

**Our Reflections: Forth Valley Recovery Conversation Cafe.
Building Recovery in Forth Valley: – Forth Valley College, Stirling - 22nd January 2014**

The seeds are sown...

A huge thank you Elaine Lawlor, Co-coordinator for Forth Valley Alcohol and Drug Partners for agreeing to meet on 25th October 2013. Along with Margaret Jamieson and Jenny Svanberg we discussed options for Forth Valley Workforce Development and it was decided the best way forward was to host a café, and the rest is history! Elaine thank you again for your huge generosity of spirit in organising and paying for the Working Group De-Brief.



Our aim

Our aim for the café was to have dialogue with intention throughout the day. A huge thank you to all to gave up their time and made the café come to life.

Event Planning

I offered unreserved apologies for missing the first group meeting. The following meetings focused upon the group's vision of hosting a café for Christmas. We decided that this was too ambitious given that the whole process of a working group is to connect and build a relationship with each other in order to come up with the correct questions to ask on the day. The 22nd January was agreed as the café date which the group was truly committed to making a reality.

Rosemary Duffy, clinical manager in one of Forth Valley's prisons, agreed to co-facilitate with me as she had attended the Conversation Café in West Dunbartonshire and had a really good idea of how a café works.

A very special thank you to Anita Duffy, who created a beautiful programme with the Recovery Communities Logo and a wonderful rainbow.

The Event Programme

10.00 am	Tea & Coffee
10.15 am	& Etiquette
	<i>Overview (tree)</i>
10.30 am	Seed One
10.45 am	Conversation One— <i>(Overview/commitments)</i>
11.15 am	Tea & Coffee Break
11.45 am	Seed Two
12.00 pm	Conversation Two
12.30 pm	Lunch
1.30 pm	Seed Three
1.45 pm	Conversation Three
2.15 pm	Tea Break
2.30 pm	Whole Group conversation
3.30 pm	Overview and Outcome
4.00 pm	Close

The Host Team



A huge **thank you** to all members of the **café host team** who really got their sleeves rolled up on the day making sure everyone had refreshments and kept the tables cleared. Were all there for the set up and stayed for the cleanup. This was a dream team....

The café in action



Were we successful in achieving our aim?

Yes. Our SurveyMonkey showed that 71.4% of people who attended had never attended a 'World style' conversation café before and 61.1% of participants said they left with new ideas

Who came to the event?

A total of 64 people came to the event. Invitations were allocated to each member of the working group, who in turn invited key assets with an interest in recovery, in the community, in services, with a lived experience of recovery and from Mutual Aid treatment services in Forth Valley. The invites extended to key assets with an interest in recovery in outlying areas and the growing recovery community.

Feedback

Feedback was received informally on the day and then a SurveyMonkey sent out. All feedback given on the day in response to the dialogue questions has been typed and will be available to interested parties in a separate document. A special mention to Hollie Henderson for the very creative and beautiful way all the feedback on the day was typed up. The responses were made up from 47.6% Treatment Provider, 33.3% Other Staff and 19.0% Person in recovery. A selection of these below:-

We asked - What was your overall experience of the Forth Valley Conversation Café?

"Positive and aspirational."

"I met people from other services I either deal with but have never met face to face or have never heard about."

"The café extended a warmth not common in the conference arena more generally. The Café was inclusive and there were a variety of ways in which to communicate. It was also very motivational resetting the compass being outward looking and more recovery focused."

We asked - What themes emerged in the conversations that you took part in at the event?

"A real drive to try to move things forward in terms of recovery in Forth Valley. Role of peer supporters in growing a recovery community."

"Need for service users, communities, families and services to work together to promote and sustain recovery capital."

We asked – Did you leave the event with any new ideas?

“That similar events need to be rolled out and include as many people as possible, especially service users.”

“Probably that the recovery message needs to be furthered within all support services and not just within the treatment services.”

“In terms of my individual practice I will focus more on looking to recovery at the very beginning of treatment, planting the seed that recovery is possible and whilst it may take time, it is achievable.”

We asked – for any final comments for the SRC that related to your experience at the café.

“Really well run on the day, left with a sense of greater unity about moving forward. Community circle at end was powerful”.

“Very well organised, very positive atmosphere. Shame that very few medical services in attendance.”

“Enabled a diverse group of people from those with lived experience and those who support and help those with lived experience whether friends, families or workers to work closely together to share ideas, views and future aspirations on the theme of recovery. The workshop was a community in itself for that day with a clear motivation to try and make things better for the future.”

Visibility of recovery - initial impact

- A decision made to enter into negotiations with Caird Forsyth to hold a conversation café in Falkirk

Visibility of recovery; developing impact (recovery bounce)

- 26 recovery commitments were made

The café tables



Apologies

Apologies made to both the Cafes which were running the same week in January due to some technical challenges experienced with the SRC IT procedures. Huge thanks to both working groups for their administrative work and tolerance. A Recovery Matters Workshop and all the catering has been offered as a token of our gratitude.

What did we learn?

Not to rush the working group this is a process in itself, just like a smaller conversation café.

Any future cafes will hold their own registrations to support relationship building within the local area.

Forth Valley is totally committed to the recovery agenda and has currently got several pieces of recovery work in the pipeline, the first being ROSC Training for all staff in Forth Valley.

Anne-Marie Quigg

Scottish Recovery Consortium - April 2014