FORTITUDE PEER SUPPORT PRESENTED TO NZEI FORUM NOVEMBER 2017 SOWING THE SEEDS OF HOPE
WHO WE ARE

Philip Snape
• Fortitude developer, facilitator, trainer since 2009
• Peer support worker, MHAPS
• Intentional Peer Support facilitator

Fiona Clapham Howard
• Peer support service delivery manager, MHAPS
Sowing the seeds of hope in the garden of the mind
OVERVIEW

What is peer support?
Why a peer programme in Early Intervention?
Connection to a recovery approach
What is Fortitude (42ude)?
What we have delivered in 2016/2017
The process is the outcome
What we learned
Tending the seedlings
WHAT IS PEER SUPPORT?

• “Kinship of shared experience”
• Focuses on the connection or relationship, rather than tasks per se
• Explores how we make sense of our experiences
• Encourages authentic two-way relationships – mutual learning, shared responsibility
• Implication: risk and safety are defined and negotiated differently

For it to be purposeful peer support, lived experience alone is not enough – a purposeful or intentional kaupapa is required

“Thankfully I have not had too many challenging circumstances during this time but I have noticed that I anticipate difficulty before it becomes overwhelming.”
WHY A PEER PROGRAMME IN E.I.?

Reason for being – existential considerations
Crisis as opportunity
Defining the experience of psychosis in context of life stages
Erikson’s psycho-social stages – adolescence to young adulthood
Peer support can help to minimise the disruption to developing mutual connections at this key stage of life

“Hearing other people share their experiences and thoughts has helped me to learn that we are not alone in our journeys, we all share the same feeling and emotions at some stage in life.”
CONNECTION TO A RECOVERY APPROACH

“Recovery” in mental health and addictions means much more than “symptom-free”, or “functional recovery”

It means reclaiming or perhaps discovering for the first time things otherwise taken for granted in life, e.g.:

- Sense of positive self identity
- Self efficacy – direction, purpose, autonomy, self-determination
- Citizenship – a place in the world, a valid and worthwhile human being
- Connection – social belonging

“I feel happier, more useful and definitely more integrated as a person; along with work and this support group I have had the opportunity to be myself.”
WHAT IS FORTITUDE?

Whakapapa – brief history of the idea growing into a programme
Kaupapa – intentions and purposefulness
Learning and making sense since 2009
Developed into an 8-week, 16-hour programme and handbook by end of 2014

“I feel less isolated and alone.”
WHAT WE HAVE DELIVERED IN 2016/2017*

Developed a programme to train young people in recovery from psychosis as Fortitude peer facilitators

3 peers from Totara House expressed interest, and completed the 5-week training course (5x 1.5 hour sessions)

2 of the 3 went on to facilitate the Fortitude programme in 2016 and 2017

Small cohorts, and attendance not always sustained – including peer facilitators

Ongoing supervision, support, mentoring, and back-up facilitation from Philip

* with the generous support of a grant from Janssen-Cilag

“My relationships have improved overall because of this group.”
THE PROCESS IS THE OUTCOME

Revised material for 2017 programme in conjunction with the peer facilitators
Condensed from 8 weeks of 2-hr sessions, to 6 weeks of 1.5hr sessions
Bigger cohort started the programme, and more than half completed all 6 weeks
Only collected qualitative data

“Being open about yourself helps others to connect with you more.”
WHAT WE LEARNED

Points to consider when thinking about setting up a peer support programme:

• What’s the purpose? And whose purpose is it?
• Supervision/mentoring via a peer organisation (lived experience alone is not enough)
• Sustainability – not a one-man show
• Remuneration
• Sustainable, useful evaluation measures/process

“The recent Peer Support group was a real success and we have had positive feedback verbally from participants.”
Ruia nga kakano o te tumanaako i roto i te maara o te hinengaro

Sowing the seeds of hope in the garden of the mind
E tū kahikatea
Hei whakapae ururoa
Awhi mai, awhi atu
Tātou tātou e
Tātou tātou e.

Stand like the kahikatea,
spreading across the horizon.
Embrace one another, we are as one.
THAT’S IT, THAT’S ALL FOLKS!
THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

For more information, or to request a copy of the Fortitude report 2017:
reception@mhaps.org.nz
42ude@live.com