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### Peer Group Chat

Date: 28/07/2022

**Title:** Engaging in Meaningful Things in Life

**Description:** Whether with our own lived experience or acting in a caring role, it is valuable for all of us to engage in things in our life that are meaningful. For example: hobbies and interests, fulfilling relationships, culture and community – the specifics will be unique to each person. In this group we will talk about what brings us meaning, the impacts of having or not having this in our life and support each other towards engaging in more meaningful things in our lives.

**Girasole (Peer Worker)** Hi everyone! First, we'd like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the various lands we are all joining this event from. We pay deep respect to the Elders of those Countries, past and present, and we further extend that respect to any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people joining this group tonight. Welcome everyone to today's Peer Group Chat talking about engaging in meaningful things in life. We really value your thoughts on how these groups go, so we will send a link to a short survey at the end of this event for you to complete. While this survey is optional, it is a chance to provide feedback for us to improve our services. In case you might need to leave part way through the event, you can find the survey here now: [https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5uUFOsHJRKQ6wyW](https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUFOsHJRKQ6wyW)

**Girasole (Peer Worker)** Tonight, Peer Support Workers @TidelsTurning and myself will be facilitating a discussion around the topic of meaningful things in life. Whether you have lived experience of complex mental health issues, you care for someone who does, or both, it is important for us all to do things in our life that are

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meaningful. We'll be moving through a number of discussion questions tonight, and it's entirely up to you how much or how little you are comfortable with sharing. Some of the conversation may be heavy in nature as we talk about times we may have struggled without meaningful things in our life. @Tyme, who moderates on the SANE Forums, is working behind the scenes to ensure our safety. If you're having any technical difficulties, please see our FAQ (<https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faq#what-if-i-am-having-a-tough-time-and-need-immediate-support>) or message @Tyme. We're looking forward to creating a space where we can reflect and learn together and expand our ideas of having meaningful things in our lives!

TideisTurning (PSW)

Hi @liquorice

Girasole (Peer Worker)

We will be starting the discussion shortly, and will just allow a bit more time for people to log on and join 😊

maddison

Hello everyone

TideisTurning (PSW)

Hi @maddison. Great to have you with us! :)

tyme (PSW/ Moderator)

Hi @maddison!

maddison

Thanks. Hi TideisTurning

maddison

Hi @tyme (PSW/ Moderator)

tyme (PSW/ Moderator)

Great to see you online @maddison!

maddison

Yes, cool @tyme (PSW/ Moderator) . I'm feeling shy tonight!

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maddison Hard to believe haha

tyme (PSW/ Moderator) Hehehe :) No need to feel shy @Maddison :)

TideisTurning (PSW) All good @maddison. You're welcome to share as much or as little as you feel comfortable. It's great to have you here with us

maddison Thanks so much @TideisTurning (PSW) . Confidence fluctuates I guess. Thankyou.

TideisTurning (PSW) Hey @the magician :) Good to see you!

the magician hi people im just in the middle of soup and bread while typing

TideisTurning (PSW) Hi @shaz51 :)

tyme (PSW/ Moderator) Hi @the magician and @shaz51! Welcome!

**Girasole (Peer Worker)** **Ok, let's start with tonight's first question :) When we talk about engaging in meaningful things in life, what comes to mind for you as things that give your life meaning?**

Shaz51 Hey @TideisTurning (PSW) , @tyme (PSW/ Moderator) , @Girasole (Peer Worker)

TideisTurning (PSW) I feel like there can be a lot of different things that help make life meaningful. Close relationships with loved ones, engaging in hobbies that I enjoy and other things that bring me happiness or joy, like being near a waterfall or playing with my dog. A recent example of a (bigger) meaningful thing is seeing a favourite musician live and being in a room with them and their music again (for the first time in a few years). Also,

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the magician not just engaging with these things, but being present and really living in the moment when I'm engaging with them - the reason I don't have pictures from seeing my favourite musician again.  
the umbrella of mental health advocacy and PR for mental health. in all its forms. i could list about 20 areas.

