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**Peer Group Chat**

**Date:** 09/03/23

**Title:** Recovering from Invalidation

**Description:** Invalidation can happen when someone rejects, judges or ignores a person's thoughts, feelings and emotions, instead deeming them to be invalid or not understandable. For some, the impact of invalidation may require ongoing work to rebuild self-esteem, trust, and self-identity. Let's come together to share our thoughts and experiences surrounding recovering from invalidation.

TideisTurning (PSW)	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 recovering from invalidation.
Amber22 (PSW)	Welcome! @Captain24
Captain24	Hi @Amber22 (PSW)

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TideisTurning (PSW)	Welcome @Captain24! Nice to see you :)
Captain24	Thanks @TideisTurning (PSW)
TideisTurning (PSW)	<p>Tonight, Peer Support Workers @TideisTurning and @Amber22 will be facilitating a discussion around the topic of recovering from invalidation. Whether you have lived experience of complex mental health issues, you care for someone who does, or both, invalidation can be immensely impactful and challenging to recover from. 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.</p> <p>Some of the conversation may be heavy in nature as we talk about struggles with experiences of invalidation and the impacts of this. @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 (<a href="https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faqs">https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faqs</a>) or message @Tyme. We're looking forward to creating a space where we can reflect and learn more together about recovering from invalidation.</p>
Amber22 (PSW)	Hey! @Laura
Laura	Hi @Amber22 (PSW)
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	Hi Laura and Captain!
Captain24	Hi @tyme (PSW/ Moderator)
Amber22 (PSW)	Hey there! @bobbie
Laura	Hi @tyme (PSW/ Moderator)
TideisTurning (PSW)	<p>Within this group tonight we'll be talking about:</p> <p>What invalidation looks like for us and the impacts and experiences of invalidation and feeling invalidated</p> <p>What validation can mean for each of us</p> <p>How to validate ourselves and how being validated might impact our lives</p>

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bobbie	hi everyone, it's Thursday again. I always enjoy this chat
Amber22 (PSW)	So glad that you enjoy it :) @bobbie
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	Hey there @bobbie! Good to see you!
TideisTurning (PSW)	Welcome everyone! We will be starting the discussion shortly, and will just allow a bit more time for people to log on and join. In the meantime, feel free to introduce yourselves. I'm @TideisTurning
Amber22 (PSW)	Welcome! @Shaz51
Shaz51	hello @Amber22 (PSW) , @tyme (PSW/ Moderator) , @TideisTurning (PSW)
TideisTurning (PSW)	Hello & welcome @Laura, @bobbie @Shaz51 :)
Laura	Hi @TideisTurning (PSW)
Amber22 (PSW)	Welcome! @Sumi789
TideisTurning (PSW)	Welcome @sumi789 :)
Shaz51	hello @Laura
Sumi789	Hi everyone first time in these chats I'm super excited to see how it goes
Laura	Hi @Shaz51
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	Welcome @Sumi789!
Amber22 (PSW)	Yay so glad to have you along tonight! @Sumi789
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	Hi @Shaz51
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	Hi @Owlunar!!!! You made it!
TideisTurning (PSW)	Just in time @owlunar :)

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Amber22 (PSW)	Welcome! owlunar :)
TideisTurning (PSW)	<b>Our first question for this evening; What does invalidation mean and look like for you?</b>
Sumi789	Invalidation mostly feels like unless I'm in crisis I psych myself out of thinking I don't need meds or I'm faking my MH issues
bobbie	Statements that dismiss my feelings, and not being listened to.
Laura	Not being heard, having my feeling not taken seriously. or feeling rejected.
Amber22 (PSW)	<b>It can look like many different things but the one that has been most prominent in my life is when I have stated how I've been feeling and someone has told me that I am not entitled to feel this way, or that others have it far worse than I do.</b>
Captain24	Not being heard. Being put down
TideisTurning (PSW)	<b>100% @biobbie &amp; I hadn't thought of faking as another form of invalidation @Sumi789, bit it makes sense.</b>
Laura	Don't you hate it when people do that @Amber22 (PSW)
Amber22 (PSW)	<b>It definitely isn't a nice feeling at all @Laura</b>
TideisTurning (PSW)	<b>Rejection &amp; being put down are some other big ones @Laura &amp; @Captain24</b>
bobbie	oh yes @Amber22 i get that totally
Sumi789	After such severe invalidation it's really difficult to validate yourself, so I struggle with self invalidation the most
Laura	Very much so @Amber22 (PSW) @TideisTurning (PSW) rejection hurts.
bobbie	I get it in the form of "Don't complain" "You're too sensitive" "You're seeing things", completely disregarding what you said and they go on with their own stories...
bobbie	@Sumi789 yes you don't believe/support yourself if you grow up around that constantly
TideisTurning (PSW)	<b>Often the message I get in a situation like this is 'your feelings/ experiences are not valid', which it sounds might resonate with a lot of you here as well. I'm wondering if there are any other messages others get from invalidating experiences?</b>

