

## STEPPING STONES



**‘EVERY STEP IS A JOURNEY AND A JOURNEY HAS MANY STEPS’**

### **AIMS**

Stepping Stones is a women’s peer group created and designed by women to provide a space for women with shared experience.

The group often expresses itself in creative ways and there are a range of creative materials available to provide an environment which supports and encourages expression, discussion and self- exploration in a relaxed way.

The group welcomes women 16 years and over who have experienced abuse in any form and who are seeking a supportive and understanding space.

### **GROUP TIMES**

The group takes place weekly each Wednesday and runs from 10.30 to 12.30pm.

### **GROUP VENUE**

The group is held at My Sisters Place at 123 Borough Road, Middlesbrough, TS1 3AN.

Contact number: - My Sisters Place – 01642 241864

Contact Name:- Ejaye Moran

### **WHAT THE GROUP WANTS**

The group agreed that some of its needs from My Sisters Place were to:

- Provide a suitable space that is physically safe for the group to meet.
- Provide an emotionally safe environment for the group and provide support to group members if needed.
- Provide a member of staff to attend the group and be consulted with and provide guidance for the group when needed and to inform the group of any times when this is not possible.
- To provide, at the group’s request, speakers, outside organisations or people that can offer information, workshops on different topics that the group request.
- Provide opportunities for the group to discuss suggestions and agree future events.
- Provide resources for the group to use.

#### THE GROUP ALSO WANT:

- Education around mental health.
- To use creative activities within the group to explore and share experiences.
- Have games available to play.
- To develop quizzes for the group to play.
- To have refreshments on hand.
- To have the option to consider activities outside of my sisters place if the group found something that would be useful – but would adhere to My Sisters Place’s policies and procedures and any limitations around this.
- A suggestion box – open to all group members contribute to.
- To have regular relaxation sessions.
- To learn different ways to meditate.

#### ROLES IN THE GROUP

There was general agreement in the group that there were some roles which no member of the group should adopt and that group members should be signposted to other support if they required further support. The group wanted to exclude the roles of:

- a counsellor
- a support worker
- a befriender

There was also consensus in the group that there would be shared roles which could be agreed and assigned on a rotating basis within the group, but this would be a voluntary process. Shared roles involved:

- arranging the room
- welcoming members
- planning future sessions, including content

The group take joint peer responsibility for facilitation of the group at each session.



### STEPPING STONES GOODWILL AGREEMENT

For Stepping Stones to create the environment that meets its aims and to create a safe, confidential and supportive space to everyone that attends Stepping Stones founding members have designed a Good Will Agreement that current and future members agree to whilst attending Stepping Stones. All members agree to offer the following to each other:

- Accepting and non-judgemental attitudes towards each other at all times.
- That what is discussed within the group is not talked about outside of the group.
- If contact is made outside of the group, group members should not disclose to non-group members how or where they know the member from.
- Respect that some members may not want contact outside of stepping stones group.
- To act as individuals within the group, even if there are contacts outside of the group, familiarity with each other outside of stepping stones will not be brought into the group.
- That no member should be made to feel excluded or not included with group discussions unless the individual group member has expressed that they do not want to contribute or be included.
- To be mindful and respectful of difference at all times and provide an inclusive environment irrespective of ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability or life choice.
- Not to talk over each other or interrupt if a group member is sharing something within the group.
- Agree to have all mobile phones on silent and or vibrate.
- Group members will always be mindful of the language and tone they use in the group.
- If a group member inadvertently offends another group member they should demonstrate a willingness to resolve the issue and apologise.
- To follow all My Sisters Place's health and safety procedures whilst attending the group at My Sisters Place offices.
- Encourage the contribution of ideas, thoughts as the group progresses.
- Be mindful of possible impacts on other group members regarding content shared with the group.
- Members should be aware not to make assumptions based purely on their own experience and assume other members hold the same views.
- Members to be aware of their own views and opinions and that others may have different views and opinions.
- Respect other group members' boundaries both physically, emotionally and culturally.
- Members have the option to leave the group at any time without explanation.
- Members are able to step out of the group and re-join the group if they need to take a self-care break.