Shaz51 Yes me too @the magician

the magician im passionate about my book and my late 21st century research idea

Girasole (Peer Worker) @the magician I'm legitimately interested in those ~20 areas! If you felt interested to list them, or a number of them :)

maddison Things that give my life meaning have a different feel to them. I can get depot away or lost, or feel hungry to learn more. Being mindful can also make the mundane feel meaningful.

TideisTurning (PSW) That's cool @the magician. Is that book one you're writing or reading?

Shaz51 My family , step children, photography

tyme (PSW/ Moderator) Absolutely @Maddison! These things are so important. Even the idea of mindful eating - helps you appreciate things on a different level altogether!

TideisTurning (PSW) I know the feeling @maddison. Being really present when engaging in something meaningful can add a whole extra layer

tyme (PSW/ Moderator) @Shaz51! I don't think I've heard much about your photography - way to go!

the magician a book im writing

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- tyme (PSW/ Moderator) Sounds great @the magician!
- TideisTurning (PSW) Photography is an excellent one @Shaz51 & @the magician :)
- Shaz51 @tyme (PSW/ Moderator) , I love waterfalls, rivers , macro , animals, dragonflies, butterflies
- tyme (PSW/ Moderator) For me, I find connecting with people gives me meaning in life – as well as my work!
- TideisTurning (PSW) Love waterfalls @Shaz51
- TideisTurning (PSW) Right with you @tyme (PSW/ Moderator) :)
- Girasole (Peer Worker) I also really value nature, photography, music, and my connections with loved ones :) Plus discovery, learning, growth, & travel
- Shaz51 Yes being self employed and helping others
- Girasole (Peer Worker) Also engaging in things with that are in line with my values, and doing what I can to try and make the world a better place
- tyme (PSW/ Moderator) @Shaz51 helping others can bring so much more meaning to life
- Shaz51 Sure does @tyme (PSW/ Moderator)
- tyme (PSW/ Moderator) I don't think my life would be the same without being able to help other people.

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<b>Girasole (Peer Worker)</b>	<b>What might be the impacts when we are not engaging in things that are meaningful for us?</b>
the magician	list: lobbying–campaigns anti stigma , health apps, peer groups, remedial therapies. , NDIS policy / international, legal discrimination, safe spaces in psych wards, a quiet room, masked ball fundraisers etc, lecturing in business/universities, homelessness and GIS for Melbourne 2050, rehabilitation guide, general interest programs, documentaries.
the magician	being meant to do something, having support of close family, engaging in GROUP, ( peer and outdoors inc) says something about who you are and passions and lifestyles.
Shaz51	Ohhh @Girasole (Peer Worker) The impacts are loneliness, sadness , ohh I just have to engage in things that are meaningful
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	So true @the magician – it speaks to your values
TideisTurning (PSW)	For me, it doesn't end well. Feelings of depression can start to set in when there has been a lack of engagement in meaningful things, which can then make it harder to engage in meaningful things, and there can be a whole cycle from there.
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	In terms of the impacts of not engaging in meaningful things, for me, it brings a lot of frustration. I feel I haven't achieved anything, particularly as I am a very goal–driven person
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	Very true @tideisturning – that vicious cycle
maddison	Yes @Shaz51 lonliness. Not having something meaningful feels directionless. i.e lonely.
Shaz51	When we were in bed for a week with the flu , I was soo glad I still had Sane Forums
the magician	for me down times i would comfort myself by hibernating. lots of blankets/pillow and not much activity

