



Inspirations

LIVING WITH DEPRESSION ...?

Depression is different from feeling low or sad. A person suffering with depression will experience intense emotions of anxiety, hopelessness, negativity and helplessness, and the feelings stay with them instead of going away. Depression is best described by someone who knows – a “sufferer”!

Depression – what does it feel like?

Wings clipped, feathers oiled
Aborted daily take-offs
Wading in treacle

Lacklustre. Can't breathe.
Manic inactivity
Encroaching numbness

Confused, forgetful
Endless lists, tasks for the day
Sleep; insomnia

Dark introspection
Fatigue, every effort blanked
Fortified shutters

Rainbow long faded
Black and white and shades of grey
Monochrome living

Endless shivering
Blue ice pumps through veins
This polar cap never melts

Deflated, let down
Weighted to the ground; handcuffed
Every bubble bursts

No winner's medals
Struggle to the starting line
Not at the races

Creativity
Dries up. Flourishes; small steps
Something from nothing

Callous self-hatred
Stricken senseless. Alien
Crushed by fate. Friendless

First hurdle faller
The conspiracy of life
Odds on a loser

Inevitable
Break down, break up, no
breakthrough
Corralled, reined in, trapped

Frustration, anger
Crescendo of emotion
Threatens to burst forth

Regrets, lost chances
Tears of disappointment well
Lost soul, futile search.

That's what it feels like to me.



Depression is quite common and it can happen to anyone – although the exact number of people with depression is hard to estimate because many people do not get help, or are not formally diagnosed. Everyone's experience of depression

is different; it can happen for many reasons and the length of time it can take to recover ranges from around six months to a year or more. Depression can happen suddenly, for example, as a result of physical illness, bereavement, family problems or life changing events (such as childbirth, children leaving home or redundancy). The stress caused by uncertainties can also be a trigger. We are seeing more clients come to us with feelings of stress, anxiety and depression as they experience the impact of the current economic climate on their lives.

One of the first steps in getting help for depression is to visit your GP who may or may not wish to prescribe medication. There is evidence that counselling works to help people with depression. Our trained counsellors provide sufferers with a safe environment in which they can talk through their everyday issues and whatever else may be behind the depression. Clients also have the opportunity to explore, with a professional who will not judge, the impact of any stigma or prejudice they are facing or fear they may come across if they were to open up to others about their illness. So if you are experiencing depression – either as a sufferer, or as a family member or friend of a sufferer, *Inspire* offers a safe and welcoming environment where you will be heard, valued and respected.

And don't forget *Inspire* has a bursary fund so don't let your finances stop you seeking the help you need.

INSPIRE TRAINING

At *Inspire* we are proud to be able to offer an extensive range of both professional and non-professional training opportunities. Our course leaders are all professionally trained and it is our desire to ensure that our courses are tailored to meet the needs of the participants and delivered at an affordable price.

Here's a taste of what we've been up to lately.

Team work keeps the streets calm

Woodbridge Town Pastors have been a regular feature on the streets of Woodbridge every Friday night since April 2009. This committed team works to assist the Police to keep calm on the streets and helps ensure that people can get home safely after a night out. Co-founder Carolyn Swinney was determined that the Town Pastors (TP's) should be looked after too, knowing that they might be affected by their work and situations that they become involved in. Carolyn sought the advice of *Inspire* as to how this might be done and we were pleased to be able to help.

Following a meeting to discuss the Team's needs we facilitated a six month review of the TP's work; this would be an opportunity for the Team to evaluate the first few months of their work. Carolyn says that this relaxed and informal evening was *"a brilliant opportunity for people to share their positive and negative experiences as well as the things that really worry them about the work"*. Subsequently we



Margaret Bale, Community Services Manager for Felixstowe Salvation Army, writes about her experience of training with *Inspire*:

Bringing in an outside training provider was something of a new venture for us; typically we have looked to meeting training needs in-house or through Salvation Army provision. It also represented a step of faith on my part as there was no training budget for the newly established Community Services programme which I manage. What we did have was a group of volunteers eager to improve their listening skills; a recognition that all that we were going to do in terms of reaching out to people with God's love relied on us being

developed a training evening focussing on improving listening and communication skills and managing conflict. The TP's enthusiastically role-played difficult scenarios demonstrating (as well as great acting skills) how they can manage and diffuse sensitive or volatile situations.

Carolyn has this to say about our involvement with them: *"The training was excellent and the mix of teaching styles made it really interesting. It would be beneficial to anyone involved in listening to others – learning how to do it better can make a huge difference to how we manage situations."*

Within the first year of the scheme operating there was a reduction in crime on the streets of Woodbridge. Relationships between the TP's, Police and Landlords are positive; *Inspire* is delighted to be working in partnership with the scheme and we look forward to our next review with the Team this November.

able to listen to their needs. Thankfully we were supported by ministers who acknowledged the value of investing in the best training we could find and were prepared to give it their blessing – and authorise the cost!

