

SANE AUSTRALIA

SANE Australia Online Peer Group

Date: 31/3/2022

Topic: The Desire to Be “Normal”

Description: It can be a common experience to feel “I just want to be normal.” But what is normal, exactly? And is it really the case that most people actually experience life the way we imagine to be as ideal or normal? Perhaps our diverse experiences are more normal than we might think? Let’s talk about ideas of being ‘normal’ vs ‘different’.

Welcome everyone to today’s Peer Group Chat talking about the desire to be “normal.” 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

earthling95
(PSW)

now: https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW

Tonight, Peer Support Workers @earthling95@TidelsTurning will be facilitating a discussion around the topic of what it is to be “normal.” Whether you have lived experience of complex mental health issues, you care for someone who does, or both, anyone can benefit from perhaps rethinking what they understand to be “normal,” if comparing oneself to that is causing negative emotions.

earthling95
(PSW)

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 mental health struggles. @Oshun Blu, 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 \(https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faqs#what-if-i-am-having-a-tough-time-and-need-immediate-support\)](https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faqs#what-if-i-am-having-a-tough-time-and-need-immediate-support) or message [@Oshun Blu](#).

We're looking forward to creating a space where we can reflect and learn together and expand our ideas of

earthling95 (PSW) what it means to be "normal"

We will be starting the discussion shortly, and will just allow a bit more time for

earthling95 (PSW) people to log on and join 😊

Welcome everyone! Feel free to introduce yourselves.

earthling95 (PSW) I'm earthling95

Oshun_Blu (Moderator) Hey hey! I'm @Oshun_Blu :)
Hi :)

TideisTurning (PSW) @TideisTurning here

earthling95 (PSW) Welcome @teej :)

TideisTurning (PSW) Hi @Teej :)

Hey @Teej!

Oshun_Blu (Moderator) Welcome :)

teej
earthling95
(PSW)

Hi all 🙌
Welcome
Snowie :)
Hey Snowie!

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

Good to see
you
Hi @Snowie.
Great to
have you
with us

TideisTurning
(PSW)

**Q1 .What
do you
understand
'normal' to
mean as it
relates to
your
experiences
as a
person?**

earthling95
(PSW)

Normal
means
fitting
in with
society
to me

teej

TideisTurning
(PSW)

For me, normal can have different definitions depending on context. What those definitions have in common, a little similar to the actual dictionary definition, is 'normal' being something that is 'typical' or 'usual'. But, given my own definition of normal can vary, I feel like everyone is likely to have a definition or idea of normal that is somewhat unique to each of us as individuals.

I don't know if I have ever fully understood what it is to be "normal" to be honest haha. For as long as I can remember I have felt like I was trying really hard to fit in a box that I don't fit into, but I was never really given a rulebook as to why that might be.

**Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)**

Normal has always felt just a little bit out of reach for me

To me there is no such thing as normal. All people have different experiences and what is normal to one person isn't to another. I think that people put too much pressure on others to be there definition of

Snowie

"normal"

Hey

@Shaz51 !

Good to

**Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)**

see you again :)

Sometimes change has been inevitable, yet painful in life for me. I have often wondered..when will things 'ever go back to normal'.

**earthling95
(PSW)**

**earthling95
(PSW)**

Welcome Shaz51 :)

**TideisTurning
(PSW)** Hi
@shaz51
:)

I agree with
you,
Snowie. the
goalposts
of normal
always
seem to be
moving and
there's a lot
of pressure
to keep up
with that

**Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)**

Maybe
the
goalposts
move as
society
changes.

teej

**earthling95
(PSW)**

Well
said
teej.
oh
absolutely,
@teej .

**Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)**

Very
insightful
and well
said
I'm thinking
about social
media and how
that may have

teej

defined new
goalposts for
some

Q2
.Where
do you
think your
ideas of
'normal'
may have
come
from?

earthling95
(PSW)

Oh yes. I
think
social
media
probably
has a
huge role
@Teej!

