF-beta sets a whole cascade of responses going within the cell. Eventually the message gets back that things are back to normal and TGF-beta is broken down so that the conversation is stopped.

We understand the importance of TGF-beta because of what happens when the communication process goes wrong. For example, in [Marfan syndrome](#), the guardian protein doesn't work properly and there is too much TGF-beta in the tissue. This means that the signalling system is activated inappropriately, resulting in problems like aortic aneurysm (outpouching and weakening of the major artery taking blood from the heart), bone overgrowth and stretchy skin.

Another disease (called [Loeys Dietz syndrome](#)) also results in aortic aneurysm due to the TGF-beta conversation being too loud. Some people with Loeys Dietz syndrome have a problem with the TGF-beta receptors on the cell surface. Others actually have an abnormal TGF-beta protein itself and some have a change in one of the proteins that is affected by TGF-beta communication, called SMAD3. It all seems to come

On the other hand, when TGF-beta talks too quietly and there isn't enough chatting going on, it can result in cancer because one of the jobs of TGF-beta is to stop cells dividing when they shouldn't. Abnormal TGF-beta can stop the body's immune system responding to infections and cancer cells. It might also have a role in obesity. The TGF-beta story is just one of many cell communication networks we know about. There is lots of chatting going on all day among the body's molecules. And sometimes the conversations are just too loud or too soft and the system gets out of control - that's when we can develop a disease. But mostly these continuous discussions make sure that we are healthy and function properly.

Contributed by Kim Summers

Support for your group: Communication in groups

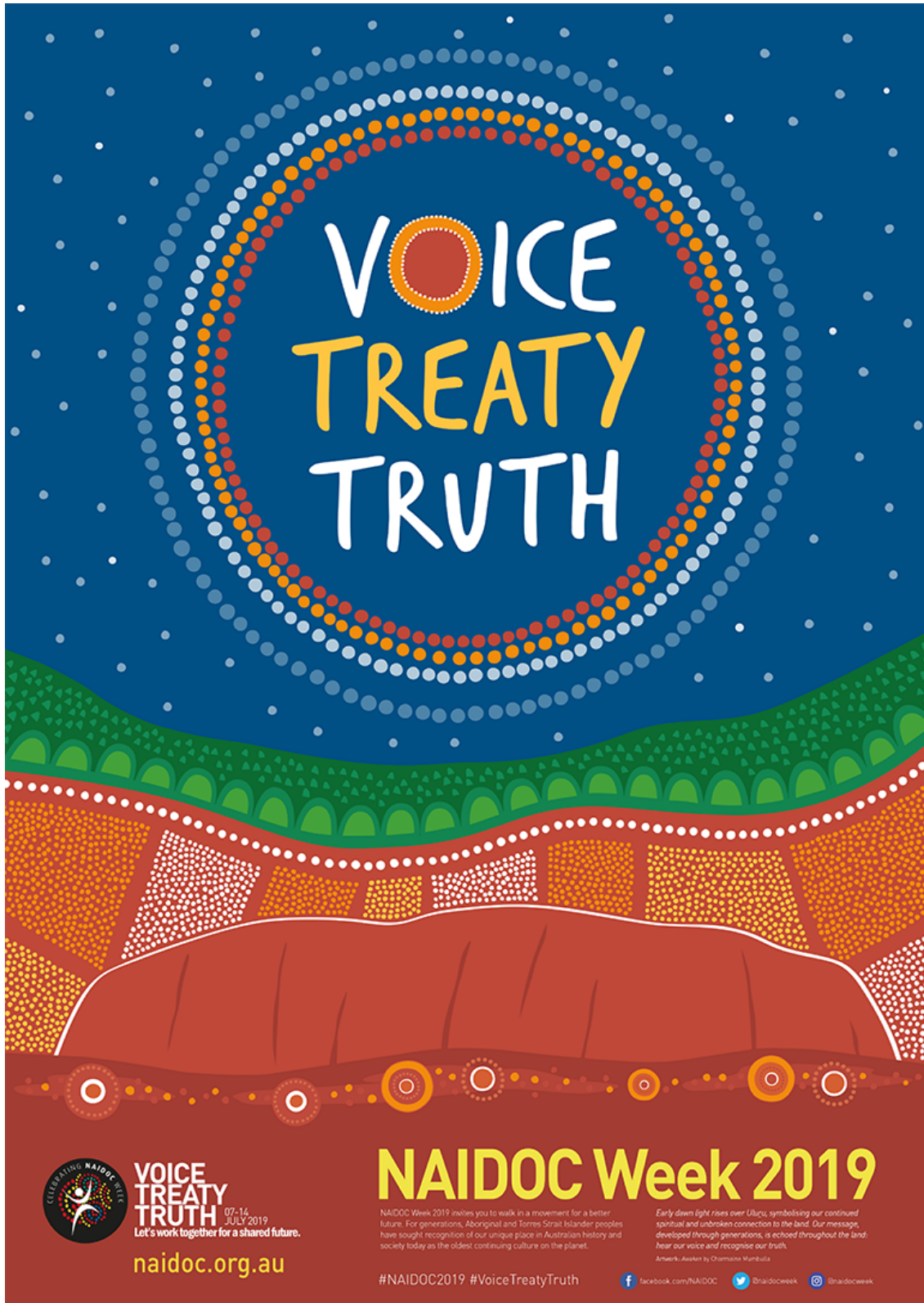
Communication with others in peer support groups can be challenging. People may recount experiences that they have had which can be emotionally affecting to themselves or others in the group. Maybe you find it hard to share. Maybe you are feeling angry at the world.

Just a few tips that have been shared with us are:

1. Firstly, it's OK to cry. A box of tissues is an essential group supply.
2. Redirection: If you're in a situation where the speaker or some of the listeners are being overwhelmed by the situation being discussed it may be helpful to redirect the conversation. Through asking questions, you can direct a speaker to talk about a less sensitive aspect of their experience.
3. Revisit later: If someone gets overwhelmed or they've talked for quite a while, you can suggest that the group move on and revisit later. Either make sure there's time later or acknowledge that the group didn't get back to the topic, and schedule a time. Sometimes the moment has passed and people are OK to move on.
4. Reflection: Listen and describe back to the person what they've told you, and confirm with them that you have understood what they said.
5. What not to say..there are things you should avoid saying. Classic examples are telling someone "I understand" or "you should". Everyone's reality is different. Try saying, "you've been through a lot" or "What worked for me was" or a phrase like "tell me more so I can understand better".

Share responsibility... it is not just the group leader's job to help keep

one. When everyone works with respect and responsibility, your group will have great conversations.



NAIDOC week, a call for action to recognise the voices of aboriginal and islander people. Find an [event](#) near you July 7-10th, or hold your own! A picture tells a thousand words... this poster features the artwork of [Charmaine Mumbulla](#).

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