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- TideisTurning (PSW) What I'm hearing, from all of us so far, is that it can bring up a lot of big and hard feelings; frustration, loneliness, lack of a sense of accomplishment or motivation :)
- Girasole (Peer Worker) I agree @Shaz51 re sadness and how you simply need to engage with these kinds of things :purple\_heart: It's certainly not good for us if we're not doing that. Sometimes in my own life, for various reasons, things might slip by the wayside. E.g. the pandemic shut down a lot of things that brought my life meaning (e.g. community events, live music, social gatherings). Sometimes it may be a gradual change that we might not notice. But if we are in a place where we find ourselves not engaging in meaningful things, it can be so good for us to start to do those things again
- Girasole (Peer Worker) Do you experience any particular challenges that can make it difficult to engage in meaningful things in your life? If so, what are they?**
- TideisTurning (PSW) Yes @Girasole (Peer Worker)! Couldn't agree more
- the magician a recent rehabilitation with me is getting up at 6.30 am every morning. finding time to do more meaningful things like a bike ride or guitar book jam read a book that otherwise have little time for . a social hour a week to contact your circle.
- tyme (PSW/ Moderator) that's great @the magician! It's ME time
- tyme (PSW/ Moderator) I think health plays a huge part in whether we CAN engage in meaningful things. Ill-health can be like a spanner in the works!
- Shaz51 @Girasole (Peer Worker) , yes the Weather for photography, health
- maddison Many challenges. I guess confidence is& always has been a big factor. Having to talk myself into participating can be exhausting.

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- TideisTurning (PSW) Absolutely! And it can be so hard when the challenges presented are outside of our control with things like health, weather or other life happenings
- tyme (PSW/ Moderator) @Maddison, but once you DO participate, do you feel better?
- the magician its easy to be bored with life. one year i brainstormed up a list of hobbies and set about engaging in them one at a time, a list of five or so accross a lifetime. it can be a great way to add meaning.
- maddison Oh yes @tyme (PSW/ Moderator) it's night & day 😊
- tyme (PSW/ Moderator) Agreed @the magician - my life is so full that I also find I get bored if I'm not on the go.
- the magician i get lazy and avoid participating but i always feel better when i do.
- TideisTurning (PSW) That's a cool idea @the magician, to have a list you can refer back to and draw ideas from!
- Girasole (Peer Worker) Would it be helpful to consider some ways of working around or overcoming these barriers? If so, what do you think might be possible for your circumstances? We can also support each other with ideas if you'd like, too 😊**
- the magician just do it. build momentum. and write down what you got out of it. say it out loud .remember for next time.
- the magician doing things in chunks also
- TideisTurning (PSW) Also amazing @the magician :) having those reminders of why it's good to help provide a little more motivation for next time



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- maddison Oh I misspoke before @tyme (PSW/ Moderator) ! Sometimes it can be so rewarding. Other times, I say to myself that my instincts were right & it's easier to stay in bed! Terrible I know. It's about tailoring what is meaningful to me perhaps.
- Shaz51 Working through unforeseen circumstances and restarting
- the magician believing that are capable of change.
- TideisTurning (PSW) For me, it might be a case of trying to engage in other, smaller things I find meaningful. For example, if there are lack of opportunities to connect with a particular loved one, I might try to reach out to have a little contact with my loved one. Even if we can't properly connect, having a little contact still carries some meaning. Then, engaging in other meaningful things, like a hobby or time with someone else (including a furry friend)
- TideisTurning (PSW) Love this @Shaz51. Restarting or trying again can be huge!
- tyme (PSW/ Moderator) Hey @Maddison, and having those days where you prefer to stay in bed is totally OKAY! Reminds us that we are human :)
- Girasole (Peer Worker) @Shaz51 that can be really helpful and important coping skill - I'm wondering if you'd be open to sharing a bit about how you do that? :)
- the magician taking chances when you sense electricity with someone can be nice
- TideisTurning (PSW) Courage can be really important @the magician :)
- Shaz51 @TideisTurning (PSW) , @Girasole (Peer Worker) , to keep on keeping on, sometimes it is hard , the other day I was feeling down and my husband said let's go for a drive , I did not really want to go , but I did , pushing ourselves is good , by the end of the day , I was glad we did