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bobbie	oh and my name is constantly mispronounced!
Captain24	Same @bobbie !!
bobbie	Even my regular friends do it. I gave up after a while but now and then it still bothers me!
Laura	They make is about themselves and not see how hurt you are.
<b>Amber22 (PSW)</b>	<b>That would be very upsetting and irritating @bobbie , so valid that you feel that way</b>
bobbie	@Captain24 arghhh so annoying
Captain24	Some of my family can't even spell my name correctly @bobbie
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>That is tough! @Captain24 &amp; @bobbie :)</b>
bobbie	same! @Captain24
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>Have you ever felt invalidated? What emotions came from that or what emotions do you imagine might come up?</b>
Captain24	All the time. Especially from my family. I get upset, angry or irritable
Laura	Yes from family and other people in my life. Sad, disappointed, rejected and upset.
Captain24	I withdraw and believe it
Laura	It sucks doesn't it @Captain24
<b>Amber22 (PSW)</b>	<b>I have felt invalidated before when others have made me feel as if my emotions and thoughts are not that important. I remember at the beginning of my mental health journey I would tell people that I felt anxious and uneasy, and no one would take me seriously, and even laughed at my situation. It made me feel as if they thought I was making it up, or that I wasn't allowed to feel that way.</b>
Captain24	That's rough @Amber22 (PSW)
Laura	That's not nice @Amber22 (PSW)
<b>tyme (PSW/ Moderator)</b>	<b>Agree!</b>
bobbie	Upset. Unsupported. Not understood. Feeling like I don't matter, I'

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bobbie	m overreacting
<b>tyme (PSW/ Moderator)</b>	<b>I have felt invalidated when people have said in the past, "You are okay everywhere else, but just not at home. There's nothing wrong with you."</b>
Shaz51	teary, upset
Sumi789	I feel like more than anything invalidation has made me shut down emotionally and numb, if that makes sense
Laura	People don't understand masking hey @tyme (PSW/ Moderator)
<b>tyme (PSW/ Moderator)</b>	<b>Clearly @Laura</b>
bobbie	Yes, so much resonance here from everyone. The shutdowns, the laughing, teariness.
Captain24	My best friend actually said today that I was never anxious before! She just never noticed
<b>Amber22 (PSW)</b>	<b>I feel very validated that we all feel similarly about being invalidated</b>
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>Masking can be a huge coping mechanism @Laura. It's so unfortunate that some don't understand or struggle if/when someone unmask</b>
Laura	My parents are like that they say you seem fine Laura. When I am breaking inside @tyme.
Captain24	So true @Amber22 (PSW)
bobbie	Anxiety doesn't
Laura	Yeah it is @TideisTurning (PSW) I do it on a daily basis.
Shaz51	soo true @Laura
bobbie	Do we not mask because we get invalidated
Shaz51	family members say that to Mr shaz , so not allow to tell anyone about his , mine I tell family but they all say I look well
bobbie	I told a friend I just want others to understand. She told me others CAN'T understand because they 've never been there. But surely, they can have cognitive empathy and at least think before they speak, they don't need emotional empathy per say
<b>Amber22 (PSW)</b>	<b>Definitely understand that @bobbie , just because they haven't experienced it doesn't mean they cant TRY to understand how we feel</b>

