



# North Shore – Hornsby Support Groups Monthly Newsletter February 2022

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## In this new-year bumper issue

- This month's support groups (p 2)
- Tips to help your COVID recovery, and ATAGI's booster advice (p 3)
- A paid opportunity to help improve mental health services in NSW (p 3)
- NMHCCF website and psychosocial disability publication launch (p 3)
- BEING Leadership Academy courses 2022 (p 3)
- What's your 2022 plan for sustained self-care? (p 4)
- How to get the most out of your 2022 therapy sessions (p 4)
- Check it out! 5 ways to well-being (p 4)
- Why the right mental health diagnosis is lifesaving (p 4)
- Three mental health conditions often mistaken for each other (p 5)
- Food facts: Foods to help fight inflammation, and the health benefits of watermelon (p 5)
- Meet Kirk Reitelbach (p 5)
- What's on (p 6)?
- 24/7 mental health crisis helplines (p 7)
- Last word (p 7)



**Don't miss our next meeting.**

**Via zoom only**

**7.30pm Thurs 3 February**

See page 2 for details

## This month's support groups

Here are the support groups running this month. Note the new “twice-a-month every 2nd Saturday and every 4th Thursday” format for people under 35 and their families. “Under 35” means under 35 or thereabouts, and “families” means mums, dads, siblings, close family-like friends, and carers. **Newcomers are welcome** for either regular or occasional participation. Please contact [Hugh Worrall](#) for details.



### Wednesday, 2 February

#### Strong and Social Employment Support Group

7pm, 1st Wednesday of the month

Catch-up for mutual support (focused on lived experience employment)

<https://onedoor-org-au.zoom.us/j/93081840849>



### Thursday, 3 February

**North Shore Support Group** — 7.30pm, 1st Thursday of the month

Catch-up for mutual support

<https://onedoor-org-au.zoom.us/j/97417130869?pwd=Qi9nYW9xTi94UFdSUW9SaEVuWkJiZz09>



### Tuesday, 8 February

**Strong and Social Support Group** — 7pm, 2nd Tuesday of the month

Catch-up for mutual support (focused on lived experience)

<https://onedoor-org-au.zoom.us/j/828385372>



### Saturday, 12 February

**Under 35s and their Families** — 10.30am, 2nd Saturday of the month

Café catch-up for mutual support and planning social events

Please email [Hugh Worrall](#) for more information



### Wednesday, 22 December

**Strong and Social Support Group** — 7pm, 4th Wednesday of the month

Catch-up for mutual support (focused on lived experience)

<https://onedoor-org-au.zoom.us/j/97877157044>



### Thursday, 24 February

**Under 35s and their Families** — 10.30am, 4th Thursday of the month

Café catch-up for mutual support and planning social events

Please email [Hugh Worrall](#) for more information

## Tips to help your COVID recovery, and ATAGI's booster advice

Managing your physical and mental health with a COVID infection can be challenging. [Here's SANE Australia's tips](#) to help you get through your home recovery, and [here's an ABC News article](#) clarifying ATAGI's booster advice for people who have recovered.

## A paid opportunity to help improve mental health services in NSW

Are you a person living with a mental health condition? Are you a consumer of NSW's public mental health services? Are you interested in being an advocate for other consumers like you? Do you want to help improve public mental health services in NSW? Would you like to earn money while you're doing it?

If so, apply to become a member of the NSW Mental Health Consumer Subcommittee. People with diverse backgrounds (including people with a disability) are encouraged to apply. The successful applicant will receive training. [Click here](#) to learn more about the role and how to apply. **Don't delay — the opportunity to apply closes soon.**

## NMHCCF website and psychosocial disability publication launch

A national voice for both mental health consumers and carers, the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum (NMHCCF) listens, learns, influences, and advocates for mental health reform. The NMHCCF is inviting you to the official launch of its new website and publication about psychosocial disability. The launch is an opportunity to learn more about the NMHCCF's work, to hear NMHCCF members' perspectives on psychosocial disability and the current reform agendas, and to put your questions to a panel of lived experience experts.

The launch takes place on **21 February 2022** between 2pm and 3pm. If you'd like to participate, [register here](#).

## BEING Leadership Academy courses 2022

The [BEING Leadership Academy](#) offers short courses and workshops designed to enhance knowledge, build skills, and open educational pathways for people living with mental health conditions. Skilled and experienced peer educators deliver the programs either in-person and online. [Click here](#) to view the Academy's 2022 courses and workshops and enrol.

### Refresh your skills and confidence

Interested in the paid opportunity to help improve mental health services in NSW (above)? Take a look at the [BEING Leadership Academy courses](#) on communication, advocacy, and committee work.

## What's your 2022 plan for sustained self-care?

A lack of time is one of the main factors preventing carers from undertaking sustained self-care. From young working parents juggling childrearing and home learning, to frontline medical staff grappling with the demands and challenges of caring for others, to the full-time home-based carers of the severely ill or disabled, many carers struggle to find regular time to look after their own physical, mental, and emotional health.

A good starting point for time-poor carers to put in place a practical plan for sustained self-care is to identify your most important self-care needs. With these needs clear in your mind, you can then confidently introduce a number of small changes to your existing routine that will help you meet your self-care needs.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the value of sustained self-care and to access the Black Dog Institute's template for developing a personal self-care plan. And [click here](#) to find more practical guidance about how to start a self-care routine you'll stick with all year.

