

# Peer Support 2 Day Course

Glasgow Drug Crisis Centre, Turning Point Scotland, Glasgow

Day 2 Programme Working with Others

11.00am – 4.00pm Tuesday 13 January 2009

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| 11.00am – 11.30am   | <b>Introductions</b> & workshop agreement           |
| 11.30am – 12.00noon | <b>Communication Skills</b>                         |
| 12.00noon – 12.15pm | <b>Comfort Break</b>                                |
| 12.15pm – 12.45pm   | <b>Group Work</b>                                   |
| 12.45pm – 1.45pm    | <b>LUNCH</b>  |
| 1.45pm – 2.00pm     | <b>Afternoon Intro</b>                              |
| 2.00pm – 2.45pm     | <b>Service User Involvement</b>                     |
| 2.45pm – 3.00pm     | <b>Comfort Break</b>                                |
| 3.00pm – 3.30pm     | <b>Making a Difference</b> (putting something back) |
| 3.30pm – 4.00pm     | <b>Feedback &amp; Farewell</b>                      |

Facilitator: Chrys Muirhead  
[www.chrysm-associates.co.uk](http://www.chrysm-associates.co.uk)

# Report

## Contents

|                           |              |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Introduction              | Page 3       |
| Workshop Agreement        | Page 4       |
| Communication Skills      | Page 5       |
| Group Work                | Page 6       |
| Further Training & Needs  | Page 7       |
| Service User Involvement  | Page 7       |
| Making a Difference       | Page 8       |
| Feedback                  | Page 9       |
| Conclusion                | Page 9       |
| Handouts – Appendices A-E | Page 10 - 22 |

## Introduction

The second day of the Peer Support Training course was held on 13 January 2009 in the Glasgow Drug Crisis Centre. There were 4 participants, 3 women and 1 man, 3 from Midway services and one from Moving On. Of these 2 had attended the Day 1 course, the others completed an Introductory PS day. Eric Nicol also took part.

This follow-on second day of training around peer support focussed on 'working with others', the dynamics of group work and the importance of good communication skills. As Turning Point Scotland are committed to involving service users in decision making and in having an influence on the organisation's policies and procedures, it was decided to include a session on service user involvement and the benefits of 'making a difference' and 'putting something back'. The facilitation style was as usual participative, inclusive and empowering, and the reported points and feedback are from participants, **in their own words**.

The comments in brackets [ ] are from the facilitator.

*“Dream lofty dreams, and as you dream, so shall you become.  
Your vision is the promise of what you shall at last unveil.”*  
John Ruskin

## Workshop Agreement

Revisited at start of afternoon session

- ✓ Respect
- ✓ Non-judgemental
- ✓ What’s said in room stays in room
- ✓ Respecting each other’s opinions
- ✓ Listen
- ✓ One singer, one song

# Communication Skills

## Good Listening

- Eye contact
- Body posture
- Nodding of head
- Sharing something similar
- Repeating something back
- 'If don't understand, clarify'
- Staying on same track, not wandering off
- When closing conversation, OK to come back to it
- Look interested (even if not!)
- Active listening
- Sometimes need to close conversation

