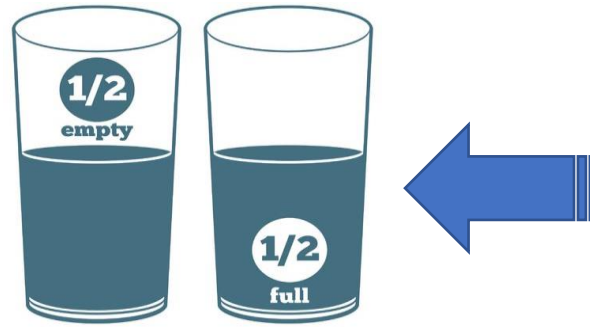


Bereavement peer-support

Using an ABCD approach to set up a local group



ABCD - Asset Based Community Development (Approach)



ABCD is built on four foundations:

- It focuses on community assets and strengths rather than problems and needs
- It identifies and mobilises individual and community assets, skills and passions
- It is community driven – ‘building communities from the inside out’
- It is relationship driven.





Timeline...



April 2019
Sent out a
plea (via
NextDoor) for
people to
help set the
project up



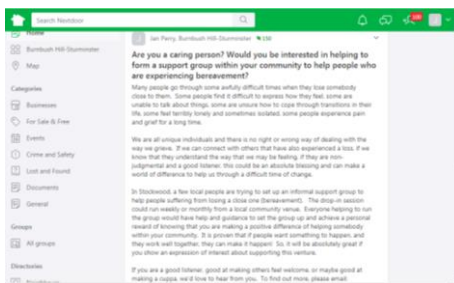
May 2019
Secured a
Venue



June 2019
Began
planning with
the team



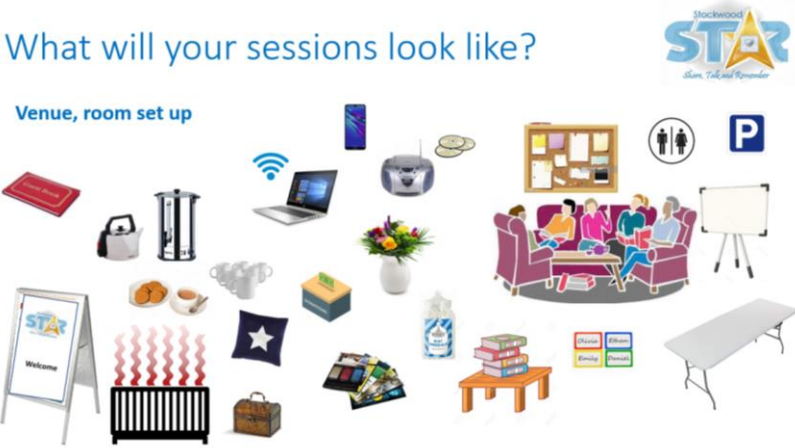
Oct 2019
Launched
STAR
- Opened the
doors




During the planning & setting up stage....

What will your sessions look like?

Venue, room set up






What will your sessions look like?

Content & delivery



Resources	Content / Delivery
	Welcome and sign into the Visitors Book
	OPENING: (for newcomers & at least one session per term) Share an overview of the Core Values & Work Ethos with everyone in the group (large laminated display)
	Followed by a 'round Robin': 'How are you feeling?' 'Any news you'd like to share?' (passing around the comfort cushion)
	General discussion
	Comfort Break – serving refreshments & biscuits/cake
	Resume discussion and/or include activities to provoke discussion
	CLOSING: Closing the session with lead facilitator checking out how people have experienced the group (allow a minimum of 20 minutes). Ending to be 'flagged up' so that everyone knows the meeting is coming to an end and for those who have not been able to speak have an opportunity to do so if they wish. Important to include the questions "what is one thing that you will take away from this session?" and, "is there anything you have coming up, between now and the next session, that you would like to share with the group?" – again, passing of the comfort cushion to allow choice of talking or just listening.



Bereavement Peer Support Group

Roles & Responsibilities

Key Supporter(s) / Co-ordinator:

Respond to initial enquiries	Co-ordinate the project & do administration
Liaise with the 'Welcomer' to arrange 1:1 welcome introductory meeting	To be the main contact person
To establish partnership work & support	Publicise the project / engage community
Produce & maintain relevant information literature / handouts for participants	Guardian role at planning/evaluation meetings

Welcomer:

Deliver 1:1 introductory meeting	Take contact details
Explain about the project (aims & objectives)	GDPR – keep records safe
Join the group. Listen & support participants in the group	Acts as a 'floater' should somebody need to leave before session officially ends OR to greet newcomers, should anybody randomly arrive to the venue after the session has begun.