There was no doubt in my mind that *Inspire* was the right organisation to deliver a training programme; I had previously attended a number of short courses offered by *Inspire* and had been impressed by the professionalism of the trainers, the content of the

Margaret Bale writes (continued)

courses and the friendly delivery. I had been reassured then – as I was now – by the knowledge that all that they did, whether through their training or through the counselling service (to which I had regularly referred people), was built on the firm foundations of the personal Christian faith of the staff and counsellors. I was thrilled when Susie Donaldson agreed to provide a training programme for our volunteers and at an amazingly reasonable cost.

Susie gave her time generously in meeting with me and a colleague to tailor the training to our specific needs for a very diverse group of volunteers! She designed a programme of three separate sessions over as many weeks covering, in addition to listening skills, important areas such as confidentiality, boundaries and looking after ourselves. Her delivery was gentle but unhurried and, possibly to some people's surprise, highly enjoyable! I was amazed at how much ground was covered in such a short time.

My own aim in arranging the training with Susie had been that the volunteers would be given the tools and the self-confidence to come alongside some of the troubled people who come to The Salvation Army for help. In fact my expectations were more than exceeded. I hadn't expected

the enthusiasm and commitment of those who attended the course: I haven't attended many training courses where the participants arrive earlier each session and were reluctant to leave at the end! Neither was I expecting that a group of very different people would, in such a short time, become a closely bonded team; four months on and they are continuing to support and care for each other. This is a real tribute to Susie's skills in empowering and enthusing people.

Has the training worked? Well, I can honestly say that I have witnessed some examples of "good listening" amongst the team. But it hasn't stopped there: two team members have gone on to embark on counselling training with *Inspire* and all of the team have expressed interest in additional training.

And would I recommend *Inspire* as a training provider? Unreservedly!

Can we help you?

Please talk to us about how we can help your organisation look after your team, those you work with, or improve your understanding and knowledge in any aspect of caring or counselling. Our Director, Susie Donaldson, will be pleased to assist you in determining your individual training needs and developing an appropriate event.



The team with their certificates!

Working with Suffolk Family Carers

Talk and Support is a telephone befriending service at Suffolk Family Carers. The project provides support to Family Carers who are having a difficult time, or who are very isolated. Volunteer Telephone Supporters call a Family Carer once a week to offer a listening ear and support.

Inspire have run training sessions for our Telephone Supporters since the project first began at the end of 2007. Sessions have been delivered on the subjects of Listening Skills, Depression awareness, Stress Management, Wellbeing, and Bereavement and loss.

These sessions have helped the Telephone Supporters to develop the listening skills which are so important for their role, and given them an awareness of some of the issues that Family Carers can face.

The training sessions run by *Inspire* are very popular with our Telephone Supporters and we consistently receive positive feedback about the sessions, such as:

- “Very well presented and interesting course

at an easy pace, giving us a chance to express our views without any embarrassment.”

- “Excellent trainer, made me feel at ease and able to share my views.”
- “Friendly and relaxed.”

Feedback from some of the volunteers who attended the last Wellbeing training session.

Training is a very important part of the support offered to the Telephone Supporters. It goes a long way to ensure that the Family Carers receive the best possible service. Thanks to *Inspire* for helping us to train and equip our Telephone Supporters!

Suffolk Family Carers offers a wide range of services to Family Carers. If you are a Family Carer and would like to find out more about support available to you, please phone our Helpline on 0844 225 3099 or see our website: www.suffolkfamilycarers.org

If you are interested in volunteering with the Talk and Support project, or other volunteer roles please call 01473 835409.

INSPIRE REPLY FORM

Please detach this form and send it with your full name and address to this address:

- I wish to become a ‘*Friend of Inspire*’ and have enclosed a gift / have completed the attached standing order form.
- Please send me information about fundraising for *Inspire*.
- Please send me general details regarding counselling training with *Inspire*.
- I wish to discuss how *Inspire* can help provide my Church / organisation with training.
- Please send me general information regarding *Inspire* Counselling and Training.
- Please add me to your mailing list to receive regular information regarding the work of *Inspire*.

Name.....

Address

.....

Postcode.....Tel. No.....

Email.....

Inspire Counselling & Training

The Fletcher Centre

2 Crescent Road Ipswich IP1 2EX

Tel: 01473 217694

email: contact@inspirecounselling.org.uk

www.inspirecounselling.org.uk

INSPIRE PEOPLE

In each edition of **Inspirations** we aim to introduce you to a member of the **Inspire** team. As Counselling Team Manager, Karen Gardner has a pivotal role to play in the day to day running of the organisation. Here she shares something of her work:

What does the role of Counselling Team Manager involve?

“My role is two-fold. I’m the first real face-to-face contact that clients have with **Inspire** when they come for an initial assessment appointment. I have the privilege of listening to the client’s story knowing that it may be the first time that they have had the opportunity to tell it to anyone”.

“I also manage the counselling team and it is essential that I know them well; this includes being aware of their preferred counselling approach, their expertise, availability and personality”.

Why are clients assessed before they start counselling?

