

# OASIS RECOVERY NEWS AND VIEWS (ORNV)

Content and Photographs by Oasis Service users.



Trigger Warning - This edition discusses topics such as relapsing and addiction

Hello and welcome to our Oasis Recovery News and Views. In this Edition we're concentrating on Peer support, how important is it that we give and receive support and encouragement.

Can recovery be done totally alone, or do we need each other? I speak for myself when I say that I most certainly couldn't recover without the support I receive from my friends, and my group and anyone else that's prepared to listen.



So, it's not long until Christmas, which can be a wonderful, or wicked time of year. Not all of us celebrate Christmas, but even when you don't, it can have an effect on our lives - especially as people recovering from addiction. It can be a lively or lonely time of year, hopefully we can try and help you to get through it safely and soberly. We hope so, that's why we're here.

Should anyone wish to get involved with the writing of ORNV, we would welcome any input from you.

I would like to thank the staff of Oasis Project for their help and support in the production of this, and my peers for putting in the work, and helping to keep this going.

We wish you all a very Happy healthy Christmas and New Year, be safe, be silly and be careful.

## This Issue Focuses on Peer Support

Our Peer Support Group

What is Peer Support

Ways in which peer support helped me.

Positive affirmations from your peers

A personal story on peer support

Christmas and the New Year 2022 - 2023

Free things to do around Christmas in Brighton

Safety around Christmas



Relapsing



## Our Peer Support Group

### Peer Support Group



Monday's 12:30pm - 2pm

11 Richmond Place

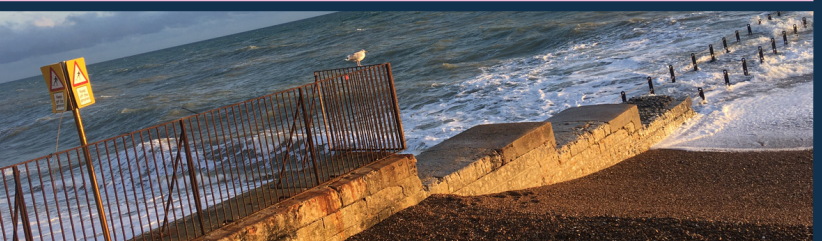


**An informal and friendly group**

**COME AND JOIN US**

**A safe non judgemental place for women to share.**

"Through sharing and listening with our peers, we can find that we feel supported and understood."



Hello ladies, we now have a peer support group running at oasis. It is completely peer led and a safe space for you to come and share or even not share maybe just listen, we do some CBT exercises and offer support to one another with no judgements.

Open to all services users of oasis, led by women in recovery who have been through oasis ourselves. Sometimes it just helps to know we are not alone and no matter where you are on your journey we can all learn and relate to one another.

Hope to see you there!

