



Mark Your Calendar: Sat., October 30, 2010 Self-Help Conference: The Forum at Carle, Urbana

Peer Support Groups – Making Meaningful Human Connection in the Modern World is the theme for the upcoming fall conference. We are pleased to welcome back to the community our keynote speaker and former coordinator of the Self-Help Center of Champaign County, **Dr. M'ellen Kennedy, M. Div.** Dr. Kennedy has been working with lay led small groups for over 25 years. She has offered facilitator training to hundreds of lay and professional leaders. She is an interfaith minister and a community psychologist. She completed her doctoral work at the University of Illinois in community psychology. Her research related to the transformative impact of the self help process amongst members of the **GROW*** personal recovery mental health support group. The conference will also include interactive break out sessions, exhibits and an opportunity to network with others in the self help community. M'ellen will also do a small group session at the conference on how small group facilitation can invite world view transformation. A workshop is also being hosted at Faith United Methodist Church, Champaign on Friday, Oct. 29th to address the small group process and support groups within a faith community context. Further information and registration will be mailed in the summer.

*Featured group in this edition of the *Self-Helper*

Self-Help Group Spotlight*: GROW

What is the Purpose of the Group GROW?

GROW is a world community mental health movement, founded in Australia in 1957 by former mental patients. Today the organization is active in the USA (Alaska, Illinois, New Jersey) and in Australia, New Zealand and Ireland.



Who Comes to GROW?

GROW is for recovery, prevention, and personal growth. It is open to anyone who recognizes a personal need and is willing to change, in cooperation with help. GROW is for

- People recovering from mental illness and addictions.
- People dealing with problems in living such as depression, fear, anxiety, loneliness and stress.
- People experiencing a life crisis such as loss, separation or abuse.

How Does GROW Work?

GROW groups are structured and meet weekly. They are anonymous, confidential and run by the members. There are no fees or dues. Through group participation, members learn to help themselves while also helping others. GROW has a written Program of Recovery and Personal Growth that serves as “an operator’s manual for living.” The Program includes helpful attitudes and problem-solving methods used by members in the group and in day-to-day living. GROW is also a community whose members extend friendship and support to one another throughout the week.

What are the benefits of GROW?

“Instead of my life being finished it was really just beginning. The Growers believed in me so I was able to begin to believe in myself. Where there was darkness and despair, GROW gave me a way through.” Joe

“When I came to GROW, I was unhappy and very lonely. Surely there was more to life than this! In the group I was accepted as I was, with all my problems, and thus began my challenge to change. As I recovered, I gained confidence in myself and the belief that ‘the best in life and love and happiness was ahead of me, not behind me.’” Jane

Meeting and Contact Information

Meets Thursdays, 6:00 p.m., Provena Covenant Hospital, 1400 W. Park St., Urbana in the University Room (basement just inside of the cafeteria) Web site: WWW.GROWINAMERICA.ORG Phone: 1-888-741-GROW (4769) or 352-6989 (Champaign office) Address: GROW in AMERICA, P.O. Box 3667, Champaign, IL 61826.

***To have your group featured** in the **Group Spotlight** in a future edition of the *Self-Helper*, contact us at 352-0099 or email sdorsey@familyservicecc.org

Announcements

- Mental Health Month has provided an opportunity to raise awareness about mental health issues with events and activities in communities across the country. Mark your calendars for these events:
 - **Anxiety Screening, Tues., April 6th, Room D244, Parkland College** – Video “Stories of Hope and Courage” and panel presentation. Screening available upon request. For more information contact Jennifer Klatsky at jklatzky@parkland.edu or call 351-2219
 - **Mental Health Recovery Conference, May 20th, Springfield, IL** Interactive recovery conference for lay persons with mental illness, family members and friends, professionals and the self-help community. For more information contact Tom Troe at Thomas.Troe@illinois.gov
 - **Anti-Stigma Alliance film event as part of Ebertfest, Sunday, April 25th, Virginia Theatre, Champaign** This film is free and open to the public and includes a panel discussion after the film related to stigma, mental health and disability challenges. Film to be announced at a later date.

Updates

Group Updating in Process: Thank you to all who have completed the group update form sent in January!
If you have not sent in your update form, please fax to 217-352-9512 or call the Self-Help Center 352- 0099.
The next edition of the Self-Help Group Directory will be published in October 2010.