Mixer – Greeter

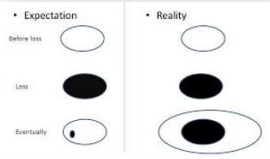

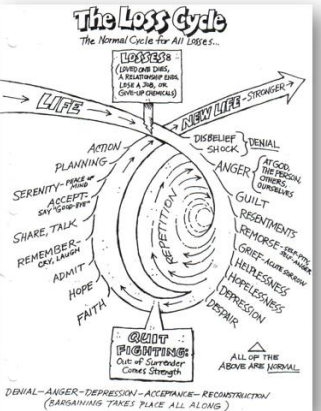
First point of contact at the door – welcome	Show around the facilities
Hand hold & introduce newcomers to group	
Join the group. Listen & support participants in the group	Acts as a 'floater' should somebody need to leave before session officially ends OR to greet newcomers, should anybody randomly arrive to the venue after the session has begun.

Listener/facilitator:

Welcomes the group & opens conversation	Looks after the 'STAR' resource box
Closes the conversation	Monitors discussion & ensures equality of time for each participant (should they want to talk)

Theories & MODELS





Group Agreement Plan

Work Ethics
Code of Conduct
Standards



Training & Support for the team and within the Team



Aims & Objectives

Aims:

The Bereavement Peer Support Group, 'STAR', provides free support for people grieving from a bereavement or difficult transition in their life. The aim of the support group is to create a safe space for people to receive support, listen to and share stories & experiences with others who have experienced loss in their life.

Objectives:

- To provide peer support sessions which will be facilitated by Peer Supporters; volunteers, most of whom have themselves been through a loss.
- Provide opportunity for participants to speak to others who have gone through something similar and/or listen to others' stories & experiences of bereavement & grief. Each session will address the topics and emotions that arise for participants on the day instead of having pre-planned topics to discuss.
- To share information about establishments which provide a range of support to help with sustaining virtuous health & well-being.



What it is ***NOT***:

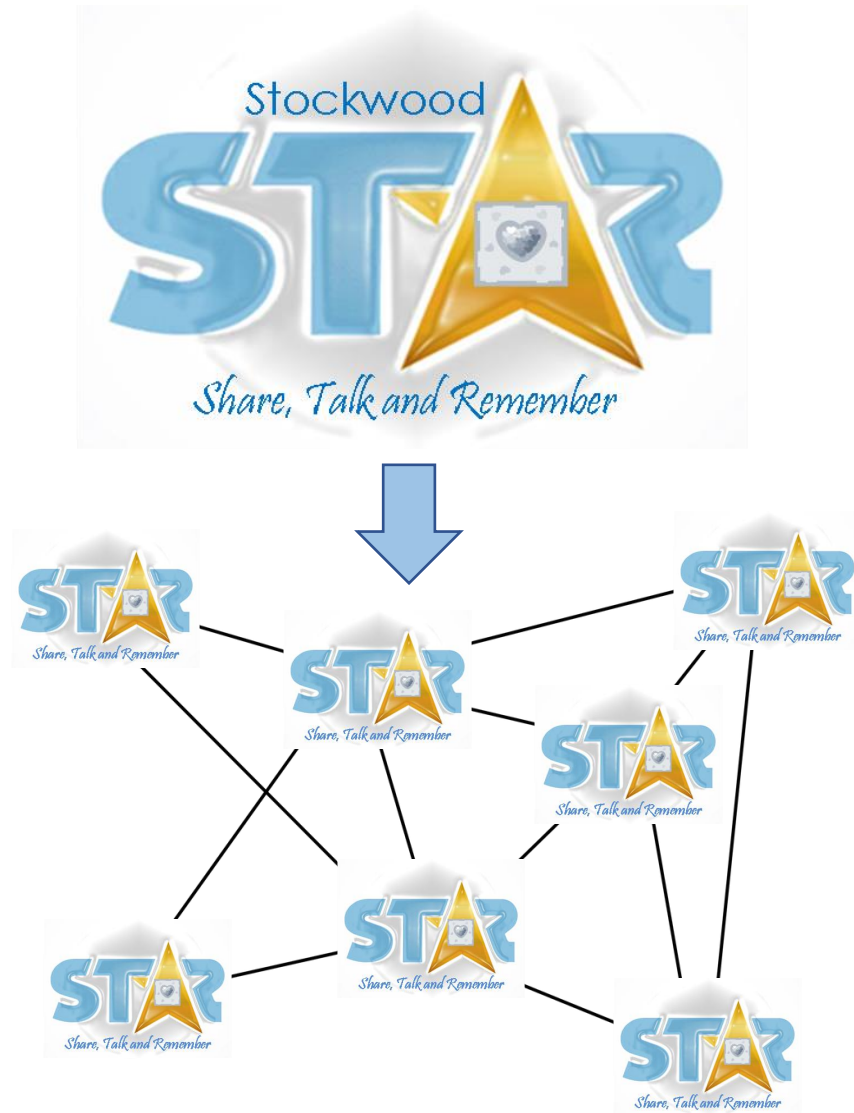
- Not a constituted business, registered company or *public service
- Not managed by a governing body
- Not a counselling service
- Not a service giving advice & guidance
- Not an organisation that charges
- Does not have a selection criteria
- Does not have a waiting list