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TideisTurning (PSW)	What is your initial reaction if you feel invalidated and how do you later respond?
Laura	That would be nice wouldn't it @bobbie , it is hard to help people understand. Maybe they don't want to.
TideisTurning (PSW)	<b>Note, when we talk about a reaction in this question, we mean the immediate thing/s you might say, do, think or feel. A response, on the other hand are the thing/s you might say, do think or feel after you've had a little space to process what's happened. Some of these things might be the same, and some may be a little more refined or developed from the immediate/ initial reaction as opposed to the more considered response (such as something you say, based upon what you're feeling or thinking as a result of what's happened).</b>
Shaz51	@TideisTurning (PSW) I don't respond later
Amber22 (PSW)	<b>My initial reaction was to feel angry and upset. I felt looked over and as if no one understood me, which left me feeling pretty lonely. I think being invalidated can make you feel very isolated and often in the moment I don't really know what to say, so I don't say anything at all. My response would ideally be to later tell them that I am being serious, and that their reaction to my statement made me feel very alone. It takes a lot of practice and courage to respond that way, which I've been working on.</b>
TideisTurning (PSW)	That is totally fair @Shaz51.
Amber22 (PSW)	<b>It can be really hard to respond after that feeling @Shaz51</b>
Laura	I shutdown and just act like nothing happened and go on about something else.
Captain24	I go quiet and then I usually just agree with them. Later I replay the conversation and believe that the invalidation is deserved
bobbie	Usually my immediate reaction is I pull a face and say nothing. Or stony face only. I mean, what can I say? Been conditioned to be like so I think since young. Don't talk back, or you're a child so you know nothing, or what you're feeling is wrong. So listen to the adult and there is nothing wrong at all.
Laura	Yeah I agree with what they say as well @Captain24

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Sumi789	Disengage
<b>Amber22 (PSW)</b>	<b>Totally get that @bobbie , I feel the same, definitely disengage @Sumi789</b>
Shaz51	Like the other day my close cousin said -- ( it will be good when I go on dialysis ) , I answered `Really `
<b>tyme (PSW/ Moderator)</b>	<b>I used to allow people to say what they wanted... I think I'm really push back now... maybe experience has given me some guts!</b>
Sumi789	Whether I'm invalidating myself or someone else is invalidating me I disengage
bobbie	I need to learn to speak up
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>That is so rough. I'm so sorry invalidation has had that kind of immense impact on you @Captain24 @Laura</b>
Sumi789	I feel like it's not my duty to educate someone who is choosing to be ignorant and unkind
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>It's super hard @bobbie :)</b>
<b>Amber22 (PSW)</b>	<b>Welcome! @Smiling_Gecko</b>
Laura	Not the best hey @TideisTurning (PSW)
bobbie	my later response would be anger. But I don't show it to them. I whinge to someone else. I feel a bit chicken that way
Shaz51	that is what my husband doe @bobbie and he is able to tell me all about it
Shaz51	hello @Smiling_Gecko
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>Hi @Smiling_Gecko good to see you :)</b>
Smiling_Gecko	Hey @Shaz51
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>On the other hand, what emotions might be linked with the experience of being validated?</b>
Smiling_Gecko	Hello @TideisTurning (PSW)
Sumi789	Accepted and visible
Laura	Cared for



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Captain24	I think relief. The feeling that someone understands and less alone in that moment. That I've been heard and accepted
bobbie	Seen, accepted, supported, loved.
Amber22 (PSW)	<b>When I feel heard and validated I feel like I am not alone, and that my thoughts are really understood. Growing through my mental health journey, I have noticed that I often feel validated by the people that have gone through similar circumstances, because I feel connected to the way that they just 'get' it.</b>
Shaz51	cared for, listened to
TideisTurning (PSW)	<b>I hadn't considered relief @Captain24, but it really resonates! Thanks for highlighting it for me :)</b>
Laura	So true @Captain24 @Amber22 (PSW)
Amber22 (PSW)	<b>Feeling cared for is the best feeling @Shaz51</b>
Amber22 (PSW)	<b>Welcome! @creative_writer</b>
creative_writer	Hi. Sorry I'm late. I was nauseous
Laura	Hi @creative_writer
Amber22 (PSW)	<b>Aw, hope you feel better @creative_writer</b>
Shaz51	hello @creative_writer
bobbie	feeling "normal" and un-alien! That there's nothing wrong with me.
TideisTurning (PSW)	<b>Not great about the nausea @creative_writer, but I'm glad you made it in the end :)</b>
Captain24	I like that @bobbie
Sumi789	Also validating myself feels like self love
Amber22 (PSW)	<b>That's so great @Sumi789</b>
TideisTurning (PSW)	<b>Why is validation important?</b>
Laura	To feel heard and understood