TideisTurning
(PSW)

I think my family of origin growing up instilled a lot of the narrative I used to think was 'normal'. But I later realised that my version of normal doesn't quite fit with their version. And that later expanded to realising that, I think, everyone's version of normal looks a little bit different even if they seem the same from the outside
I think our ideas
come from our
upbringing and also
from society. That
we put pressure on
ourselves to
conform to society

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

Snowie
TideisTurning
(PSW)

Welcome @the
magician. We're
just talking about
where different
ideas of normal
might come from
:)

hey @the
magician !

Thanks

for

coming to

hang

out :D

I think

normal for

me is really

being able

to hold

down a job,

be efficient

in that job

and have a

healthy

social life

and family

life

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

teej

For me personally- it
had a lot to do with
my upbringing, culture
and social

surroundings. More

often than not, the

word 'normal' had a

very rigid meaning..or

very black and white.

earthling95
(PSW)

Welcome
the
earthling95
(PSW) magician
:)

no such thing as normal. i think school
upbringing that you have to fit a model.
everyone thinks they're different except
were all the same just nobody thinks
so....

the magician
definitely agree with you @earthling95
(PSW) . Sometimes the socially & culturally
accepted versions of normal that we might
often see do not allow for much room to
explore other models of 'normal'

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

I think my ideas of what 'normal'
is/ what defines it often come from
not feeling 'normal' in some way,
or feeling 'different' or 'other'.

TideisTurning
(PSW)

So true. It was baffling sometimes
when I was considered 'brave'
when I chose not to follow or
internalise 'normal' feelings or way
of life

earthling95
(PSW)

I think there is no right of
wrong normal @Oshun_Blu
(Moderator) , @earthling95
(PSW) , @TideisTurning
(PSW)

Shaz51
Totally
agree, @Shaz51 Only
what feels right or
wrong for you

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)
earthling95
(PSW) Agreed
Shaz51.

Well
said.

when you look
at how many
people suffer
from MI its a
lot it becomes
its own normal
and therefore
affects the
margin of
normality

the
magician

Hi
@Tyme :)

TideisTurning
(PSW)
earthling95
(PSW)

Great to
see you
Welcome
tyme :)

Hello
@tyme

Shaz51

(PSW)

Hey

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

@tyme
(PSW) :)

**Q3 .What are
your
experiences
with being
'different,' and
how do you feel
about them?**

earthling95
(PSW)

Hi @shaz
and

tyme
(PSW)

Oshun_blu...
a very

interesting
conversation
tonight

**tyme
(PSW)**

Hi
@tideisturning

@Oshun_Blu (Moderator) wrote
“ Sometimes the socially & culturally
accepted versions of normal that we
might often see do not allow for much
room to explore other models of
'normal' . I am interested in this concept.
I'm very stuck presently in the traditional

teej

one
@earthling95,
being different
used to make me
feel abnormal. I
ended up feeling
very low. Until I
realised there's
no such thing as
“normal”.

tyme (PSW)

Rose
Burn
actress
said
that
every
family
has one
a
different
or crazy
relative

the magician
**Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)**

Difference has been something I have had a complicated relationship too in some ways (like most people, I imagine). I have always felt acutely aware of my differences and for a long time tried to hide these. But then in some ways, I almost sought to amplify other areas where I felt different--as a means of asserting & expressing my identity and rebelling against social norms

For me, my experiences of feeling 'different' are associated with my belonging to marginalised groups. Both being part of these marginalised groups, the 'different' feelings this has resulted in and some of the associated difficult experiences I've had, haven't led to the best feelings... Looking back though, I've realised a lot of my feeling 'different' is very closely related to feeling a need to 'fit in' where by contrast, when my feelings of being 'different' (particularly when it doesn't feel like a good thing) have been lesser, these were also times when I've felt a stronger sense of belonging.

