

THE EATING ISSUES CENTRE (TEIC).

Mentoring for Recovery and Life Beyond Eating Issues...

Peer Mentor Project (PMP) Aims

- Reduce social isolation and increase hope in the possibility of recovery for people with eating issues
- Provide links to a range of community connections for people in various stages of recovery
- To lead and enhance supportive recovery options for people recovering from eating issues and beyond



Predicted Outcomes

- Increased community connection for people living with and recovering from EI
- Access to a support person outside of professional treatment team
- Social contact with a person/people who have recovered from eating issues
- Contact with a supportive community of people who understand the EI over an extended time period
- Trained mentors will have the opportunity to be matched with a suitable mentee
- Mentors will be given the opportunity to provide feedback on the training

Why Mentor?

- The average time taken to recover from eating issues can vary from months to years
- People require a variety of support to recover from an eating issue
- Current services are stretched to capacity and the costs of providing the range of support needed is often greater than the capacity of most individuals and families
- People who experience eating issues naturally seek support from their peers.
- People who have recovered from an eating issue know better than anyone how difficult it can be to fully recover and can provide tangible hope and reassurance that recovery is possible.
- Mentoring gives something to both persons involved. While the mentee is provided with a caring, experienced and understanding person to talk to, the mentor is given the chance to share their experience, and support someone going through the same ordeal they may have experienced. The mentor themselves may even find encouragement for furthering their own recovery through the relationship. For both people, a supportive, safe and pro-recovery community is available where the journey is shared, as are both person's challenges and accomplishments.

How will I know if I am eligible?

- ✓ Do you have a lived experience of eating issues?
- ✓ Are you aged 18 or over?
- ✓ Are you in recovery? *
- ✓ Do you have or are eligible for a blue card?
- ✓ Do you have an interest in or experience in mentoring?
- ✓ Do you have the capacity to make a 6 month commitment to the program
- ✓ Are you willing to participate in the research and give feedback to this project?
- ✓ Do you have a counsellor/therapist/support network of your own?

*Participants need to be currently well and have a minimum of 12 months predominantly free of eating disorders thoughts and behaviours.

You may also identify as:

- Having experienced body image, exercise and eating issues
- Having participated in an Eating Issues Centre support group and/or accessed Isis counselling services in the past.*

For all enquiries please visit www.eatingissuescentre.org.au or email info@eatingissuescentre.org.au

THE EATING ISSUES CENTRE (TEIC).

You will be ineligible for this program if you :

- Have current drug or alcohol issues
- Currently engage in any self-harming behaviours and have had any recent suicide attempts.
- Are currently accessing The Eating Issues Centre services for therapeutic support*

*Note: The Eating Issues Centre reserves the right to discretion when assessing readiness for the mentor program. Applications from people accessing The Eating Issues Centre sessional counselling or other support programs at the time of application who identify as being in recovery and utilising support as part of their recovery maintenance and ongoing personal development will need to speak to their Eating Issues Centre worker about boundaries of privacy and confidentiality.

Process for Mentor Application and Matching

Step 1 – Read through the Program Outline

Step 2 – Fill in a Mentor Application Form and send to The Eating Issues Centre

Step 3 – If you have not heard back from an Eating Issues Centre worker in 2 weeks contact The Eating Issues Centre again by phone or email.

Step 4 – Complete The Eating Issues Centre Mentor Training.

Step 5 – If you are still interested in becoming a mentor – your details will be held on The Eating Issues Centre Mentor register and you will be contacted when a suitable mentee becomes available.

Mentees Eligibility Criteria

If you are considering applying to be matched with a Mentor, please consider whether you meet the following criteria:

- Aged 18 or over
- Have read program information have a basic understanding of how the program works
- Have an eating issue and are ready to make a commitment to recovery
- Have the capacity to make a 6 month commitment to a mentoring relationship
- Ideally you will have a current support team (e.g. counsellor/therapist/GP/nutritionist/dietician)
- Are able to get a letter of support from your current (or past) therapist/counsellor stating that they support your application.

Process for Mentee Application and Matching

Step 1 – Read through the Program Outline

Step 2 – Fill in a Mentee Application Form and send to The Eating Issues Centre

Step 3 – If you have not heard back from an Eating Issues Centre worker in 2 weeks contact The Eating Issues Centre again by phone or email.

Step 4 - An Intake Interview with an Eating Issues Centre worker

Mentors and mentees will have some capacity to influence who they are matched with by sharing an introductory paragraph about themselves and their preferences. For mentees this is part of their application and for mentors it will be completed after their training. All matching will be based on this introductory paragraph and mentees will be invited to rank their choice of mentor from their paragraph. The final match will be made by The Eating Issues Centre based on the information supplied by participants as to their preferences.