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Amber22 (PSW)	It's important to have validation in my life because it makes me feel connected with others. It helps me not to feel so alone, and then makes me feel more comfortable to voice how I am truly feeling/ my thoughts more often because I feel like I will be understood and listened to.
Captain24	To know you are not alone
bobbie	to make us feel important. I believe every human being is important, and we should all be able to feel so. When you are validated from young, you develop a healthy sense of self esteem and confidence. Then you may go on to live a full life, unhindered by self doubt.
TideisTurning (PSW)	<b>To my mind, validation is important because it is acknowledging and in a way legitimising an individual's emotions and/or experience.</b>
Sumi789	Validation inherently is respect for someone's experience and existence, whether you understand or not what a person is going through, respecting them is a basic right
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	<b>Also helps you feel less 'alone'</b>
TideisTurning (PSW)	<b>Absolutely @Sumi789</b>
Smiling_Gecko	Being validated stops the issue from being suppressed
Amber22 (PSW)	<b>Yes! @Smiling_Gecko</b>
Sumi789	Also following my previous comment on validation, to validate someone doesn't mean you have to necessarily agree with their perspective on the world but just inherently respect what they feel there experience is to then
Sumi789	Them*
TideisTurning (PSW)	<b>Amazing point @Sumi789. It's about acceptance and acknowledgement rather than agreement :)</b>
TideisTurning (PSW)	<b>What might it look and/or feel like to be validated? How can you validate your own emotions?</b>

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Sumi789	My sister and I get into very emotionally intense arguments where the smallest thing can sometimes really trigger me, but what she has started doing is validating that intense emotion and undoing so calming it whilst still holding me accountable, how I can validate my own emotions - I have no clue, normally just go off my meds watch my self spiral immediately and then remember oh yeh I legit have MH issues
Captain24	To be validated by someone outside my MH team would make me feel accepted for who I am. I still have a lot of work to do before I can validate my own emotions.
Laura	It would be nice, but only happens in like a safe space. I don't know if I can validate my own emotions.
<b>Amber22 (PSW)</b>	<b>I think that the biggest example for me would be when I tell people that I am feeling a certain way (maybe that I am feeling anxious) and they really listen and understand where I am coming from. Asking me if I am okay, and making sure that I feel comforted and supported. I also can validate my own emotions by telling myself that what I am feeling is real, and that on top of everything I support myself.</b>
Sumi789	Would love to hear others validate themselves
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>I feel like validating yourself is something that could be learned, but it might be a bit of a process, particularly where there's been a lot of invalidation before</b>
bobbie	I would feel safe. Then, I would be able to go on and solve whatever the problem was. Usually, it's a problem that causes a feeling I need to unload to someone. How to validate my own emotions? I guess stop and think/process the feeling. Tell myself this is a very human response.
Smiling_Gecko	Working with the chakras particularly throat chakra has given me the ability to validate myself
Shaz51	there's been a lot of invalidation before for my husband @TideisTurning (PSW) , that he does not answer anymore or talks about it , only to me
<b>Amber22 (PSW)</b>	<b>That is so great that you validate Mr Shaz @Shaz51</b>
<b>Amber22 (PSW)</b>	<b>That sounds so interesting! @Smiling_Gecko</b>
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>My dog has heard a few of my unloading @bobbie. And 'this is a very human response' is an amazing start to self-validation I reckon!</b>
Smiling_Gecko	I believe being a psych patient can deny you a voice @Amber22 (PSW)

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bobbie	Dogs are great like that @TideisTurning
bobbie	I knicked that line from my psych!
Shaz51	and sometimes I need to upload it all @Amber22 (PSW) , this is where the sane forum is good for me as I can not talk to anyone about it in real life
<b>Amber22 (PSW)</b>	<b>Aw, we love having you on the forums @Shaz51</b>
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>How has or might validation impact your life?</b>
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>Validation can be really important, because it can promote continued sharing and release of emotions which I consider a huge benefit, because bottling emotions or not allowing them to be felt/ released, could be a whole other problem altogether!</b>
<b>Amber22 (PSW)</b>	<b>Validation would make me feel a lot more confident to voice how I am feeling, or speak my mind a bit more, because I would feel like my thoughts and feelings would be well received and supported no matter what.</b>
<b>Amber22 (PSW)</b>	<b>Welcome! @Appleblossom</b>
Shaz51	hello @Appleblossom
Captain24	Being validated by the GP I first went to at the start of this journey has probably saved my life. She put me on the road to recovery. Being validated outside my team would make me feel less alone and supported.
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>Hi @Appleblossom :)</b>
Appleblossom	Hey Tide is Turning Amber and all
Appleblossom	a bit late
<b>Amber22 (PSW)</b>	<b>That's okay! You've made it for the last question @Appleblossom and feel free to read through the chat as well of course :)</b>
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>That sounds really powerful @Captain24 to have that response from your GP</b>

