



Eroding and Restoring Hope in staff teams

 Hopefulness is eroded by	 Hope is restored by
Not being listened to or valued – especially by staff at a higher level. Feeling powerless. Staff with a brief for strategic leadership who feel pessimistic about their ability to improve things, build alliances or achieve sustainable change.	An ongoing dialogue of asking for and listening to feedback from staff and service users. Valuing ideas from others. Sharing information and stories. Sense of democracy – everyone is equally important. Empowering staff to make their own decisions rather than ask. Hopeful leaders.
Insufficient resources to do the job that is needed and feeling snowed under, overwhelmed, exhausted and burnt out. Cutting resources – funding and staffing. Spinning plates – and they are all ‘the best china’!	Understanding and working within limitations. Realistic timescales. We need both <i>hope</i> and <i>opportunity</i> .
Most legislation and red tape is itself hopeless and it clashes with other bits leading to competing demands. Pressure of expectations that cannot all be met. Over-inspection that merely criticises.	Integrated policy – different directives are coherent with one another. Clear boundaries.
Problems and failures within the department or individuals that are then dealt with poorly. Risk-averse blame culture with no encouragement.	Higher management who are supportive and willing to take risks and promote empowerment, self determination and creativity. Sharing risk management.
Being isolated. Insufficient support. Left too much to your own devices. Too much focus on my role so that people say ‘it’s not my job, let them do it’. Silo thinking and working.	Staff moving around so that they see the larger picture. Sufficient staff turnover to bring in fresh ideas – and continuity too. A diverse skill mix so people use their expertise and value that of others. Cross boundary working.
Confusion over the goals for individuals and the service. Focus on the wrong priorities. Rejection of proposed improvements and changes. Lack of leadership. Avoiding decision-making.	Clearly understood, shared, ambitious and achievable targets for the individual and the team. Flexibility. Prioritise what can be done.
Deteriorating staff relationships within teams and with external partners. Unfairness.	Honesty and professional integrity with colleagues and service users. A clear, aspirational and shared value base that shapes choices.
A focus on routine and maintenance for service users, staff and services. A loss of morale. Few staff development opportunities.	Some personalities within teams. Inspirational champions giving leadership, celebrating success and giving lots of praise. Sense of humour. People like working here.
Previous attempts to move forward have failed. Problems are not addressed. Working with people who have persistent low mood.	Passion and optimism. Investment in innovation. Willingness to adapt to change. Understanding of change processes and well-managed changes. Seeing people succeed.