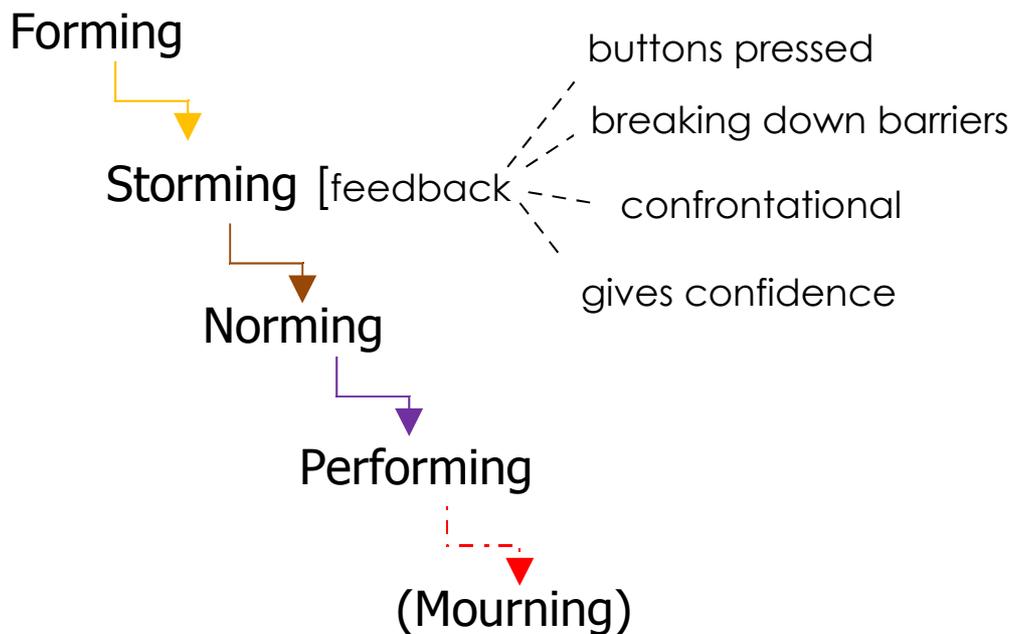
**Handouts**

Barriers to Listening  
Relationships

Appendix A  
Appendix B

[there was much discussion around examples of good listening and as we shared our opinions the participants demonstrated that they were 'good listeners' and effective communicators]

## Group Work



**Handouts** Stages in Group Development  
Group Types

Appendix C  
Appendix D

[this model of group development can be useful for people starting to work in a group situation and help prepare for possible outcomes – in particular the 'storming' phase can be a turning point when the groups starts to be really productive – it could also be the time when some might leave, we discussed this stage in some depth, the comments from participants are on the right]

## Further Training & Other Needs/Helps

Mental Health First Aid  
First Aid  
Group Work Skills

U  
S  
E  
R  
  
L  
E  
D

See my support plans

Going to Conferences (SRN)  
Events  
(in group)

Support & Supervision  
(be careful about added pressure)

Copies of Policies & Procedures  
to review in paper form

Know your limitations  
Be aware  
Personal Responsibility  
Look after yourself!