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maddison	For me, one of the most valuable tools I have learnt through SANE in overcoming barriers is to accept myself & not to be too hard on myself. Meaning can be found in the smallest of things, if I am in a still headspace.
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	I'm glad you went for the drive @shaz51.
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	Hugs @Maddison
the magician	remembering to take breaks for me is big. otherwise it just gets too hectic and stressed not mindful.
Shaz51	Ha ha me too @tyme (PSW/ Moderator)
Girasole (Peer Worker)	So true @Shaz51 sometimes pushing through to do something when we might not feel like it, can be completely worth it in the end for how fulfilling it is
TideisTurning (PSW)	Drives can be wonderful @Shaz51
the magician	its a complete mindset change
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	I used to be very socially anxious so in the beginning when I was learning to 'connect' with people, I really needed to push myself to do things I didn't want @Shaz51 – in the end, it was totally worth it. Just like your drive!
<b>Girasole (Peer Worker)</b>	<b>What do you think the benefits or positive impacts on your life may be when you are engaging in meaningful things?</b>
the magician	joy, more positive relationships, improved health.

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maddison	A zest for life! Strengthen self identity & self confidence.
Girasole (Peer Worker)	A zest for life! I love that :) @maddison
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	I found that engaging in meaningful activities definitely gives me more energy – that's why I often don't realise I'm tired until I conk out!
the magician	definitely Maddison!
TideisTurning (PSW)	Yes @maddison! It can definitely be magical. I find engaging with meaningful things can help fill my cup and build up the reserve I have that I draw on to help me cope when things feel a little more stressful. Going back to my first example of a recent meaningful experience seeing a favourite musician play live to help me illustrate it a bit more. Before that experience, I'd been struggling to find super meaningful things in my life to engage with for a while. That opportunity to see my favourite musician play seemed to flick a switch– I'd been struggling before that, but when I saw them, and afterwards, I suddenly felt ok again. Almost like magic.
maddison	Thankyou for sharing about your social anxiety @tyme (PSW/ Moderator) . Its nice to be reminded that they're is light at the end...!😊
the magician	having a special connection with your home.
Shaz51	I agree with @the magician , @maddison and also taking your mind off the unforeseen situation for a time , to give yourself to rethink about things
maddison	Wow, thankyou @TideisTurning (PSW) I think I'm starting to make a stronger connection between engaging in meaningful experiences & mental health.
TideisTurning (PSW)	That sounds really nice @the magician. I'm really curious to hear what that special connection with home might look like for you?

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- TideisTurning (PSW) Aww @maddison. I'm so happy to hear that! I'm really pleased you've been able to make that connection :)
- the magician its a two bedroom flat with a garden and vegie patch filled with second hand antiques. fell in love with it minute i got it. it s my security and safe space. i was where i was meant to end up . its quite spiritual, a place designed just for me by groups of politicians and governments i hassled.
- Girasole (Peer Worker)** **What meaningful things in life might you like to work toward engaging in more? :)**  
the magician stronger friendships.
- TideisTurning (PSW) Love this @the magician!
- TideisTurning (PSW) I think for me, working toward engaging in a variety of different meaningful things would be helpful. That way, if there are barriers to engaging with certain things, there are still other things I can do that will help bring meaning to my life.
- Shaz51 @Girasole (Peer Worker) , one is for my husband to find a wonderful place with his MI  
Shaz51 For me to accept the changes I can not change and knowing the changes that I can change along the way
- Girasole (Peer Worker) The process of engaging in more meaningful things in life may be a process that could take some time and ongoing commitment – are there any people, services, or resources that could help you maintain your commitment toward this? 😊
- TideisTurning (PSW) Reminds me a little of the serenity prayer @Shaz51, about having courage to change the things that can be changed, and the wisdom to know the difference between what can, and cannot be changed
- maddison Stronger sense of self. I love meditation & spiritual type things. Anything creative, where I can express myself & view life with different perspectives. Creating & strengthening bonds with other people & also appreciating nature & earth & experiencing appreciation & connection with it.