**TideisTurning
(PSW)**

Very true @tyme
(PSW) , what
family and society
mold you into a
normal which
they see as
normal might not
be the same for

Shaz51

us
I have always felt different for as long as I can remember. Perhaps it steams from abuse at a young age, or maybe I was just always different. I think that I have played along as a "normal" person for so long now. I feel that in some way I have let people down now that I have told people about my MI.

Snowie

I hear you tyme. Being different made me feel incompetent and impacted my self worth. It's been a journey to realise that I deserve to take up space on the table too. When I moved to this country, I felt

**earthling95
(PSW)**

'different'. It's been a process trying to
balance having my feet in two boats.

earthling95
(PSW) 'Being
normal'
was
exhausting.

teej I think the
need to fit in
drives our
sense of
normal
@TideisTurning
(PSW)

True
teej. I
have
been
thinking
a lot
earthling95
(PSW) about
this..

@earthling95
(PSW) ,
being
normal in
other people
eyes is very
tiring

Shaz51 socially i feel the need to hide my MI
factors to keep a need to know basis but
this can be limiting and represent fear of
others understanding differences. my
family were raised to ignore my different
things and treat me as normal. it worked.
the
magician
earthling95
(PSW)

"this can be limiting and represents fear of others understanding differences"..so true. Well said.

Oops @the magician I didn't mean the thumbs down icon.

teej
earthling95
(PSW)

Welcome @Zoe7 :) totally with you there, @the magician & @earthling95 (PSW) . Being someone elses version of normal can be pretty restrictive. Feels too tight to wear someone else's life

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

Just going to try to catch up @earthling95 (PSW)

Zoe7

Hi @Zoe7 :) We're just talking about feeling

TideisTurning
(PSW)

different and the impact

this can
have on our
lives :)

earthling95
(PSW) No
worries
:)

i remember at high school wanting
to be a part of a group. then when
i got ill i just wanted people to
accept me being very quiet and sit.
the
magician instead i was singled out and
ostracised.

Thanks
@TideisTurning
(PSW) 👍

Zoe7 Might just
follow along
for now.

I think social media has a
big part in people's
perception of "normal" -
when I'm actual fact, I think
tyme
(PSW) social media portrays quite
the opposite.

I feel you
TideisTurning
(PSW) @the
magician :)

I think for some of us there was a
"normal" and feeling part of the
rat-race but then a "breakdown"
of some kind changed us and we
can't go back to that normal. That
makes it hard for everyone
teej
involved

earthling95
(PSW)

So true tyme. I often find myself comparing to people on social media..especially their immaculate morning routines and I often wonder.."wish I could do this"

by the time i got to year 12 i didn't care anymore being an individual was in. Avril Lavigne: anything but ordinary please...

the
magician

Q4 Do you find you tend to compare yourself to "normal" people? If so, how has this impacted you - and how have you tried to deal with this?

**earthling95
(PSW)**

Through my recovery. I realised I've found my new 'normal'

**tyme
(PSW)**

Finding ourselves is very important xx

Shaz51

love that
@tyme
(PSW) .

**Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)**

Finding the
new normal
can be a
heck of a
ride/journey
i dont
compare its
bad for self
esteem. were
all the same
stuff just
packaged
differently.

the magician

Good point @the
magician. In my
youth, I didn't have
that wisdom, and I
DID compare. That
led to spiral into
depression

tyme (PSW)

accepting
yourself as
a whole
person is
important

the magician

I find comparing ourselves to others is
saying to ourselves that we are not
enough. We are enough just as we are
and realising/telling ourselves that is
maybe the first step to actually liking
ourselves.

Zoe7

earthling95
(PSW)

I'll share something that is close to my heart- my brother is disabled and he was often ostracised in social settings..something as simple as playing with kids in the park. As his sister it angered me and I would often wonder growing up I wish he could just 'normally' play in the park. Just witnessing those situations impacted me deeply growing up.

TideisTurning
(PSW)

I like to think of comparison as a bit of a trap. It's all too easy to do!