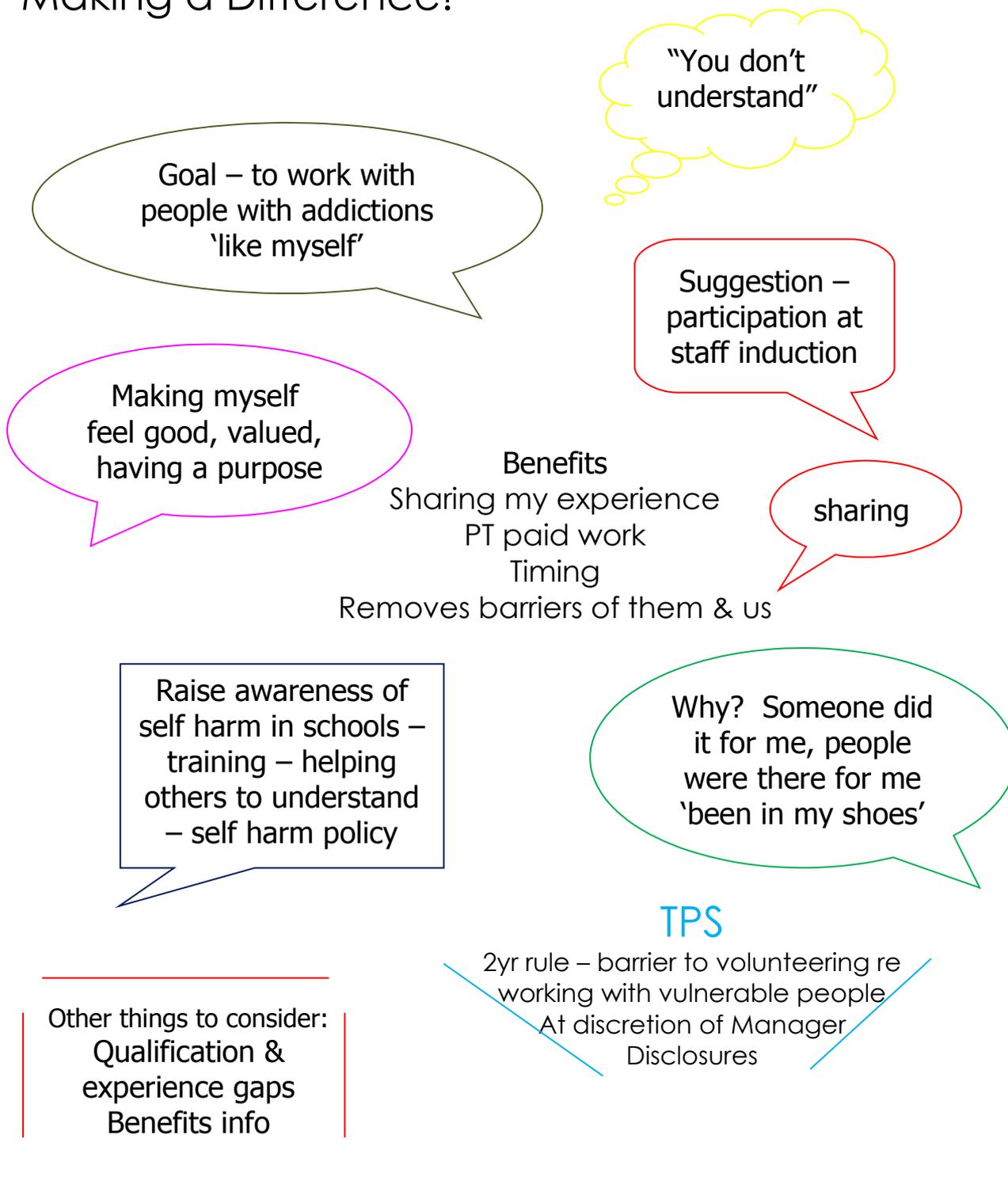
## Service User Involvement

Eric explained to the participants that there would be 2 meetings of the User Involvement Group every month, one of these for training and the other a discussion around policies and procedures. The group would include ex-service users and be facilitated by Eric and Tracy, with the first meeting to decide on the aims and objectives of the group.

**Handout** Ladder of participation Appendix E

[the participants all seemed keen on being involved in group work and in having a say about the policies and procedures of TPS – there was some discussion around the HNC Working with Communities qualification, some of the units in this could be useful for group members]

# Making a Difference!



[the suggestion by a participant that service users could be part of the staff induction was a really good one, with benefits for everyone – there could be other areas also where user' experience could be a plus for TPS eg in producing the content for leaflets or promoting stuff on the radio or speaking to professionals in the areas of self harm and addictions, work that would not necessarily require an enhanced disclosure]

# Feedback

## on Post-its

- ✓ really enjoyed the whole training
  - I'd like personal development training & group work training
  - Everyone participated well & respected each other
  - Best thing there is going to be follow up, we have planned what we are going to do in the future
  - Glad I went, everyone nice and friendly
- ✓ Good positive feeling & enthusiastic group of people
- ✓ Looking forward to working with you all
- ✓ What went well:
  - like the fact that it's facilitated not taught – feel more involved in group
  - like the wide range of discussion
  - like that this is going to lead on to! Thanks
- ✓ thought it was excellent, very beneficial to my keeping stable & healthy
- ✓ room for improvement – better sweeties!
- ✓ There is always room for improvement even when things are well

## Conclusion

Another productive day's training, the smaller group meant that everyone had more opportunity to talk and share their experience. Everyone demonstrated a good level of self awareness and an ability to help others, and to be involved in a decision-making level within Turning Point Scotland.

I handed out a Certificate of Achievement to each participant with dates of attendance at the Peer Support training, 2 had completed all 3 days of the course - Introductory and 2 day follow-up.

## Appendix A (2 pages)

## Barriers to Good Listening

### 'On-off' listening

This unfortunate habit in listening arises from the fact that most of us think about four times as fast as the average person speaks. Thus, the listener has ½ of a minute of spare thinking time for each listening minute. Sometimes we use this extra time to think of our own personal affairs, concerns, or interests and troubles instead of listening.

### 'Red-flag' listening

To some of us certain words are like the proverbial red flag to the bull. When we hear them we get upset or irritated and stop listening. These terms vary with individuals. However, to some, words like 'should', 'must', 'unfaithful', 'police', 'discipline', 'school', 'management', 'unions', etc are signals to which there is an automatic response. When this signal comes in we tune out the speaker.

