

## Membership

HVNNSW is an Incorporated Association, run and controlled by its members.

Joining HVNNSW is easy, just complete and submit the membership form available on our web site.



## Philosophy and Approach

HVNNSW does not see itself as conflicting in any way with the professional beliefs and practices within the mental health system.

To the contrary, HVNNSW promotes a strong alliance with the mental health system and its practitioners in any way possible to promote recovery for people who hear voices.

HVNNSW committee and members will not :

- ◆ Offer opinion or advice to members regarding medications prescribed by their mental health professional.
- ◆ Offer opinion or advice to members regarding issues such as substance abuse or use of drugs.
- ◆ Offer opinion or advice about the merits, or otherwise, of clinical, therapy groups and any form of mental health treatment a HV member may be receiving.

HVNNSW would like to sincerely thank the **Hearing Voices Network Australia** for kindly allowing us to source and utilise their intellectual property in the production of this brochure.

## What do we have to offer?

# HOPE

## FOR VOICE HEARERS

**Remember, if you are someone who suffers the torment of distressing voices...**

### You Are Not Alone

## Hearing Voices Network NSW

is one of many such networks around the world that offers support for voice hearers via the establishment and facilitation of self-help groups.



**Quote from Ron Coleman, international speaker, consultant, trainer and voice hearer:**

***In the self-help group I learned many techniques to help me cope and control my voices. I also learned to come out of my shell and to live again. This is, in my opinion, the power of the network.***

# HOPE

## Hearing Voices Network NSW

**Our primary objective is to establish, facilitate and support self-help groups for voice hearers throughout NSW**



**Our purpose is to generate an awareness of the hearing voices experience, and a better understanding and acceptance of voice hearers and their carers**

Phone: 0425 334244

[www.hvnnsw.org.au](http://www.hvnnsw.org.au)

[info@hvnnsw.org.au](mailto:info@hvnnsw.org.au)

## Our Role

To provide a framework and environment which facilitates the processes that enables people who hear distressing voices to move towards recovery.

## Our Aims

- ◆ To show that hearing voices is a real experience and may not always be a symptom of mental illness.
- ◆ To educate society about the meaning of hearing voices, and help to reduce the stigma in the community.
- ◆ To develop appropriate coping strategies for voice hearers.
- ◆ To promote solutions through the integration of voice hearers and professionals.
- ◆ To develop alliances with similar organisations world-wide.

## Key Principles

- ◆ Acceptance and Validation
- ◆ Respect
- ◆ Promote Hope
- ◆ Independence and Empowerment
- ◆ Safety and Courage
- ◆ Collaboration

## Key Result Areas

- ◆ Groups – Establishment and Consumer feedback.
- ◆ Community – Awareness and Support.
- ◆ Alliances – Quality and Quantity.
- ◆ Growth – Physically and Intellectually.

## What is a Hearing Voices Network?

A Hearing Voices Network is a consolidation of numerous Hearing Voices Self-Help Groups and affiliated members, established and supported by a Management Committee.

Members include voice hearers, carers, friends, service providers, as well as other support organisations.

## About Hearing Voices

The term “Hearing Voices” constitutes a range of experiences, commonly referred to as “Hallucinations”.

These can be Auditory and Visual, amongst other sensations, perceived as being separate from oneself.

There are many different ways to hear voices. Voices can be experienced in the head, from outside the head or even in the body. It may be one voice or it may be many.

The voice may talk to you or about you.

## About Hearing Voices Groups

Hearing Voices Groups are a social environment that encourage and promote:

- ◆ Self Empowerment
- ◆ Interdependence, and
- ◆ A view of members as “experts by experience”.

## Groups Provide:

- ◆ Acceptance and a sense that one is not alone.
- ◆ A safe place to talk about visions and voices.
- ◆ An opportunity to learn what voices mean and how to gain control over the experience.



## Hearing Voices Self-Help Group Guidelines

These Guidelines are fundamental to the process, and provide the platform for group participation and structure.

- ◆ Is a self-help group and not a clinical group offering treatment.
- ◆ Accept that voices and visions are real experiences.
- ◆ Accept people as they are.
- ◆ Make no assumption of illness.
- ◆ Respects each member as an expert.
- ◆ Work out problems collectively.
- ◆ Encourages an ethos of self-determination.
- ◆ Are a self-help group not a therapy group.
- ◆ Can be a community to which people belong.
- ◆ Accept that people are not any the less for having voices and visions.
- ◆ Sanctions the freedom to talk about anything, not just voices and visions.
- ◆ Sanctions the freedom to interpret experiences in any way.
- ◆ Sanctions the freedom to challenge social norms.
- ◆ Values ordinary, non-professional language.
- ◆ Focuses primarily on sharing experiences, support and empathy.
- ◆ Members are not subject to referral or risk assessment.
- ◆ Members are able to come and go as they want without repercussions.
- ◆ Members are aware of limits to confidentiality.
- ◆ Work toward upholding equity within the group.
- ◆ Decide on the limits to confidentiality not the facilitator.
- ◆ Share responsibility rather than the facilitator solely.
- ◆ Members join for as long as it suits them.
- ◆ Are open to people from other geographical area.
- ◆ Facilitator is not under clinical pressure to report back to anyone else.
- ◆ Encourages, supports and enables voice hearers to take a co-facilitator or facilitators role.

