

LIVED EXPERIENCE

CJU'S GUIDE TO WORKING WITH PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE



ENGAGEMENT IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE:

- What service providers are currently doing does not always work
- The outcomes that come from the community are better able to meet the needs of people within that community
- People with lived experience see gaps that service providers do not
- People with lived experience have a right to agency
- It enables resources to be redistributed
- Service providers/funders/etc need to understand the real impact of the work they do.

PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE NEED:

- Non judgemental engagement
- To be included in the decisions that impact them
- Support and accommodations to make their own decisions and opportunities to provide their contributions
- To be engaged with at 'first contact' and with every decision that impacts them
- To be engaged in the planning and design of services so services meet their actual needs
- Processes of engagement that establish safety
- Organisations to have accountability (i.e. don't hand pick people that are pliable)
- To have the feedback loop of engagement closed
- To be checked back in with after consultations, and during evaluation - this is accountability
- Space to reflect on if they (individually) are ready and well enough to engage, for some people this may be dynamic and change - they need to be supported in this and clarity on how this can work (or not) with the group.



IS OUR ORGANISATION READY?

- Are we ready to pay people in ways that work for them?
- Are we ready to share decision making?
- Are we able to redistribute power?
- Is trauma informed practice how we do things?
- Are we willing and ready to learn from the people we support?
- Do we understand the ways in which language is used & abused?



LIVED EXPERIENCE

CJU'S GUIDE TO WORKING WITH PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE



PEOPLE IN ORGANISATIONS NEED TO:

(A few ideas from the CJU Justice LEAG)

- Know what is culturally appropriate, what the local cultural protocols are
- Provide practical assistance for Elders to participate equitably
- Make accommodations for individual people (these will be different for everyone)
- Listen to peoples' needs
- Respond to peoples' needs.
- Be aware that everyone's trauma is different, just because one thing helps someone, it doesn't mean that is what everyone needs
- Understand that making assumptions can be deadly - this is relevant for planning, co-design and for in the moment support
- Have awareness of realities outside of your own experience - professional folk need to be aware of and continually challenging their unconscious biases
- Translation- agencies need to work on this!
- Enable transparent and open dialogue which includes freedom to make mistakes, be called out/in and restore trust
- Apologise, and acknowledge they don't know everything



ORGANISATIONS NEED TO STOP:

- Using othering and deficit language
- Using their positions, ego and expertise to maintain control
- Making assumptions and decisions for people
- Causing harm by doing this work badly or not doing it at all

Incomplete Checklist:

- Do an organisational audit
- Know what resources you have for engagement (human, emotional, supervision, time and financial)
- Have a trauma informed- relational plan for engagement
- Have policies and processes for engagement
- Be prepared for changing direction- know limits and share them with folk



This document is part of broader body of work and came from series of discussions and conversations that have taken place online and in person, using mouth words, pictures, text and stories. This work isn't complete and is ongoing, it is a summary of some of our shared stories and ideas. Yarned and created in 2024 by members of the Justice LEAG.