“It is really important that I get a sense of the client’s needs and what they want to achieve through counselling, as well as for them to gain an idea of what **Inspire** is all about. I am able to explain what **Inspire** can offer and if I feel we are able to help; if not I will always attempt to refer them on to someone who can. From this session I am able to match them with the best counsellor for that individual client”.

Why is it so important to match clients with the ‘right’ counsellor?

“We believe that it is the strength of the therapeutic relationship that determines the client’s ability to make changes. We trust that our clients will make the right

decisions for them and so I am aiming to facilitate this through the ‘best fit’ between client and counsellor. Knowing the counselling team members well ensures that I can make good referrals and that clients can access the help they need”.

What do you particularly enjoy about your work at **Inspire**?

“I love the variety – meeting and working with such a diverse group of people!”

What is the most challenging aspect of your role?

“There are always constraints on our time, energy and finances which makes developing the work of **Inspire** frustrating at times. There is a need for us to grow further and offer additional services but we are limited in how we can do this without more resources”.



GIFT AID AND STANDING ORDER FORM



If you are a tax payer, then the Inland Revenue will repay the tax to **Inspire**, which increases the value of your donation to us, at no further cost to yourself

Gift Aid Declaration

Name:

Address:

Post Code:

I am a UK taxpayer, and pay sufficient tax to cover my donations. I wish **Inspire** to treat all my donations as gift aid and recover the tax. If at any time I no longer pay sufficient tax to cover my donations, I will let **Inspire** know.

Signed:

Date:

STANDING ORDER FORM

Name of Bank

Address

Bank Sort Code

Account Number

Please pay from the above account, the sum of

£..... monthly to:

Inspire Counselling and Training
HSBC Bank, 66 Hamilton Road, Felixstowe, IP11 7AJ
Sort Code 40-21-06
A/c 01141333

Starting on (date)
until further notified by me

Name(s)

Address

Signature (two if joint account)

MONEY MATTERS AT *INSPIRE*

As a charity we make no apology for using each edition of **Inspirations** to talk about money! *Inspire* was established to provide low cost counselling to anyone who seeks it, regardless of their ability to pay. Almost 20 years on this continues to be our desire and the demand for our services only increases.

2010 has seen a considerable rise in the number of clients accessing help at *Inspire*. To this end we have taken on 5 new counsellors, including 3 students, since the start of the year. Our team of 13 counsellors, whose professional costs are met by *Inspire*, is working to capacity. As volunteers they give their time freely and we are indebted to them for providing both that time and their expertise to fulfill the vision of *Inspire*.

The current economic climate with its ongoing uncertainties, threats of redundancy, reduction in available jobs, increased living costs and outsourcing of services means that we are all feeling the squeeze. Our lead article on depression highlighted the effects of stress and anxiety as well as the need for the provision of care and counselling. And yet we are increasingly aware of the lack of provision in this respect; long waiting times and high fees make counselling inaccessible for many people. It is greatly acknowledged that the '3rd sector', i.e. charities, are going to be required to provide more help to people as the economy struggles to pick up. This provides us with a fantastic opportunity but the challenge is financing this.

At *Inspire* we are committed to the provision of accessible counselling, but we cannot do this without your help. We are incredibly grateful to those of you who individually and corporately contribute financially to our work but we need



to ask for more and new support. The maths is easy: an explosion in client numbers and an increasing counselling team means higher costs. It costs us just under £30 per client to provide an hour of counselling and the average client donation doesn't even cover half of this.

Will you be our friend . . . ?

Could you help? Would you partner with us by becoming a '**Friend of Inspire**' by agreeing to give a regular gift to our Bursary Fund? This fund was established 3 years ago to bridge the gap between a client's fee and the full cost of a session. To date many clients have benefitted from the generosity of those who have signed up to this, including Jenny:

Jenny (not her real name) recently completed 19 sessions of counselling with *Inspire*, supported by our Bursary Fund. She said: *"At my first appointment I was asked to say what I could afford to pay. It wasn't much but that was ok as they said the charity could help me through its Bursary. I couldn't have afforded counselling myself but having it has helped me enormously –*

I didn't have to feel bad about not paying much and I feel like I am able to live my life again thanks to the help my counsellor gave me. One day I hope I can give back something to help other people . . ."

Your gift, no matter how small, could make a powerful difference to a client's life. Please consider how you can help us; there's a standing order form attached and we would love to hear from you. Please remember that if you are a UK taxpayer we can receive tax relief on your gift if you sign the declaration.

If you would like to discuss any finance issues or explore other ways in which you can help us please speak to our Administrator, Jane Scarlett on 01473 217694.

THANK YOU!

Thank you to those churches, individuals and organisations who support us financially on a regular basis. Please continue to support us in this way and consider increasing your giving. We cannot continue the work of *Inspire* without you and rely on your ongoing commitment to us!

Inspire Counselling & Training is in partnership with Heart for Ipswich. Heart for Ipswich is an established project aimed at enabling Christians from many Churches to work together more closely to help meet the social and spiritual needs of the people of Ipswich, and to proclaim the good news of the Gospel.



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