I think I compare myself to others but not sure if they are normal or not. I think that it is easy to compare ourselves and find fault in our own lives. In saying that, people only let you see the "good" times or what they want you to see. You never see their whole lives. It does impact me however, I think I am more judgmental on myself, probably more harder on myself.

Snowie

Sometimes I found myself comparing myself to other "normal" people, even when they were doing things that I don't necessarily want to do in my goals. For me it would start as more of a cognitive exercise in playing the game of "what if...?". A means of exploring what could have been if I had made different choices in my path. It used to lead to a lot of rumination and ultimately, tons of shame. no thanks

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

earthling95
(PSW)

Ah, the shame spiral..

@earthling95
(PSW) I feel very stuck with this currently. I am struggling with it lots

teej

TideisTurning
(PSW) I've been
there
@earthling95

earthling95
(PSW) It's
absolutely
awful.

tyme
(PSW) At this
point in my
life, I don't
feel
"normal". I
feel quite
"abnormal"
actually,
but I love it
that way!

Shaz51
earthling95
(PSW) You too
@TideisTurning
(PSW) xx

earthling95
(PSW) Love that
@tyme (PSW) !
@earthling95
(PSW) i tend to
get bored with
everything that
same "normal"...

tyme (PSW) I like being
different and a
bit strange lol
i don't have
normal
healthy
friendships
just a whole
heap of
situational
friends that s

the magician

my abnormal
part

The
song
"My
Way"
by
Frank
Sinatra
is
playing
in my
mind
tyme :)

**earthling95
(PSW)**

@tyme
(PSW) I
think that is
awesome,
and I love
you've
been able
to embrace
and learn to
love it! :)

**TideisTurning
(PSW)**

Same here, @tyme (PSW) . I
love being weirdly, boldly
me. Becoming a friend to
myself was a big step here,
and becoming friends with
people who embraced the
stuff I thought i had to hide

**Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)**

It's like your
own
homecoming.

**earthling95
(PSW)**

tyme (PSW) Yep @earthling95
(PSW) @Oshun_Blu
(Moderator) @TideisTurning
(PSW) I thrive on being a
little "different"
yessss, love
that!

Oshun_Blu (Moderator) @earthling95
(PSW) 100%
But

tyme (PSW) respectfully.
I feel like I spent
the first half of
my life "learning"
to become
normal. Now I
am spending
time unlearning
that, and learning
to become even
more 'me'

Oshun_Blu (Moderator) my
nephew
actually
wants to
be crazy.
like his
auntie.
the
second
nephew
wants
group.
like

the
magician outdoors
inc.

**earthling95
(PSW)**

Bless.
Q5
Sometimes
it's not
good to
feel
different.
What are
some of
the
challenges
you
experience
as a result

**earthling95
(PSW)**

of being
'different'?

Sometimes people
feel being different
means hierarchy, but
it doesn't. Doesn't
mean one is better
than the other. As you
said @the magician ,
we are the same stuff,
packaged differently

**tyme
(PSW)**

Love it
@Oshun_Blu
(Moderator) !

**tyme
(PSW)**

It's a
profound
revelation
that we
don't need

**tyme
(PSW)**

to
conform
to the

same
mould
.." we
don't
need to
conform
to the
same

earthling95
(PSW)

mould"
:) love it
@tyme

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

(PSW) absolutely,
powerful stuff

The
challenges
for me
personally
is that I'm
very stuck,
can't go
backwards
- can't go
forwards

teej

I think I am hesitant to makes
friends or let others too close to me
incase they reject me. I try and hide
who I really am and spend so much
of my energy tryin to come across
as normal. It consumes you daily
and makes my depression worse.

Snowie

To name a few and not
go too deep, in my life,
I've had stigma
(including and
especially internalised
stigma), outright

TideisTurning
(PSW)

discrimination and
abuse, exclusion and
ostracism.

