

TOOLS AND METHODS

Peer Support & Self-help

The Netherlands 2021



TOOL'S SUMMARY

Tool/method name	Peer Support & Self-help
Tool/method summary description	School of life: Recovery based mutual learning in a school-like environment. Group activities for people who have lived experiences with mental health challenges. Peer to peer contact & support.
Country observed	The Netherlands
Year observed	2021
Programme area	Social inclusion
Tool type	We use a variety of tools: (evidence based) self-help programmes, icebreakers, support documents, facilitating peer support and mutual learning.
Specific topic	(mental) health, isolation, empowerment, equality, meaning, general wellbeing, grief & loss, addiction.
Beneficiaries of tool:	Everyone who want to work with their wellbeing.
Can this tool be applied to other beneficiaries: yes/no	Yes
What type of beneficiaries: ALL, or specific ones?	Specific
If specific ones, which?	Adults (18+) with mental/life challenges and social exclusion. People who are in any way interested in learning about and working on their own wellbeing.

Method full description

History

Traditional mental health care (MHC) in the Netherlands was treatment based. People with mental health disorders would often be excluded from society and live in secluded areas in group homes. A change was necessary. User involvement and recovery-oriented care was introduced. Recovery meaning: a process that leads to a meaningful life. It does not mean people are “symptom free” or “cured”.

Peer support has been a helpful tool to this process.

People would start living and being a part of society slowly but surely changing how we look at and treat people with mental health disorders. Peer to peer contact is often a way to acknowledge and validate people's experiences. This makes way for new perspectives on life. Peer to peer contact can be inspiring. It can bring hope and connection to people who would oftentimes feel hopeless and excluded.

Peer support

Peer support as a method is a value driven way of working. By having values to reflect on, it asks us to look at ourselves as human beings and peers. Within Enik recovery college we reflect on the values: Equality, reciprocity, empowerment, hope and connection.

Everyone who works at Enik is also a peer: we all have lived experiences with mental health challenges / disruption. Facilitating peer support means we are a part of the group as equals we do not control or teach; we facilitate self-help.

Lister

Lister is a “protected living facility” that offers guidance and care to people with mental health disorders. They have embraced recovery-based care and Enik was created in cooperation with Lister: they are the umbrella organization for Enik.

Enik

Enik came about when the “recovery bureau” was growing and changing. Peer support in a wider context: for people who did not have a history in psychiatry but would still benefit from peer support and self-help. The self-help program would evolve and include many aspects for people willing to work in their personal wellbeing.

Could it be used in other contexts? If yes, which ones?

Peer to peer contact & support can be useful in many fields:

Migration, active citizenship, the elderly, and youth work.

What is innovative about this method or tool?

Peer support takes place in an educational environment (school-like setting). It is run by 100% peers: no interference of (mental health) professionals, it's free of charge, no requirements of the participants, our retreats: A week-long programme of self-help/peer support including spending the night and having meals at Enik. A “social meeting point” where people can meet and have lunch.

We co-create our program meaning: participants get the opportunity to create and facilitate peer support programs on themes that they feel connected with.

Detailed Methodology

Elements of WRAP (wellness recovery action plan) & HOP (Honest, Open, Proud)

Other general groups but mostly during a structured series of workshops, where the mutual learning process is facilitated. Peer to peer contact in a group form.

Peer values: they are the focus of our work, constantly reflecting and adjusting.

People share their experiences and own stories to help and support empowering each other in a safe place. Collectively they build a solidarity net and form meaningful connections. The learning environment is one of non-formal and informal education. Learning is based on the concept of mutual learning where people learn from each other rather than from trainers. It is recognized and valued that people are experts about themselves and can inspire each other to use and explore that expertise. The trainers facilitate this process. Next to the learning process there is a strong focus on meeting each other in an environment that promotes empowerment and the message we are all equal value.

Specific advice for staff/volunteers/adult educators:

- No Judgment, everyone is welcome to participate, no exclusion.
- Try to create opportunities to include everyone.
- Don't be afraid to show yourself and what life has taught you. It's a great way to connect with people and it strengthens the feeling of equality.
- We work from a "value driven" vision meaning we have 5 values (equality, reciprocity, hope, empowerment & connection) that we are constantly reflecting on during our work.

For more resources and information

Enik Recovery College

www.enikrecoverycollege.nl <https://www.enikrecoverycollege.nl/about/> and more info below.