### 'Open-ears - closed mind' listening

Sometimes we decide rather quickly that either the subject or the speaker is boring and what is said makes no sense. Often we jump to conclusions that we can predict what he knows or what he will say: thus, we conclude, there is no reason to listen because we will hear nothing new if we do.

### *'Glassy-eyed' listening*

Sometimes we look at a person intently and we almost seem to be listening although our minds may be on other things or on far distant places. We drop back into the comfort of our own thoughts. We get glassy-eyed and often a dreamy expression appears on our faces. We can tell when people look at us in this way. Similarly, they can see the same in us and we're not fooling anyone.

## 'Too-deep-for-me' listening

We do not like to have our pet ideas, prejudices and points of view overturned. We do not like to have our opinions and judgements challenged. Consequently, when a speaker says something that clashed with what we think, believe, and hold firm to - then we may unconsciously stop listening or even become defensive and plan a counter-attack.

## Being 'subject-centred' instead of 'speaker-centred'

Sometimes we concentrate on the problem and not the person. Detail and fact about an incident becomes more important than what people are saying about themselves.

## 'Fact' listening

Often as we listen to people we try to remember the facts and repeat them over and over again to drive them home. As we do this, frequently the speaker has gone on to new facts and we lose them in the process.

## 'Pencil' listening

Trying to put down on paper everything the speaker says, usually means we are bound to lose some of it because the speaker's words come out faster than we can write them down. Eye contact also becomes more difficult.

## 'Hubbub' listening

Sometimes there are many distractions when we listen - noise, movement of people, or other matters clamouring for our attention.

An awareness of the above 'pitfalls' can be the first step to avoiding them.

## Relationships

### Attitudes that are essential to relationship making

1. Wanting to spend time with other people.
2. Believing that every human being is worthy of respect.
3. Believing that every relationship involves give and take.
4. Being prepared to talk openly but appropriately about your self to others.
5. Seeing the value of getting and giving feedback.
6. Being both willing to give and get help.
7. Believing people to be a mixture of qualities, strengths and weaknesses.
8. Believing that people respond positively when approached positively.
9. Recognising that people will not always behave or be how we would like them to be.
10. Realising that we will not like everyone and not everyone will like us.

### The skills of making relationships

- (a) Respect - conveying to people that they are worthwhile, unique and valuable.
- (b) Genuineness - conveying that you are real, trustworthy, not hiding behind roles or facades.
- (c) Empathy - conveying that you understand the other person's world as they are experiencing it.

## Respect is conveyed by:

- ✓ giving positive attention
- ✓ active listening
- ✓ giving your time
- ✓ remembering the other's name
- ✓ introducing yourself
- ✓ basic courtesies
- ✓ asking questions
- ✓ checking out assumptions you have made about others
- ✓ not making snap judgements or criticising
- ✓ not interrupting or talking over someone

## Genuineness:

- talking appropriately about self
- responding naturally
- sharing feelings appropriately
- being spontaneous
- verbal and non verbal behaviour consistent
- not being defensive
- not pretending to be someone you are not

## Empathy:

- reflecting back other feelings you are picking up eg you must have felt angry
- sharing related experiences of your own
- 'behavioural mirroring' - smiling when other smiles etc

# Stages in Group Development

## Group Development

Groups do not come into existence fully formed. They grow and mature and it is possible to identify the stages of development through which a group goes before it becomes fully efficient and effective. Not all groups pass through all the stages and some get stuck in the middle and remain inefficient and ineffective. Progress through the stages may be slow but appears to be necessary and inescapable.

## The Five Stages of Group Development

The Tuckman model shows the five stages that teams go through from:

### Forming

To

### Storming

To

### Norming

To

### Performing

To

### Mourning

(in some models this stage is known alternatively as **Adjourning**).

## Forming

This is the first stage in the life of a group. It is the time when:

- groups come together for the first time
- people have a wide variety of feelings at this time
- members are preoccupied with inclusion - "Dipping the toe in the water"
- members are often dependent on an appointed leader
- members may make irrelevant contributions as norms have not yet been established

Generally, people are learning how to belong.

In the Forming stage, team members are introduced. They state why they were chosen or 'volunteered' for the team and what they hope to accomplish within the team. Members cautiously explore the boundaries of acceptable group behaviour. This is a stage of transition from individual to member status, and of testing the leader's guidance both formally and informally.