I have at times had to quite literally 'watch my back' for being
different, and loving different kinds of people openly. Having to
leave certain parts of myself at home for my own safety started
to get really hard to do the more I learned to love those parts
of myself. Ultimately my solution to this has been to seek out
and lean into community. Feeling uplifted and embraced feels
so powerful and safe

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

You're not
alone with
those kinds of

TideisTurning
(PSW)

things
@Snowie :)
Being on the
receiving end

earthling95
(PSW)

of
discrimination.
mixes it up
keeps it
interesting

the magician

I think it engrained a
sense of hyper
independence in me
early on..that I am the
only one who will be able
to protect myself.

earthling95
(PSW)

@Snowie I'm with you there, I have become
a lot more selective about who I let into my
circle nowadays, and have come to accept
that sometimes that means my circle will be
much smaller. Quality over quantity is where
I'm at now
more selective with
friends and higher

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

the magician

expectations in
relationships and
ambitions/education
Quality over
quantity is

**TideisTurning
(PSW)**

huge
@oshun_blu

Meh? I've come to the point that if people don't appreciate me for what I can bring to society, then they are probably not who I want to hang around with. Self-love is of utmost importance here - but needs to be learnt. It took me a long time to love myself enough to not give a hoot about being

tyme (PSW)

ostracised
@earthling95
(PSW) that hyper
independence
response can be a
huge part of feeling
different, hey. I still
struggle to let that
one rest

**Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)**

sometimes! It's a
continuous process

"self love is
of utmost
importance
but needs
to be learnt"
so true. I
think that
process
started with
self-respect
for me..

**earthling95
(PSW)**

Shaz51 Same here @tyme (PSW)
Teej: do you feel unable to overcome the magician obstacles in time? I wish the process didn't have to be so hard

earthling95 (PSW)
Q6. Alternatively, are there times where you have felt like your 'differences' were a good thing?

Oshun_Blu (Moderator)
So well expressed, @tyme (PSW) "The most rebellious thing I ever did was learn to love myself in a world that wants anything but" is a quote I love about that concept of self-love.

TideisTurning (PSW)
In many ways, I'm still in the process of trying to convince myself and truly believe that being a little different is even ok/ acceptable, let alone a good thing. So, it's rare that my being different actually feels like a good thing (work in progress), but it does happen occasionally. It's actually a big part of the reason I do the work I do with peer support work. Because it allows me to turn lemons into lemonade if you will by giving me

opportunities to make good of my different and some of the negative experiences that have come from that.

**earthling95
(PSW)**

In my case I believe my "differences" have been educational for some.. only when they come from a space of curiosity and not being condescending.

tyme (PSW)

Being different can be so helpful in group work. You can see things others may not see, and you can work things out in ways others can't.

I don't think I have felt like my differences have been a good thing. I think I am still learning about my differences and the impact they have on me. It seems like a marathon to me.

Snowie

**earthling95
(PSW)**

Slow and steady wins the marathon
Snowie :)

the
magician

being unwell and annoying housing 49 times gave me a great place to live. being

open led to my special
consideration in
education. volunteering for
MI gave me direction in life.
not smoking or driving gave
me a wad of cash.

That's ok
@Snowie.

TideisTurning
(PSW) There's no
rush. :)

Shaz51
Love that
@earthling95
(PSW)

I feel most at home in my
differences when they are being
used to collaborate or create. I have
discovered that seeing the world
differently means that we can all
swap perspectives here and there.
And when that happens, rare as it
may be sometimes, it feels really
powerful

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

So
important
tyme
(PSW) @the
magician

I have
often
wondered-
why do we
give
earthling95
(PSW) healing a
timeline..

So true
tyme
(PSW) @earthling95
(PSW)

the
magician

always
accepted
my illness
just not
the life
that's
supposed
to go with
it

**tyme
(PSW)**

I think
healing
and
recovery
are
lifelong
for me

**earthling95
(PSW)**

I
hear
you

**Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)**

Absolutely agree, I think
healing often changes
shape over the course
of life and that can be
liberating...and also
downright frustrating at
times haha
schizophrenia
is not a bad
life just a hard
one. but you
go with the
ups and
positives
permanently.

the
magician
**earthling95
(PSW)**

'Life is a rollercoaster"-
Ronan
Keating

Q7.