### Oasis Christmas Opening Hours

Mon 21 – Fri 23 December – 9am-5pm

Monday 26 December – CLOSED

Tuesday 27 December – CLOSED

Wednesday 28 December – 9am-5pm

Thursday 29 December – 9am-5pm

Friday 30 December – 9am-5pm

Monday 2 January – CLOSED

Tuesday 3 Jan onwards – 9am-5pm

Creche & Morley Street

Wed 28th December - OPEN

29th and 30th December - CLOSED





## What is peer support?

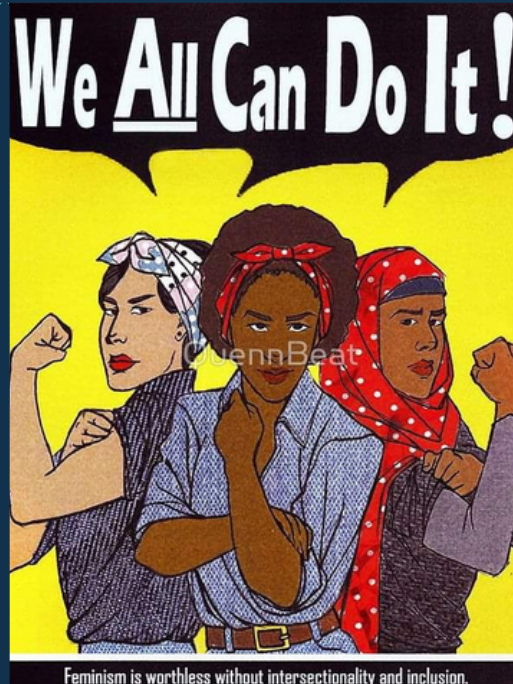
Your Peers are your equals who are working towards a common goal. In our case of course it's recovery from addiction. The idea of Peer support is to be able to relate to people with the same or similar issues as yourself. Through sharing and listening with our peers we can find that we feel supported and understood. Within addiction recovery it's so important to feel included, part of a positive recovery group. We can find a common bond and feel less isolated, isn't it good when you think "phew; it's not just me who's done that then!"

Everyone is different, but everyone's experience is equally important, no one is more of an expert than anyone else.

Peer Support can improve your self-esteem, your confidence, and mental wellbeing. When we share an experience, or a situation, we are actually helping another member of the group. With respect, non-judgement, and a few group rules we can find mutual support. That's priceless and a gift we can all afford to give.

## Ways in which peer support has helped me

- Speaking with others who understand what you're going through – different to speaking to people I'm normally around
- Someone else to call for support
- Learning from them- and things that have helped them in recovery
- There's no judgement, I feel I can be honest and open with them about anything



- Human connection
- To not feel alone and to know I am not the only one - others have been in the same place I am
- Hope
- Helped me to have empathy for others and myself and not sympathy which has helped me to see myself in a new light
- Given me purpose to attend groups and to connect emotionally with people



## Positive Affirmation From Your Peers

You're worth it

You're worth taking care of

You're doing amazing

Fall down and bounce back up again

Be patient and love yourself as you heal

Don't try to be perfect

Recover and Discover

I am my higher power

Don't Drink - Think

Recovery can be fun

Love yourself - Love Life

love the you within

Whine no Wine

It's never too late to make a new start

You've got this

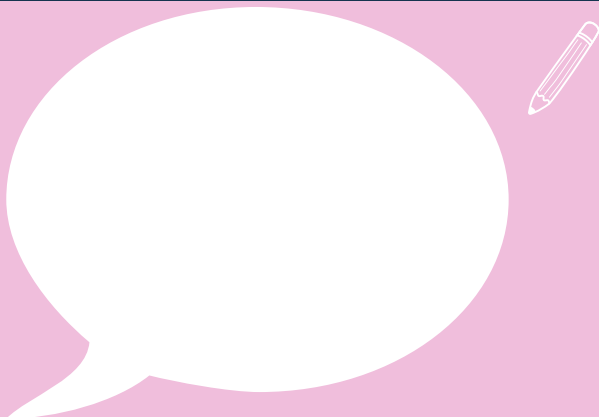
It's never too late to make a new start

If not now, when?

It's all temporary

Be kind to yourself

Write your own positive affirmation for yourself and your peers



“  
Find a group of people who challenge and inspire you, spend a lot of time with them, and it will change your life.”

Amy Poehler



## Peer Support has helped my recovery in many ways...

The most prominent way stopping me feeling alone and having people who get it and have been where I have been. Outside of my family everyone I knew or had any connection to either used or was in the drug world. Peer support helped me to connect to others in a healthy way.

To begin with it came through relationships I built with professionals, Social Worker, Key Worker, Rehab, Oasis, Counsellor all of which helped me to open up and trust (a little) but this built up more and more over time.

Then moving onto trusting and respecting other women and peers.

This was the hardest for me given my history with women and friendship not being good. Learning I was not alone in my thoughts and feeling towards others and in my recovery helped me to change my thinking and to truly not judge and to believe I'm not being judged myself. This allowed me to support, listen even befriend and understand people (my peers) instead.