** A public service is something which is organized by the government or an official body in order to benefit all the people in a particular society or community.*

What it *is* & the Benefits:

- A voluntary community group / entity
- A service which enhances and supports public health
- Focuses on ABCD Approach
- A *secular* community service
- An organisation where there is no hierarchy
- A safe place where people are welcomed, able to listen to others, talk, share stories, cry, laugh, receive care and support, and just be
- FREE
- Inclusive environment, welcoming diversity and equality for all adults aged over 18 years
- Provides Sign-posting
- No selection criteria or waiting list
- No time limit
- It doesn't cost any money to run – just time & commitment of everyone involved, & gifts in-kind

Outcomes



- A committed and welcoming team of facilitators offering a Safe, Friendly and Informal space for people to Share, Talk, Remember, Listen, Laugh, Cry and just Be.
- Support from two local venues offering free space
- Delivery of 2 sessions every month
- Over the past year engaged and supported 13 participants 8 of which are currently regularly attending
- Befriending telephone call service
- Showcased and shared the model across Bristol and engaged 25 delegates, from various community organisations, who completed the **STAR Training the Trainers Programme** 4 of which have since set up their own STAR Group in their community. The others holding plans to set up after pandemic.
- Through recognition and support of AgeUK Bristol, the CCG have offered to fund a year's contract for the STAR Training the Trainers Programme to be promoted widely across BNSSG & also a **Bespoke STAR 'Grow Your Group' training Programme** to empower others to set up a STAR Group in their own community.
- Emerging STAR Network across BNSSG

Value & Worth of the Peer Support Group

Comments from:

Participants attending for support

- “I was told about the group by a guy who I met at the cemetery. He recently lost his wife. He told me that he’s the only man in the group and although he was anxious about coming along, he said it was the best thing he’s done; everyone in the group is lovely, friendly and caring and he feels he’s able to express himself which is something he usually finds difficult to do. He encouraged me to come along, so here I am.”
- “It’s just what I need. I’ve been for 1:1 counselling but I feel that I need to listen to others share their stories and how they cope in difficult situations. I can’t say what I want to say at home as I need to protect my family.”
- “I need to know that I’m not alone in how I feel.”
- “After attending the first session I actually slept through the night for the first time since losing my husband.”
- “After the first session I came away feeling ‘lifted’.”

STAR Facilitators (members of the Team)

- “I’m here to listen and give support because I care but actually, I find that when I leave the session I feel that I’ve received therapy because the reward of helping others and making a positive difference to somebody’s life is amazing!”
- “We are not just there as facilitators or helpers, we are actually part of the group as a whole. – the group is ‘one’”
- You can actually see the difference it is making to everyone involved.
- We laugh, we cry, we laugh and cry some more!
- I am on a journey – I have people in front of me who can help me and I have people behind me and I’d like to help them.

Interested?

If you are interested in finding out more or maybe thinking of engaging others to set up a STAR Bereavement Peer Support Group in your community and would like to explore the STAR Training the Trainers Programme, or the STAR Grow Your Group Training, please let me know.

Jan Perry

STAR Network Co-ordinator & Freelance Trainer

starsconnecting@outlook.com

07595165082



There will be a follow-on Workshop in May, hosted by Festival of Co-production Learning with the Ageing Better Programme. This will include more in depth information about the delivery, and video clips from the facilitators who helped to set up the Stockwood STAR.