**Considering
the positives
and/or
negatives of
being
'different'-
how do you
feel overall
about the
concept of
what it
means to be
"normal?"**

**earthling95
(PSW)**

i think from my year level there were about 5 people who committed suicide. i think of my worst times and how it could have been possibly worse. how hard they must have felt to go through with that. and not be able to help or get help. all because we weren't normal.

the
magician

"Normal is an illusion. What is normal for the spider is chaos for the fly"-Morticia Addams. Pretty much sums up my overall feelings

**Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)**

earthling95 (PSW) about normal as a concept I'm so sorry to hear the magician.

TideisTurning (PSW) That's awful @the magician. Im sorry you had to go through that

tyme (PSW) So sad to hear @the magician

teej the magician :grimacing:

Oshun_Blu (Moderator) Thank you for sharing that, @the magician . You've touched on such an important point about the need for facilitation of spaces where people can feel 'normal' within their differences. I'm sorry you had to experience that

teej Sorry. I'm having connection problems

I've heard it said before in the hearing voices space, that 'normal' is a setting on a washing machine rather than a state of being for a person. I really like this. What I'm going to try to do going forward is, if I think of normal in relation to me, is to look at 'my normal'. That is, what is normal, for me rather than trying to think of normal as a subjective concept, which, thinking more about it, I don't think it is! Just like every person is different, everyone will have different ideas of what 'normal' is, and the meaning of 'normal' will be different for all of us as individuals. Everyone is different, and not only is that ok (even when it might not feel that way), but it's actually kind of awesome, because not only are our differences what make us unique, they're also an important part of what make us who we are.

**TideisTurning
(PSW)**

"What the hell is
ADD my friends say
I should act my
age..what's my age
again? what's my
age again..🎵"

**earthling95
(PSW)**

Sums up the whole
experience of being
'normal' for me.

haha :)
Thank you for
sharing
@TideisTurning
(PSW) . So
insightful.

**earthling95
(PSW)**

Especially that
'normal' is a
setting on a
washing
machine..love
the analogy.

**TideisTurning
(PSW)**

All good
@Teej. Just do
the best you
can :)

tyme (PSW)

Well said
@TideisTurning
(PSW)

teej
How do you find
your new normal
when everyone
around you is
waiting for your
old normal to
come back?

**tyme
(PSW)**
@teej pehaps
they'll stop
waiting once
they realise
your new
normal is
better than
your old
normal?

the
magician
point out
everyone
changes
with time
experiences
find new
people to
share that
with

**earthling95
(PSW)**
or they will
have the
mindfulness
to meet you
where you're
at and nurture
your new
normal :)

@teej if we keep
striving for the
old normal, we
forget to live in
the present -
what we actually
have control
over?

tyme
(PSW)

earthling95
(PSW)

Well
said.

But
the
truth is
my
new
normal
isn't
better,
and
most
people
see it
as

teej

worse
and
accept
as
long
as

the
magician

youre
happy

That's a really
good question
@teej. I feel like it's
a case of just
being you, and
being true to

TideisTurning
(PSW)

yourself. ou get to
decide what
opinions feel
important to listen
to :)

That's a really good question, @teej and I
think that after spending a while getting to
know yourself and nurturing those parts of
yourself, it becomes a matter of other
people getting to know you again too. Some
people will leave, because change is hard.
But the ones who stay? Those are the ones
to hold onto

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

you
have to
like
the
magician
yourself
first
@teej , I
too had a
worse
normal
before a
better
normal...if
that

tyme
(PSW)

makes
sense
**Q: Have you learned
anything helpful from
others' experiences
here tonight that you
might be able to
apply in your own**

earthling95
(PSW)