Saying this doesn't mean to say I have to like everyone or what they say or that I never have any issues; but it does mean I am not against anyone, it's not a battle anymore. I am open to anyone and willing to give them a chance and I am not afraid of people giving me a chance.

For the first time in years, I actually want to stay connected to my recovery and give back to help others, because of how I now feel about myself and how strong I feel in my recovery, which has a lot to do with how I was helped by others.

Everyone deserves this chance. In the past I was always itching to get away from all things recovery but still not use (which never lasted), but now I want to stay connected, to help others and for us to learn from each other and take strength and hope from one another. This is what helps me keep my recovery strong.

other women are not  
my competition.  
I stand with them.  
not against them



**'I want to stay connected, to help others and for us to learn from each other and take strength and hope from one another.'**



It can feel quite isolating over the holiday period, especially at Christmas and New Year; when it feels like the whole world is partying apart from you! Of course, this is a myth, not everyone is drinking and having a great time, in fact - a lot of people are getting out of their mind because they're not having a good time. There is so much pressure on us to be 'Happy' and party's and family gatherings can put us under a lot of pressure to use or drink.

We thought it may be helpful to share some coping skills for such times.

1. Know that you can excuse yourself from any situation.
2. Your recovery is paramount, no one and nothing is worth risking it for.
3. Call someone who really knows your recovery, a friend, someone else in recovery.
4. Take 'time out'. Go somewhere else, collect your thoughts, meditate.
5. HALT is a useful tool, are you hungry? Angry, Lonely, Tired. If you are, take care of your needs.
6. You are the most important person in your life and your needs come first.
7. Reason with yourself, is what you are feeling worth risking your recovery for?
8. NO is a very hard word to say at times, it's such a powerful word and does not need any accompanying reply. Just know NO is enough.
9. Know your worth, give yourself some positive affirmations.
10. Christmas is temporary and will pass, your recovery will continue.

**WE'RE STRONGER  
TOGETHER AS A  
TEAM .**



Free things to do at Xmas in  
Brighton

Burning of the clocks 21st December  
 Artist open houses 26th November – 11th  
 December  
 Brighton Christmas festival – 18th November –  
 Xmas eve  
 Brighton and Hove buses - Santa bus trail -  
 Until 22nd December  
 The snowman Exhibition at the Royal Pavillion





## Safety around Christmas events

Christmas time is meant to be the best most joyful year for a lot of people, but it can also be a very hard time for anyone - especially someone in recovery. If you're choosing to go out around Christmas - could be with your friends / family / work colleagues etc. Here's a few things to think about before going out

- Having someone there with you who knows about your recovery- who you can go to if needed
  - Having an exit plan- if things get a bit much leave!
- Be mindful of potential triggers and if there's anything putting you at more risk of using



## Relapsing

I've relapsed a few times in my recovery, each time I found them very difficult to overcome. The last relapse I had I fell back into denial; I didn't see it as a relapse I'd call them 'slip ups' and even when I got back to drinking daily, I still didn't see it as I wasn't as bad as I'd been in the past.

The things around me seemed to be going well and everyone around me thought I was doing well so I just went along with that. Really, I felt false and that

I'd failed. Coming out of this I had to admit to myself I'd relapsed and remind myself of reality that when it comes to drinking it's all or nothing with me.

I went back to the basics focusing on the things that I knew helped me. eating/sleeping properly, exercise, attending meetings. Being around my peers at oasis helped me massively, being able to speak with people who understand and being inspired at how far they had come and where I want to get too. I'm now coming up to 10 weeks sober and I'm in a better place I have been for a long, long time. I'm doing positive work around my recovery and learning/growing every day.