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bobbie	I will feel important and that I matter. I will be more confident in life, less anxious and unsure/dependent on others. And not feel stupid.
bobbie	We support you @Captain24 !
Captain24	Thanks @bobbie
Shaz51	here for you @Captain24
Sumi789	It could teach me to learn how to hold space, for myself and others
Captain24	She was amazing @TideisTurning (PSW) it's a shame she left the country!
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>That is a shame @Captain24 . I hope you're able to find and engage with others who are just as supportive, although maybe in different ways :)</b>
Appleblossom	I had some amazing validation from an old student today. She phoned me up to tell me somebody else had the experience I recently had of straining, knee, ankle and in this case hip from dancing with a particular partner. It meant the world to me she bothered to reassure me that it was not just me, and said I was sensitive in a good way, which was also something I needed to hear. A new person corrected me in conversation. I said I am sensitive, and she said No you are not. How can people be so rude. Anyway she was a lot nicer to me today. S all in a good day. So important NOT to take others' ideas on board, when they really do not fit.
Sumi789	Also I think a world and the MH moving towards a validating framework would support so much more with early interventions etc
bobbie	Validation is a basic human right! the good and the not-so-good @Appleblossom
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>I feel like sensitivity can be a real strength @Appleblossom . It sucks when someone minimises it or makes us feel like it's a bad thing!</b>
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</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>
Smiling_Gecko	Validation certainly has universality
<b>Amber22 (PSW)</b>	<b>I loved @Appleblossom s comment about "So important NOT to take others ideas on board, when they really do not fit." It definitely resonated</b>
Captain24	I have learnt that I'm not alone. That others feel the same.

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<b>Amber22 (PSW)</b>	<b>Definitely not alone! @Captain24</b>
bobbie	I think I learnt that, no matter what, there will always be invalidation somewhere. So it's very important to learn to self-validate, back yourself up 100%.
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>Yes @Amber22 (PSW) &amp; @Appleblossom also, the idea of 'faking' as a form of invalidation (thanks @Sumi789) &amp; the feeling of relief that can come from being validated (thanks again for highlighting @Captain24) :) </b>
Laura	Feeling less alone
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>Tonight's topic may have brought up some heavy feelings as we talked about struggles with experiences of invalidation and the impacts of this. Would some self-care be helpful for you after we finish? If so, what might you do?</b>
Shaz51	yes feeling less alone to carry on , to keep on keeping on , and to take one step at a time
Laura	Hot drink and some chocolate
<b>Amber22 (PSW)</b>	<b>Yes, a big cup of tea afterwards :) </b>
bobbie	a cuppa steaming hot decaf tea and a youtube video
Laura	We all think a like
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	<b>Yes @Shaz51. I always think of a wise little blue fish who says 'just keep swimming' :) </b>
Shaz51	a big cup of coffeEEEE
Captain24	I think maybe a shower and go to bed would be the best option
<b>Amber22 (PSW)</b>	<b>A big cuppa! @Shaz51</b>
Laura	Love that @TideisTurning (PSW) just keep swimming made me laugh
Appleblossom	Music meds sleep
Shaz51	youtube here for my husband
Laura	I am watching YOU

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TideisTurning (PSW)	<p>Here are some further resources we recommend having a look at:</p> <p>1 What is Emotional Invalidation: <a href="https://psychcentral.com/health/reasons-you-and-others-invalidate-your-emotional-experience#why-its-done">https://psychcentral.com/health/reasons-you-and-others-invalidate-your-emotional-experience#why-its-done</a></p> <p>2 On the power and place of validation in relationships: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2JNTkVR668">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2JNTkVR668</a></p> <p>3 Recovering From Invalidation <a href="https://eymtherapy.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/recoveringfrominvalidation1.pdf">https://eymtherapy.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/recoveringfrominvalidation1.pdf</a></p>
Smiling_Gecko	Excellent @TideisTurning (PSW) !
TideisTurning (PSW)	We would love to hear your anonymous feedback on today's group so we can continue to improve. It is voluntary, and will take about 4 minutes to complete: <a href="https://forms.office.com/r/yk4HS4Snnf">https://forms.office.com/r/yk4HS4Snnf</a>
Amber22 (PSW)	Thank you everyone :) I hope you all have a lovely night tonight!
Captain24	Thanks
Laura	Thank you
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	Thank you all!
TideisTurning (PSW)	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 <a href="https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat">https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat</a> . You can also ask questions for us to discuss in future peer chats!
bobbie	Thank you all. I look forward to next week's discussion. I see you all and thank you for seeing me
TideisTurning (PSW)	Thanks everyone for joining us & sharing and making this space what it has been. Take care & until next time :)
Shaz51	thank you everyone