Spotlight on Research

On Starting a Self-Help Group

Researchers at Wichita State University conducted a study related to the development of self-help groups. They surveyed 37 group founders to learn more about reasons people start groups, steps taken in starting a group, satisfactions and frustrations with starting a group. The study yielded the following information:

- **People often start groups because** they want to connect with others who share their concern. Nearly 40% of group founders believed there was a need in the community; nearly 30% thought sharing similar experiences would help others and more than 25% of group founders hoped the group would help them personally.
- Over 85% of group founders reported **the need for organizational or programming** efforts. The most common need was finding a meeting location (50%); others tried to provide educational opportunities (36%) and some tried to develop shared leadership (14%) by asking members to set-up the meeting room, provide refreshments or other responsibilities. Many founders (73%) publicized their meetings to potential members. the meetings. Fifty percent outreached through public newspapers, church notices, TV and radio PSA's. Some founders (25%) contacted people they knew who shared the group concern and 30% contacted professionals they believed would refer people to the group.
- The **most frequent satisfaction** of group founders (52%) was the group helped other people. Other founders reported (32%) people in the community showed interest in attending the group and 25% stated their satisfaction working with others to start the group.
- **Common frustrations** with starting a group included handling organizational tasks (40%) such as finding a suitable meeting place, lack of support to start the group and lack of participation and involvement by others (30%). Shared leadership was another challenge; 25% of group founders had trouble finding people willing to help organize and facilitate group meetings.

Wituk, S., Tiemeyer, S., Warren, M. and Meissen, G., *Understanding the Development of Self-Help Groups*, Wichita State University

The Self-Help Center of Family Service provides **free consultation services** to persons **starting groups** and **groups in existence experiencing challenges**. The **facilitator workshop** (see page 3) and **self help conference** are also opportunities to enhance group facilitation skills and network with other facilitators to discuss common group challenges and experiences.

The Self-Help Center of Family Service Presents....



Spring Workshop
Saturday, April 17 – 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Facilitation Skills for Self-Help/Support Group Leaders

Topics: Facilitator Roles, Leadership Style and Shared Leadership, Group Membership Issues, Listening Skills, Dealing with Group Conflict and Difficult Behaviors and more..

Workshop Facilitator: Sharon Monday-Dorsey, Self-Help Center Coordinator

Workshop Location: Doris Kelley Christopher Hall, University of Illinois, 904 W. Nevada St. (corner of Nevada and Lincoln Ave., Urbana, Studio Room, Main Floor

Registration Fee: \$35 includes lunch and resource packet; \$10 additional fee for 7.5 hours of CEU credit for licensed social workers or counselors

Information: Self-Help Center 352-0099

-----Registration Form-----

Your Name: _____ E-mail: _____

Group Name/Organization: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Indicate any Dietary Restrictions or Special Accommodations Needed: _____

Fees Enclosed: \$35 Basic Registration Fee

\$10 7.5 CEU Credit Fee

Make checks payable to:
Self-Help Center of Family Service
405 S. State St., Champaign, IL 61820

Register Early! Workshop Size is Limited!

Thank You

RSVP Volunteer Elizabeth Easley for her ongoing assistance with clerical projects;
Ted Kappes, Prairienet Community Networking Initiative, for his ongoing assistance with updating Self-Help Center information on the website;
David Gordon, Urbana Adult Education, for his generous assistance with the layout and production of this edition of the Self-Helper newsletter;
Robbie Russell for his assistance updating group information on the website; and
Ginny Sims for her graphic design assistance on the upcoming fall conference publicity materials.

“We’re “Going Green”...and we need your help!

Thank you to everyone who has already responded to this request! In an effort to try and help save our natural resources and reduce our printing costs, the Self-Help Center *is working to e-mail the newsletter* to as many subscribers as possible. You can help us accomplish this goal by providing us with your e-mail address. Please note your e-mail address will be used to keep you informed through the *Self-Helper* newsletter and will not be shared without your permission. *Please send your e-mail to sdorsey@familyservicecc.org*

Thank you for helping us to preserve our environment!



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Return Service Requested

In this issue:

- **Facilitator Workshop - Sat., April 17**
- **Save the Date:**
Self Help Conference - Sat., Oct. 30th
- **Anti Stigma Film (EbertFest) – Sun., April 25**
The Virginia Theatre, Champaign

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