## How to get the most out of your 2022 therapy sessions

Showing up to therapy is just the first step. Here are [10 tips](#) to help you get the most out of your therapy sessions.

## Why the right mental health diagnosis is lifesaving

Many people diagnosed with a complex mental health condition receive more than one diagnosis between the first onset of illness and steady and sustained recovery. [In this November 2021 Everyday Health article](#), one woman says she received several

## CHECK IT OUT!

### 5 Ways to Wellbeing

#### [5 Ways to Wellbeing](#)

introduces you to five simple and effective ways to improve your psychological and emotional health.

You'll find practical tools and resources to make the "5 ways" part of your ways to wellbeing. For example, you'll learn:

- what's important to you with the "5 Ways" Quiz
- about the benefits of improving your wellbeing
- how to reduce stress
- how to do the "5 Ways" at home, work, or study.

[Check it out!](#)

misdiagnoses over the course of 15 years before being correctly diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Another says she spent 25 years taking psychiatric medications she didn't need.

## Three mental health conditions often mistaken for each other

Three complex mental health conditions often mistaken for each other are mania with psychosis, schizophrenia, and schizoaffective-disorder-bipolar-type. [In this January 2022 Psychiatric Times article](#), psychiatrist Dr David Osser sets out the current DSM diagnostic criteria for each of the conditions and explains why more people are diagnosed with schizophrenia using DSM-5. He also talks about the treatment plans for each conditions. Dr Osser has written the article for clinicians and there's a smattering of technical language. Nonetheless, the article illustrates how, without sufficient information or attention, misdiagnoses can easily occur.

## Food facts: Foods to help fight inflammation, and the health benefits of watermelon

Even low levels of inflammation in your body can lead to disease over time. Peppers (ie capsicums), dark chocolate, fish, and extra virgin olive oil are just a few everyday foods that can help reduce inflammation. [Here's some more.](#)

Who doesn't love a crisp wedge of mouth-watering watermelon? Sweet, juicy, and thirst-quenching. And an evocative feature of summer BBQ's, picnics, and hot sunny days. But despite its general appeal, watermelon's many significant health benefits are under-appreciated. [Read here](#) to learn how every low-calorie slice of is a source of vitamins, minerals, and other protective properties.

## Meet Kirk Reitelbach

Each month the [CURESZ Foundation](#) highlights stories of individuals who have overcome schizophrenia and are thriving personally and professionally. In our February 2022 newsletter, we feature [Kirk Reitelbach](#).

After a happy childhood and excelling at high school, Kirk starting using marijuana and experimenting with LSD during his first year of college. Within a couple of years, Kirk's life featured alcohol and drug abuse. He lost his friends, dropped out of college, and returned home to live with his parents. He was 20 years of age.

Two years later, Kirk had his first psychotic episode. Even though he started treatment with a psychiatrist, the psychosis continued. Fortunately, Kirk's mother convinced him to

stop using alcohol and drugs completely. Over the next decade, they moved from place to place trying to find an effective treatment for Kirk's psychosis.

In his mid-30's, Kirk started taking clozapine for the first time. After a few months, his symptoms decreased and he felt better mentally and physically. After another few months, he felt he was a new person. After 15 years of being unwell, Kirk's recovery journey had finally begun.

Kirk's core message to others struggling to get well is simply to never give up. In his words:

*It's possible to recover from a major mental illness and have a happy and fulfilling life. I am living proof! Never give up, and keep trying various treatments until you have reached the highest level of recovery possible.*

## What's on?



**For community events,  
please see the February edition of the Uniting Family and Carer  
Mental Health Program Newsletter (emailed to you with this newsletter).**

## 24/7 mental health crisis helplines

<b>Emergency: Police and Ambulance</b>	<b>000</b>	When you need an <b>emergency response</b> from the police or ambulance because someone is at risk of death or serious harm.
<b>Mental Health Line</b>	<b>1800 011 511</b>	When you need <b>advice and guidance</b> from a mental health professional or a referral to a local mental health service.
<b>Suicide Call-Back Service</b>	<b>1300 659 467</b>	When you need <b>crisis counselling</b> because you or someone you care for or care about is at risk of suicide, or you are bereaved or personally affected by suicide.
<b>Post-Suicide Support</b>	<b>1300 727 247</b>	When you need support because you are bereaved or personally affected by suicide.
<b>Lifeline Crisis Support</b>	<b>13 11 14</b>	When you need <b>crisis counselling</b> because you are feeling overwhelmed, struggling to cope, or experiencing distress.
<b>Lifeline Crisis Text</b>	<b>0477 131 114</b>	When you need <b>crisis support</b> via SMS technology.
<b>1800 Respect</b>	<b>1800 737 732</b>	When the matter concerns <b>sexual assault or domestic violence</b> but is not an emergency. If it is an emergency, call 000.
<b>Kids Helpline</b>	<b>1800 551 800</b>	When you are a young person aged 5 to 25 and need to talk to a professional counsellor about anything troubling you.

## Last word



*Let all your activity be directed to some object, let it have some end in view.*

— Seneca, Roman Stoic philosopher