Forming includes these feelings and behaviours:

- excitement, anticipation and optimism
- pride in being chosen for the project
- a tentative attachment to the team
- suspicion of and anxiety about the job
- defining the tasks and how they will be accomplished
- determining acceptable group behaviour
- deciding what information needs to be gathered
- abstract discussions of the concepts and issues and, for some members
- impatience with these discussions

There will be difficulty in identifying some of the relevant problems. Because there is so much going on to distract members' attention in the beginning, the team accomplishes little, if anything, that concerns its project goals. This is perfectly normal.

## Storming

This is the second stage in the life of a group. It is a tricky, uncomfortable stage where:

- members are testing out, reaching for roles and assessing the viability of the group
- power is a big issue; the group is very fragile
- early problems are exposed and the group can overcome these before settling down to its main task

The team's transition from the 'As-is' to the 'To-be', is called the Storming phase. All members have their own ideas as to how the process should look and personal agendas are rampant. Storming is probably the most difficult stage for the team. They begin to realise the tasks that are ahead are different and more difficult than they imagined. Impatient about the lack of progress, members argue about just what actions the team should take. They try to rely solely on their personal and professional experience and resist collaborating with most of the other team members.

Storming includes these feelings and behaviours:

- resisting the task
- resisting quality improvement approaches suggested by other members
- sharp fluctuations in attitude about the team and the project's chance of success
- arguing among members even when they agree on the real issues
- defensiveness, competition and choosing sides
- questioning the wisdom of those who selected this project and appointed the other members of the team
- establishing unrealistic goals
- disunity, increased tension and jealousy

The above pressures mean that team members have little energy to spend on progressing towards the team's goal, but they are beginning to understand one another. This phase sometimes takes three or four meetings before arriving at the Norming phase.

## Norming

This is the third stage in the life of a group when:

- groups gain cohesion, lose those members who are not committed to its task, establish safeguards and ground rules, and develop any skills required to undertake the agreed tasks
- trust and a group culture develop
- norms are established, ie accepted ways of doing things in a group
- roles become stabilised

The Norming phase is when the team reaches a consensus on the 'To-be' process. Everyone wants to share the newly found focus. Enthusiasm is high and the team is tempted to go beyond the original scope of the process. During this stage, members reconcile competing loyalties and responsibilities. They accept the team, team ground rules, their roles in the team and the individuality of fellow members. Emotional conflict is reduced as previously competitive relationships become more cooperative. Norming includes these feelings and behaviours:

- An ability to express criticism constructively.
- Acceptance of membership in the team.
- An attempt to achieve harmony by avoiding conflict.
- More friendliness, confiding in each other and sharing of personal problems.
- A sense of team cohesion, spirit and goals.
- Establishing and maintaining team ground rules and boundaries

As team members begin to work out their differences, they now have more time and energy to spend on the project.

## Performing

This is the fourth and principal stage in the life of a group when:

- the group task, or contract, is met
- the group accomplishes the task which led to the creation of the group in the first place – **it is where the work happens**
- there will be a positive group identity emerging around the individuals' reasons for being there and a capacity in the group to deal with individual and group problems in a positive way

On the way there, however, there will be times when the question of group identity appears to become overly important – an end in itself – and although this is inevitable the group will be stuck if individuals' needs are forgotten. Having said this, group identity will engender a strength and capacity that is seemingly greater than the individual members, if harnessed in a positive way. (Barry Tuckman 1965)

The team has now settled its relationships and expectations. They can begin performing by diagnosing, solving problems, and choosing and implementing changes. At last team members have discovered and accepted each other's strengths and weakness, and learned what their roles are. Performing includes these feelings and behaviours:

- Members have insights into personal and group processes, and better understanding of each others strengths and weakness.
- Constructive Self-Change.
- Ability to prevent or work through group problems.
- Close attachment to the team

The team is now an effective, cohesive unit. You can tell when your team has reached this stage because you start getting a lot of work done.

## Mourning

This is the final stage in the life of any group. The team briefs and shares the improved process during this phase. When the team finally completes that last briefing, there is always a bittersweet sense of accomplishment coupled with the reluctance to say good-bye. Many relationships formed within these teams continue long after the team disbands.