A short clip of Enik with english subtitles:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gbbb7WUnEC8&t=4s>

Testimonies from Lister's participants in the IFSJ Study Vists

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_cQghG7QMM

Contact Person



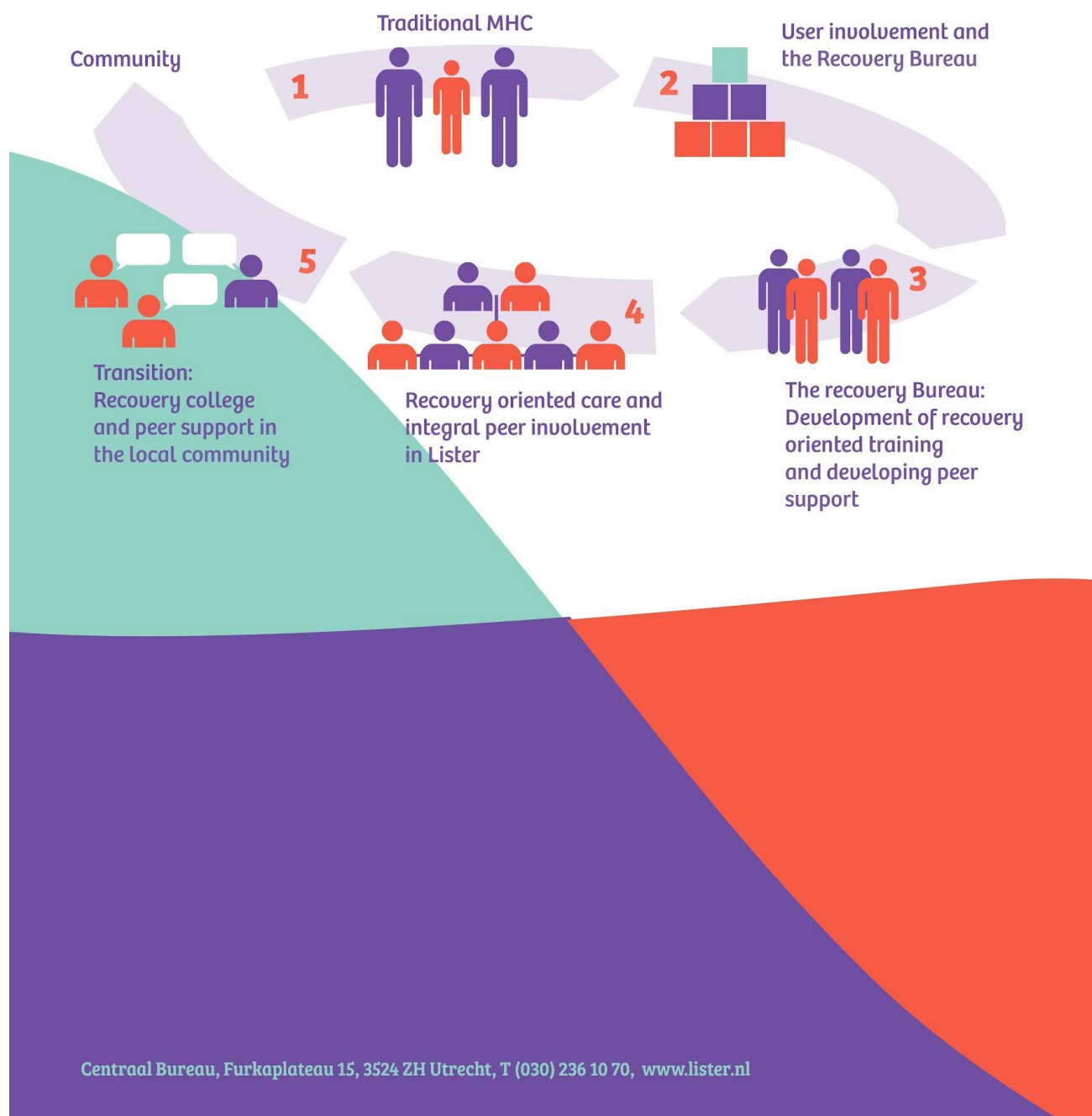
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Lister in transition

The new reality of the Recovery College



Enik

First Dutch recovery college

Enik wordt 100% gerund door peers • 100%

Meaning
Hope
Opportunities
Power



Buildingbloks: peersupport, self-help and participation



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A community based Recovery College



Enik Recovery College

Mental resilience through Peer support

Enik is 100% run
by peers • 100%



Peer Support

Enik Recovery College is a learning environment and meeting point for mental health recovery. Enik is 100% run by peers. This means that everyone at Enik shares similar lived experiences.

All who struggle with disruption caused by a mental health disorder or addiction are welcome to find peer support and inspiration to strengthen their mental resilience.



Our locations (Utrecht City and surrounding regions)



We at Enik strongly believe in the power of peer support and sharing knowledge and strategies for coping and wellbeing. Our peer support is based on equivalence, hope, meaning and strength.

Equivalence
Hope
Strength
Meaning

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