



Manchester Dual Diagnosis Group Values and Rules

Welcome to the Manchester Dual Diagnosis Group. This group is managed and led by volunteers and is supported by and registered with Rethink Mental Illness.

Our group aims to provide an opportunity for people in addiction recovery who experience mental health difficulties (dual diagnosis) to come together for mutual peer support. There is currently a gap in services for integrated dual diagnosis support. We aim to bridge this gap by providing a place for people to come together for emotional and social support, sharing their experiences of mental health and addiction difficulties and ideas and suggestions about what may be helpful, including relevant information about other sources of support in the local area.

To ensure we provide a positive environment and a group that people feel safe in, we ask that everyone observes the following values and rules:

- We are a peer support group and are all here because of similar personal circumstances, including those of us who give our time to make the group happen.
- We are a voluntary-led group, offering support by sharing our experience, strength and hope. We do not provide advice, therapy or treatment, but encourage sharing information about local organisations that may offer such help.
- Every group member is important and will be listened to with respect. We are welcoming and non-judgemental towards each other.
- We try to ensure everyone has an opportunity to speak and be listened to. However, we do not require that everyone contributes to discussions and members may choose not to say anything if they so wish.
- We allow one person to speak at a time and do not speak over each other.
- The group coordinator will try their best to manage the time in the group so that everyone has a space. Out of respect for everyone's time, the group will end on time and the group coordinator will issue a reminder a few minutes before the end.
- We respect each other's confidentiality – what is said in the group stays in the group. However, if anyone says something which indicates significant risk to themselves or others, then this information will be passed on to the relevant people.
- We respect each other's diversity of identity and culture, and do not allow discriminatory or stereotypical remarks or behaviour in the group. No racism, sexism or any other kind of -ism.

Leading the way to a better
quality of life for everyone
affected by severe mental illness.



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- We respect each other's diversity of thought and opinion – we may not always agree with each other, but we uphold each other's right to self-expression and value everyone's contributions equally. If we disagree with a point someone makes, then it is the point we disagree with, not the person.
- We are mindful of the content of what we share, as it could potentially be distressing or triggering for others, and in such cases we will forewarn the group.
- We respect each other's individuality – whilst we may have similar experiences, we will still have differences in our situations and we are all unique.
- We respect that "recovery" with regard to mental health and addiction may mean different things to different people, and that we may be at different places in our individual journeys. We do not seek to impose any one model or philosophy of recovery on anyone. We also acknowledge that some of us may not accept the current discourse around "recovery" and may have different beliefs.
- No swearing, bullying, intimidating, violent, aggressive or threatening language or behaviour to be used. This includes quotation of such language by other people as it may cause distress.
- Members must not come to the group intoxicated or having used any illicit substances. If they do, they will be required to leave that meeting of the group, but may come to future meetings when they are sober.
- For face-to-face meetings, smoking and e-cigarettes are not permitted inside the building, please go outside.
- We come to the group to discuss issues relating to mental health and addiction recovery. Questions about a group member's personal life (for example religion, sexuality) should only be raised by the individual concerned, should they wish to.
- We keep the focus of the discussion on our issues relating to dual diagnosis only. We avoid off-topic discussions, particularly of controversial subjects such as politics, religion and current events, unless these are directly relevant to our issues. If so, we keep the focus on how they affect us on a personal level.
- We respect each other's right to privacy and anonymity and comply with safeguarding and data protection policies. Therefore, all members will refrain from posting of personal information or photos of other group members on social media sites and all other public domains without the consent of those concerned. You will need to have written consent for using photographs.

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- The group will hold contact details for group members for up to six years from the last time we have heard from you. These details will be held on a password protected phone and computer and will not be shared outside of Rethink Mental Illness. This does not affect any opt in arrangements you have made with the rest of the charity i.e. as a donor or member or other type of supporter.

For online meetings, we ask that everyone observes the following values and rules:

- Please mute your microphone when not speaking to reduce background noise. The group coordinator may mute your microphone if you have forgotten to do so.
- To maintain privacy, where members have others in their home at the time of the meeting, members will where possible wear headphones so other members feel safe and comfortable to share.
- Please do not share login details of online meetings without the express permission of the group coordinator.

In accordance with the document *Terms of Reference: Manchester Dual Diagnosis Group*, members who do not act in accordance with any of the above values and rules will be reminded of them by the group coordinator, who will explain that if the inappropriate behaviour continues then they may be asked to leave the group.

Thank you for maintaining these group values and rules. If there are any more which you can think of, please bring them to the group and/or discuss them with the group coordinator.

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