Because the group has achieved a measure of productivity and therefore becomes important to its membership, leaving the group or ending the group will engender feelings of loss, anticlimax, panic/worry and relief associated with ending. This needs to be recognised, acknowledged and dealt with in ways that are appropriate to the group or individuals.

At this stage the group/individuals may seem to go backwards in an attempt to hold on to something that has been good. In dealing with the 'loss' we need to mark it (a Party! or an Outing!) but also help individuals maintain their positive experience in the future. The 'life' of the group is over – 'grieving' is healthy but not an end in itself. Yet the saying "Every ending is also a beginning" is true. This ending creates the space for whatever will happen next.

The 4-stage model has been verified by research and can help explain some of the problems of group working. A group may be operating at half power because it may have failed to work through some of the issues at the earlier stages, eg the efficiency of a project team may be impaired because it had not resolved the issue of leadership. Alternatively, people may be pulling in different directions because the purpose of the group has not been clarified, nor its objectives agreed. Members might be using the group to achieve their personal and unstated aims (hidden agendas).

## Stages in Group Development

| Stages of Development | Process   | Outcome  |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| <b>Forming</b>        | There is anxiety and dependence on the group leader. Testing to find out the nature of the situation and the acceptable type of behaviour | Members find out what the task is, what the rules are and what methods are appropriate                         |
| <b>Storming</b>       | Conflict between sub-groups, rebellion against the leader, opinions are polarised, resistance to control by the group                     | Emotional resistance to demands of the task  |
| <b>Norming</b>        | Development of group cohesion, norms emerge, resistance and conflicts patched up. Mutual support and sense of group identity              | Open exchange of views and feelings. Co-operation develops   |
| <b>Performing</b>     | Interpersonal problems are resolved. Interpersonal structure becomes the means of getting things done. Roles are flexible and functional  | Solutions to problems emerge. Constructive attempts to complete tasks. Energy now available for effective work |

## Appendix D (2 Pages)

## Group Types

### 1. The Talkative Type

- may be showing off, may simply be keen, may have plenty of information on the subject and is naturally garrulous.

### 2. The Argumentative Type

- may be naturally aggressive, may just be having a bad day.

### 3. The Quick, Helpful Type

- is really trying to help and keep things going, in fact, hogs the discussion.

### 4. The Inarticulate Type

- know what they want to say but has difficulty communicating it. This can be disruptive and confusing.

### 5. The Silent Type

- refuses to talk, perhaps because they are bored, uninterested, feels inferior, timid or insecure.

### 6. The Obstinate Type

- prejudiced, perhaps; refuses to budge; won't see your point of view.

### 7. The Aggrieved Type

- has a pet peeve; may be a professional 'moaner'.

### 8. The Private Conversation Type

- side conversation carried on by two members of the group, may be personal; in either case, distracts rest of group and workers.

### 9. The YES Type

- legitimacy and safety can be borrowed by agreeing with other people.

### 10. The Self Opinionated Type

- this person describes many of his own experiences in an attempt to look good to other group members.

### 11. The Team Clown

- they are apt to joke, mimic or engage in other disruptive acts at inopportune times: some people resent displays of non-involvement in the group process.

## Hints for Working with Groups

- Learn participants' names
- Foster an atmosphere which encourages diversity and opinion
- Develop active listening skills
- Be non-judgemental
- Learn to be more comfortable with silences
- Observe the right of individuals to not contribute
- Allow everyone the opportunity to speak
- Encourage participants to respond honestly
- Ask clarifying questions and draw out opinions
- Encourage group members to take responsibility for their own learning
- Assist the group to draw conclusions from their activities and discussions
- Support participants as they try out new behaviour
- Encourage group members to evaluate their own participation and that of the group

## Appendix E

# Ladder of Participation

The Ladder of Participation is a model that can be used to examine where you are in terms of service user involvement now and where you want to be in the future:

### FULL CONTROL:

Service users control decision making at the highest level.

### SHARING POWER:

Service users share decisions and responsibility, influencing and determining outcomes.

### PARTICIPATION:

Service users can make suggestions and influence outcomes.

### CONSULTATION:

Service users are asked what they think but have limited influence.

### INFORMATION:

Services users are told what is happening but have no influence.

### NO CONTROL:

Service users are passive consumers.