THE EATING ISSUES CENTRE (TEIC).

FAQs

What is involved in the Mentor Training?

Evening or Half Day Session (3 hours) Introduction to Mentoring

Full Day Session (7.5 hours) Mentoring Skills Development

Evening or half day Session (3 hours) Meal Support (Usually a 1-2 weeks after the Meet & Greet)

Following the training all mentors will be linked with a senior mentor who has also completed the mentor program. There will be an opportunity to join a private Facebook group and to participate in peer group forums. Mentors will also have several opportunities to connect socially throughout the 6 month program.

How often will I meet with my mentor/mentee?

It is recommended that you have contact weekly to fortnightly and while face to face contact is preferred it is also possible to utilise other mediums such as phone, email and MSN between face to face contact. Both Mentors & Mentees will also meet as a group 3 times throughout the 6 month program.

The initial **Meet & Greet** will be an opportunity to meet your mentee/mentor and to meet your cohort.

Once you have met your mentor/mentee you will have the opportunity to complete a **Contact Agreement** outlining the type, location and frequency of contact.

The **Mid Point Review** will be an opportunity to consider achievements and explore any challenges arising.

And the **Final Celebration** a chance to reflect on the program and the journey of the past 6 months.

What is the evidence for this program?

The design and structure of the PMP is based on best practice national and international standards from other mentoring programs. As with any new program The Eating Issues Centre will continue to evaluate program data with a view to making an ongoing contribution to the evidence base by sharing the evidence collected during the program on how mentoring can assist people with eating issues.

Will I need to stop other forms of therapy?

No. This program is not designed to replace therapeutic support but to offer an additional support for people between contact with professional medical and mental health support. Initial data collected showed those people who participated in other forms of support such as individual and group therapy had better outcomes than those who had fewer support options.

What if I have other needs that can't be met through the mentor program?

This program is not intended to meet every need of each person living with eating issues, but rather offers a unique opportunity to develop a supportive relationship that can be found through contact with someone who has lived through EI's and experienced recovery. The mentor is not an expert on recovery and will not tell you what to do, but may be able to share some of what has worked for them in similar situations. The mentor /mentee relationship is intended to be limited to 6 months, if both parties wish to extend the relationship beyond this time period this will be a matter for them to negotiate.

Where to from here?

If you are ready to express your interest in either the training or becoming a mentee please complete the Mentor or Mentee Registration Form and return it to The Eating Issues Centre as soon as possible. A worker will be in contact with you within a week, if you have not received a call back within this time or you have any further questions, particularly if you are unsure about whether you are the right person for this program please contact The Eating Issues Centre info@eatingissuescentre.org.au

THE EATING ISSUES CENTRE (TEIC).

About The Eating Issues Centre

The Eating Issues Centre is a community based non-profit charity that promotes positive body image and the prevention of eating issues as well as offering supportive therapeutic options for people affected by eating issues. The Eating Issues Centre is funded by Qld Health to provide counselling and groups, information and referrals to people over 16. We believe that mentoring is an important element of the future recovery landscape and offers people, who have recovered from eating issues and others in the community, away to make a meaningful contribution to individual and social change.

www.eatingissuescentre.org.au or phone 3844 6055.

The Eating Issues Centre works closely with the Eating Disorders Association in providing support to people living with and recovering from eating issues, and their carers and loved ones.

The Eating Issues Centre Mission Statement & Philosophy

Support, Understanding & Change

At The Eating Issues Centre we believe in the importance of making sense of eating issues in respectful and non-judgmental ways. We acknowledge the multifaceted and interactive factors that contribute to the development of eating issues and seek to promote empowerment, connections and change on individual and social levels.

The Eating Issues Centre Background

The Eating Issues Centre was founded in 1996 by a group of feminist practitioners who sought to develop alternative approaches to the bio-medical model of working with women with eating issues. For more than 15 years The Eating Issues Centre has listened to the different ways that gender has played a part in the development of eating issues for our service users and how important a gendered perspective is to our client when accessing recovery oriented services.

The Eating Issues Centre Goals

- Provide a range of services that respond to the diverse needs of individuals with eating issues
- Contribute to the evidence base and practice knowledge of working with people with eating issues from a feminist perspective.
- Enhance the support options available to people with eating issues through increased community awareness, understanding and recovery options.
- Develop and maintain The Eating Issues Centre as a dynamic organisation that leads the field of therapeutic for people with body image and eating issues.

If you have any questions about any of the above information please feel free to contact The Eating Issues Centre and speak to a worker before deciding whether or not you would be eligible to participate in the program.