

2nd Dec 2008

BOURNEMOUTH THRESHOLD DIALOGUE

Where everyone learns
but nobody teaches

COMMUNITY DIALOGUE: BOURNEMOUTH

Tuesdays 6:15 – 7:45pm Oxford Road, B'mouth

Change is hard even if it is for the better

Participants: 4 Ex-offenders, 3 Police, 2 B'mouth Council & 1PD

LEARNINGS

"I've been using for 18yrs and sleeping rough for 16 yrs. I've been in accommodation for 2 weeks and know being clean is better for me but am getting my head round the rules of living indoors. I'm ok but my head is a bit messed up at the moment - I'm alright though." (Ex-offender)

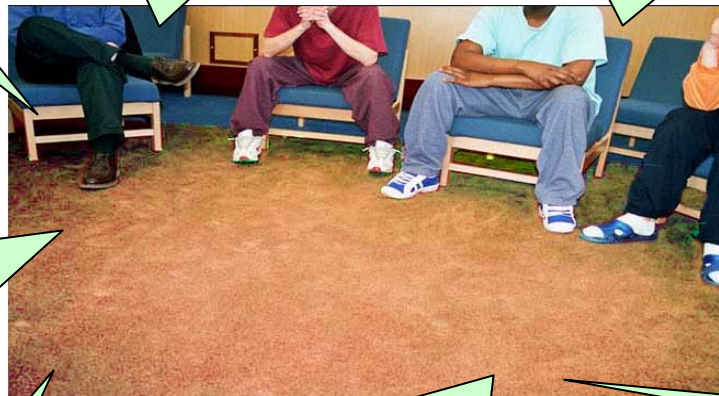
"My goal for the next year is to go to college to do art. It's for my own interest. It's the boredom that's a killer." (Ex-offender)

"I've done college courses before but given up because they just weren't right. There's got to be a reason to go." (Ex-offender)
"It depends what your reasons are for doing the courses." (PD)

When you get clean, boredom can be the big killer.

"I'm from Bournemouth but because I went to live in Bristol for a while, when I came back they said I had no local connections and I ended up sleeping rough for a year even though my mum lives in Poole."

(Ex-offender)



Alcohol is a big problem because it's socially acceptable, readily available and yet could lead to addiction.

To be successful in recovery you have to be prepared to change your friendship groups and your whole way of life.

"I'm living in a dry house at the moment but I had a slip recently and got kicked out. I was able to stay at my mums and after 2 weeks they took me back. If it wasn't for my mum I would have been back on the streets and would have gone really downhill." (Ex-offender)

"My problem now is drink. I stopped using heroin because I was scared. Last time I was in hospital they told me I'd either come back in a body bag or without a leg." (Ex-offender)
"If you had a shock like that with alcohol, would you stop drinking?" (Police)
"Probably." (Ex-offender)

"Street drinkers get their alcohol confiscated when students out drinking don't - we're easy targets." (Ex-offender)
"The level of violence from the homeless is nothing compared to that in town on a Friday and Saturday night." (Ex-offender)
"We confiscate any alcohol in public. I often take bottles off visitors to town who come out of the pubs and clubs." (Police)

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.