

1c5

Been There, Done That

Do

Introduce a service user who has succeeded in the community activity to another person who is contemplating starting.

Story

Annie would like to attend an art class at the local community education centre. The keyworker suggested she talked to another service user who has similar mental health difficulties (agitation and panic attacks in social situations) who has already attended, succeeded there and benefited from attendance.

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Hints & Hazards

This can feel like manipulation or a breach of confidence unless care is taken. Both people in the encounter need to give their permission. Presenting to a group might be less pressurised than meeting one to one.

Do not assume that two people might get on well or that one person will experience the same response to the setting as another.

The introduction may be a single encounter or it could lead to a longer term link in which the experienced person becomes a mentor (see 7b8). Alternatively, each person who receives help in this way could be expected to offer encouragement to the next person who comes through, thus giving something back.