**life? If yes, what did
you learn?**

I think I feel the
pressure
because of my
age as well.
Coming to learn
who you really
are in your 50s
feels
overwhelming at
times

teej

that other
people can
feel on the
outside too

the
magician



for all the
above
replies.

teej

Tonight was such a
powerful
conversation. I've
appreciated
everyone's share
from tonight,
regardless of where
each person's
journey is in finding

tyme (PSW)

their normal
I think that
is what I've
learned
tonight, that
everyone
has had
their own
experiences
and learning

teej

to find a
"normal" for
them

Il have learned so much from you all, to be
honest. Sometimes being a human is really
weird and messy. But in these spaces, that
weird stuff that we were told we have to
keep secret becomes so powerful. Shame
dies when stories are shared. Thanks for
being so open with your stories

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

here :purple_heart:

thankyou

the
magician

I'm going to
catch some
Netflix:nerd:

I feel like my
biggest
takeaways
this evening
are some
wonderful
quotes from
all of you, like
"quality over

TideisTurning
(PSW)

quantity" with
relationships

Thank you
for your
courage
and

earthling95
(PSW)

vulnerability
folks.

So true
- Shame

tyme
(PSW)

dies when
stories are
shared

@Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)
@Oshun_Blu
(Moderator) maybe
you just helped me
come to terms with
maybe it's the fear of
losing some close to
me that keeps me
stuck
pain
shared
is
halved
. here
too.

teej

the
magician

oh @teej !
My heart
is all
bursting
and warm
over here,
thank you
for being
so
vulnerable
here.

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

Truly <3

Q: Tonight's topic may have brought up some heavy feelings as we talked about difficult life experiences and perhaps comparing them to others. Would some self-care be helpful for you after we finish? If so, what might you do?

earthling95
(PSW)

teej
earthling95
(PSW)
Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)
teej

Yep it
did but
I'm all
ok. Will
chill
out
and
distract
I might
sleep
early and
have a
cheeky
caramel
chocolate!
I am
going to
go cuddle
my cats
and
watch a
movie I
think :)
Night all
💜🙏🤞🙏🙏

[We'd like to invite you to complete a survey reflecting on your experience in this Peer Group Chat. As we're trialling this service, we'd love to hear any feedback you may have. It will only take a few minutes to complete. Please click this](#)

earthling95
(PSW)

[link: https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW](https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW)
Here are some further resources we recommend having a look at: 1: What is "normal" and what is "different?" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zz0Xcnea>
Sometimes we may feel that our experiences with trauma are isolated to us, or the exception to the rule in terms of human experience.

earthling95
(PSW)

Trauma is quite normal, unfortunately- and the figures presented at the beginning of this article use a fairly conservative understanding of trauma- not including things like neglect, verbal and emotional abuse, bullying, etc. So how much higher might the actual figure be? For better or for worse, trauma is not an uncommon human experience (if anything, it appears almost universal) <https://www.bu.edu/sph/news/articles/2018/trauma-and-its-aftermath/>
3: Perhaps it could be helpful to try and focus on comparing our experiences to our own journeys, and not to others:

<https://www.enlightenedsolutions.com/how-to-quit-comparing-yourself-to-others-and-focus-on-recovery/>

see you
next
week
people.
my
weekly
reality
window.

the
magician

g'night
everyone,
thanks again
for tonight. I
love it when I
get to come
hang out here
with you
all :blush:

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

[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/online-mental-health-meet-up>. You can also ask questions for us to discuss in future peer chats!](#)

earthling95
(PSW)

Thank you
so much
everyone
for being
here and
sharing
witus so
generously
:)

TideisTurning
(PSW)

earthling95
(PSW)

Goodnight
folks
:) have a
lovely
week
ahead.

TideisTurning
(PSW)

We'll be
closing the
room soon
everyone.
Thanks
again for
being here
& take
good care
of
yourselves!
:)