## Coping Skills for Xmas

- KEEPING TO "ROUTINE"
- SAYING NO TO ALCOHOL - MAKE STATEMENTS TO FRIENDS & FAMILY "I DON'T DRINK!"
- MAKE IT CLEAR TO FRIENDS & FAMILY About boundaries around DRINK - SAFEGUARD, TELL them in advance about your recovery & what it means so they can be supportive.
- MAKE AN EXIT PLAN - ~~prepare~~ Inform family member / EXIT CARD (excuse to get out.)
- Just leave if Don't feel comfortable -
- **WARNING SIGNS** - CRAVING / EMOTIONAL / ANGER / NOT ENJOYING THE ENVIRONMENT.
- **FIND Things to comfort** Yourself again - FOOD / REST / QUIET TIME / BE CREATIVE / WATCH A MOVIE /
- TAKE CONTROL - The choice & Growth in Your recovery IS Yours! "YOU GOT THIS!!!"
- DON'T MEET needs of OTHERS - Prioritise Your Life.
- BE PRESENT - TAKE ONE DAY AT A TIME.
- EMBRACE CHRISTMAS IN A POSITIVE MINDSET.
- Remember the escalation of Thinking about one DRINK or having one.

...celebrating, partying, and spending. So, January, whether by choice or necessity, is time to 'rein it in' as there is less cash to spare.

Some people may take a month off and give the money they save to charity. Some may see how it affects the way they feel, their routine, their lifestyle. All these seem fine BUT... some people may decide to do the month and ONLY the month. They could end up drinking MORE after the initial dry month than they were before. Or they could become more affected after a smaller amount, making them vulnerable. There are people who want to take the month off but end up having dangerous withdrawal effects.

If you're thinking of taking part, ask yourself a few questions:

What are your reasons?

What do you plan to do after the month?

What outcome are you hoping for?

If you decide to take part, make sure you do so safely.

## Dry January

"Dry January is the UK's one-month alcohol-free challenge. It isn't about giving anything up. It's about getting something back. Get your fun back. Get your energy back. Get your calm back."

The first dry January was held in 2013, with 4000 people taking part. In 2022 the number had risen to over 130,000 people.

But is it a good thing or a bad thing? What are the reasons for it? Overindulgence over the winter holidays? Too much eating, drinking....

# THANKYOU

To Oasis Service users who contributed to this issue.  
And thank you to YOU for reading!

If you would like to contribute anonymously to the next issue, speak with your care coordinator or add your input into our suggestions box at no. 11.

If you would like support from Oasis Project with alcohol or drug use please call 01273 696970 or make a referral via our website [www.oasisproject.org.uk](http://www.oasisproject.org.uk)



# Peer Support External Resources

“Peer support is when people use their own experiences to help each other.”

Here are some organisations outside of Oasis you may find useful during this festive period.

## Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)

For men and women with the desire to stop drinking alcohol. AA hold meetings online and in person. Online meetings are held every day, all over the world. AA use the 12-step system.

<http://aa.org/>

## Cocaine Anonymous (CA)

For men and women with the desire to stop using cocaine and other mind-altering substances. CA hold meetings online and in person. CA also use the 12-step system.

[www.cocaineanonymous.org.uk](http://www.cocaineanonymous.org.uk)

Call 0800 612 0225

## Narcotics Anonymous (NA)

For men and women with the desire to stop using drugs. NA hold meetings online and in person. NA also use the 12-step system.

<http://ukna.org/>

Helpline (10am – midnight) 0300 999 1212

## Change Grow Live (CGL)

CGL Recovery Service – provide a variety of groups. The main peer led group is called Speakeasy, held Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. They also provide Speak out LGBTQ+ on Thursdays.

<http://changegrowlive.org/>

01273 731900

## Cascades Creative Recovery

Cascade Creative Recovery is a community based, peer-led charity whose mission is to empower people to find and sustain recovery from substance misuse.

<http://cascadecreativerecovery.com/>

A variety of groups held at:

Cascade Creative Recovery,  
Brighthelm Centre,  
North Road  
BN1 1YD