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tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	Ditto to you @Maddision!
the magician	mental health organisations running peer groups dependent on covid.
maddison	Yes @tyme (PSW/ Moderator) ! Oh I love this @the magician .
the magician	thankyou those sending love these!
Girasole (Peer Worker)	I always feel like letting the people close to us know that we are wanting to achieve something – that can open up opportunities for them to support you. They might do an activity with you, or encourage you, or help hold you accountable. I know I at least can find it challenging to do something possibly new if I feel like I'm struggling with it alone!
the magician	mums can help just by being your band aid!
Shaz51	Very true @the magician
TideisTurning (PSW)	Definitely @Girasole (Peer Worker) Having support and encouragement from others + gentle and supportive accountability can be super helpful! That sense that you're not on your own is so powerful
the magician	i have learnt tonight that we are all in this together.
<b>Girasole (Peer Worker)</b>	<b>Have you learned anything helpful from others' experiences here tonight that you might be able to apply in your own life? If yes, what did you learn?</b>
maddison	Honestly, the best resources I have in my life are the lovely people that are here right now – on this thread! I have other people in my life, although trust can be issue. There is no question of love, it's only that mental

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concerns can sometimes impede trust. I might feel comfortable sharing my ideas – it would depend on how receptive they were.

- tyme (PSW/ Moderator) That's amazing to hear @Maddison
- TideisTurning (PSW) @maddison, thank you so, so much for sharing. That is lovely to hear that you find this space so supportive. We are so happy to have you with us to help make this space what it is
- Girasole (Peer Worker) I really liked hearing what everyone has shared tonight, and I think we've shared such a lovely and valuable space together :) Some things that particularly resonated personally were these from @the magician – "believing that [we] are capable of change" – and also this idea! – "getting up at 6.30 am every morning. finding time to do more meaningful things like a bike ride or guitar book jam read a book that otherwise have little time for . a social hour a week to contact your circle"
- TideisTurning (PSW) Absolutely! I think some of the most valuable things for me have been the privilege of hearing your stories and what's meaningful for you all. Thank you so much @maddison @Shaz51 @the magician for sharing your perspectives, being here and making this space what it is
- maddison Thankyou @TideisTurning (PSW) @tyme (PSW/ Moderator) ...I am the luckiest one ! & @Shaz51 @the magician @Girasole (Peer Worker) and if I have forgotten anyone. Thanks everyone! 👍
- the magician happy to contribute. pleased it was helpful.
- Girasole (Peer Worker) Would some self-care be helpful for you after we finish? If so, what might you do? 🤔**
- tyme (PSW/ Moderator) I'm going to grab something to eat :)
- Shaz51 Happy to be here xoxo

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maddison  
the magician  
Shaz51

Haha... Yes food please!  
chat to the band aid, read a book in bed.  
Ha ha coffee and a shower for me

TideisTurning (PSW)

All wonderful ideas! food, book in bed :)

the magician

thanks and goodnight people.

**Girasole (Peer Worker)**

**Here are some further resources we recommend having a look at:**  
**1 - "30 Meaningful Things To Do in Life" <https://www.minimalismmadesimple.com/home/meaningful-things/>**  
**2 - On what may make life meaningful <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RLFVoEF2RIO>**

tyme (PSW/ Moderator)

Good night @the magician! Great to chat with you!

Shaz51

Chatted to my band aid in hospital today @the magician

**Girasole (Peer Worker)**

**We'd like to invite you to complete a survey reflecting on your experience in this Peer Group Chat. We'd love to hear any feedback you may have. It will only take a few minutes to complete. Please click this link: [https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5uUFOsHJRKQ6wyW](https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUFOsHJRKQ6wyW)**

the magician

engage with yo next week

tyme (PSW/ Moderator)

Super!

TideisTurning (PSW)

Thanks everyone :)

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Girasole (Peer Worker)

Thank you for joining, and we hope you enjoyed the discussion 😊 If you'd like to be informed when our next Peer Group Chat will be taking place, you can sign up to our mailing list here <https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat>. You can also ask questions for us to discuss in future peer chats!

Girasole (Peer Worker)  
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)

Thank you so much for sharing this space tonight everyone! :) Take care and have a good evening  
Good Evening everyone :)