

9th September 2008

BOURNEMOUTH THRESHOLD DIALOGUE

Where everyone learns
but nobody teaches

COMMUNITY DIALOGUE: BOURNEMOUTH

Tuesdays 6:15 – 7:45pm Clubhouse, Boscombe

How to keep talking through chaos

Participants: 5 Ex-offenders & 6 Others (Police, Housing support worker, Ex-offender volunteer & PD)

LEARNINGS

"I've got an appointment tomorrow with the BAAT. It's my 3rd appointment. If I don't make it this time they won't offer me any help."
(Ex-offender)

"You've got to get yourself to that appointment. Sleep outside. I've done that before to make sure."
(Ex-offender)

"No one accepts or allows users because they think we're disgusting and we're going to put our using in your face. Not all of us do. I think drinkers are a much bigger problem to live with. But we've got that label stuck on us and we're turned away from everywhere because people just see the label."
(Ex-offender)

"It's upset me a bit coming here tonight. I've been clean for 4 years. I gave up because it's s**t. Listening to you I realise I've forgotten what it's like waking up every day to all this - all the anger, how horrible it is. It has been a real wake-up call for me. I'll definitely come back next week."
(Ex-offender)

"We all have to work within the boundaries set by our organisations. That's everyone - the Police, BCHA. No one wants to put someone out on the street, but the housing providers have to protect their other residents who are vulnerable to relapse."
(Police)

"You say you've never had your own front door. Having your own place brings it's own problems. All the utility bills, council tax – there's a lot to pay out to have that independence. It's taken me years to get to the point where I can cope."
(Ex-offender volunteer)



"Situations like this really affect us - we get deeply upset by it. We are all genuine people. We don't talk about people behind their backs, we haven't got it in for anyone. We have to follow procedures... I know there is a lot about what happens to people that I don't understand and that's why I'm here."
(Housing support worker)

"I was doing really well - back in touch with my girlfriend and seeing my daughter. My girlfriend gave me kaolin and morphine because I had a stomach bug and it showed up positive for opiates at the hostel. I didn't get any chances... That's someone's whole life tipped upside down on it's head just like that... It's my reputation. No-one will give me a chance. That's why I got treated the way I did."
(Ex-offender)

This a group that people can access when other doors seem to be closing to them.

Appropriate housing isn't available to people who are trying to stabilise their drug use or in relapse.

Conversations about the problems that people are facing right now aren't always easy.

Bournemouth Threshold Dialogue brings Bournemouth offenders together in open conversation with the agencies responsible for their supervision and support. Dialogues are themed on the issues affecting re-offending. The process starts in custody and continues post-release in the community, emphasising support, challenge, responsibility and early intervention. Threshold Dialogue is supported by Bournemouth Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership.