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SANE Peer Group Chat

Date: 30/06/2022

Title: Healing from Invalidation

Description: Invalidation is a form of trauma that involves the act of rejecting, judging, or ignoring a person’s thoughts, feelings, and emotions as being valid and understandable. The impact of invalidation may require – for some people – ongoing work to rebuild self-esteem, trust, and self-identity. Let us come together to share our thoughts and experiences surrounding healing from invalidation.

Sirius (PSW)	<p>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 Healing from Invalidation. 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.</p> <p>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</p>
Sirius (PSW)	Hello @Captain24 and @Jacques 😊
	Hello @Jacques!
Captain24	Hi @LittleSteps (PSW)
LittleSteps (PSW)	Welcome @Captain24!

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Sirius (PSW)	<p>Tonight, Peer Support Workers @Sirius and @LittleSteps will be facilitating a discussion around the topic of Healing from Invalidation. Whether you have lived experience of complex mental health issues, you care for someone who does, or both, discussing ways in which emotional invalidation affects us individually is important in identifying and assisting ways in which we can heal from it. 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. @jynx who moderates on the SANE Forums, is working behind the scenes to ensure our safety.</p> <p>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) or message @jynx. We're looking forward to creating a space where we can reflect and learn together and expand our ideas of Healing from Invalidation.</p>
maddison	Hello
Jacques	hello ladies and gentlemen
LittleSteps (PSW)	Hello @maddison 😊
Jynx (Moderator)	Hello all! 😊
Sirius (PSW)	We will be starting the discussion shortly, and will just allow a bit more time for people to log on and join
LittleSteps (PSW)	Hello @the magician! 😊
the magician	Hi people I'm magician. Such an important topic!
Jynx (Moderator)	And I'm ya moderator buddy Jynx 😊
LittleSteps (PSW)	Hi everyone! I'm @LittleSteps 😊
Sirius (PSW)	Welcome everyone! Feel free to introduce yourselves. I'm @Sirius :blush:
maddison	Hi all it's maddison!

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Meggle	G'day
Jacques	Hi everyone, I'm Jacques, I have been on sane since it started. Happy to contribute to this chat. the topics have been amazing of late
LittleSteps (PSW)	Welcome @Meggle! 😊
Captain24	Hi I'm Captain24
Sirius (PSW)	Hello @Meggle!
LittleSteps (PSW)	Hi there @CeeCee 😊
Sirius (PSW)	Okay, let's get started... Q1: What does invalidation mean and look like to you?
maddison	Lack of connection.
Jacques	It is so hurtful to me, when people say just get over it (depression) and that mental illness has no physical effects, so it is not a real disease. I had a psychologist tell me I was faking mental health issues for 20 years "to get the dole" it makes me feel so hopeless sometimes
Captain24	Not being recognised
Meggle	that's terrible @Jacques
the magician	Three examples that I could elaborate on. When abuse is not managed and heard from within the system. When relatives always have something hurtful to pick on and when your potential is disregarded.
Jynx (Moderator)	That is so awful Jacques, so sorry to hear you had to go through that.
LittleSteps (PSW)	I also agree
Captain24	I agree magician with the family
Jacques	yes magician, when family put us down it hurts the most

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LittleSteps (PSW)	Invalidation, I believe, can take many different forms and be verbal or non-verbal. For example, I believe that people can show and enact invalidation even through their body language. Other ways someone could invalidate other people can be due to with their words.
the magician	Was that psych deregistered for saying that? Completely unprofessional.
Jacques	No magician, it was in the public system, several people heard it, and I only went once. I never went back
the magician	Sometimes it's when you get a certain look from someone that feels daunting to be assertive with those people's comments.
Sirius (PSW)	Question 2: Have you ever felt invalidated? What emotions came from that if you have?
Jacques	Yes, I get people rolling their eyes a lot, or just wanting to walk away, especially when any difficult topics come up.
maddison	It makes me question myself. Perhaps my feelings are wrong - perhaps I am wrong.
Captain24	A lot. I felt heartbroken and but after a while you start to believe it.
Jacques	I guess hurt, confusion, sadness, anger, I tent to withdraw into myself and distance myself from the situation
LittleSteps (PSW)	That must be hard to go through @maddison
Jacques	yes Captain24 I do that too, I always put myself down and validate people who hurt me saying they may be right
Captain24	Yes Jacques. Especially when it's done from a young age from people that are supposed to support you
the magician	I was told I had technical assault or unreciprocated assault or trouble with convincing a court rather than just being believed and feeling traumatised and just delusional. It took 25 years and a new psych to be validated. And believed.
Jynx (Moderator)	Yeah Captain that resonates pretty deeply.... it can be so hard to untangle yourself from it
maddison	Yes @LittleSteps (PSW) it is horrible way to feel. Unfair to make anyone feel this way.
Sirius (PSW)	Absolutely @Captain24

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LittleSteps (PSW)	I have certainly felt invalidated. When my emotions and experiences are invalidated, I can feel down and upset. It makes me feel like I am somehow less human less worthy of respect. I have learnt different ways to deal with invalidation, and how to validate my own experiences, even.
LittleSteps (PSW)	@the magician that sounds like a long time to go without validation and being believed. I am sorry to hear that.
Sirius (PSW)	Question 3: What do you do if your emotions are invalidated and how do you handle invalidation?
the magician	I don't like that for whatever reason a single family member will always find it humorous to provoke fun meanly. I don't like that we have that relationship.
LittleSteps (PSW)	When I am invalidated, I try to draw attention back to my emotions through the use of statements. This can look like stating your emotions using statements, like for example saying To be honest with you, I am feeling really invalidated right now. I am feeling quite upset.
Captain24	I tend to believe it and just have to accept it.
the magician	I guess to say something.
Meggle	I try to get support by ringing my friend and talking with her about the situation
maddison	I think distancing myself from situation is helpful. Try to remember the importance of stuff worth. If others for not recognise the same worth, perhaps it is time to question what, or why I need from them.
Captain24	@LittleSteps (PSW) that can be hard when the invalidation has been constant throughout life and you can't stand up to that person
the magician	People deserve to know they're hurting your feelings that you don't know why they do it but that you'd prefer they didn't. Otherwise it's just gets sour and withdrawn. Introspective about the whole thing.
Jacques	I usually withdraw and punish myself, depending what is being said I can go into a deep depression. I guess it comes from childhood trauma, I was punished in primary school by a nun, she used to lock me in a room, I guess punishing myself comes from that.

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Jacques	It really does wear you down, I agree with Captain.
Jynx (Moderator)	Oh wow @Jacques that is very intense. Sounds like you have realised how big an impact this has had on you and you're still in the process of healing from it. Thank you for sharing with us.
the magician	I had a lot of anger about the way a step dad said I would turn out so that if anything happened to me I deserved it. Perhaps he was the problem.
Jacques	Sorry if my chat is too full on, please let me know admins if I need to tone it down.
LittleSteps (PSW)	absolutely @Captain24
LittleSteps (PSW)	@the magician no one deserves to be treated or spoken to like that
Captain24	I get that magician. I was told that I was a useless child and that I wasn't wanted
Sirius (PSW)	Question 4: Why is emotional invalidation so harmful? How has it impacted your life?
Jynx (Moderator)	Thank you for checking in @Jacques. You haven't breached any guidelines by keeping the descriptions basic. You deserve to be able to tell your story 😊
LittleSteps (PSW)	@Captain24. That sounds like something that is difficult to hear at such a young age. We are sitting here with you through this for tonight.
the magician	Releasing yourself from past patterns and reclaiming space if not your life is empowering when we have been invalidated for a long time.
Jacques	Hugs magician and captain, it must be so so difficult from people who should love you the most.
Captain24	It has me doubting myself always. I have no confidence and believe what has been said. It has put me where I am today
Jacques	I think for me emotional invalidation over a long period of time makes me believe it is all in my head, and makes me withdraw which intensifies the feelings and mental health issues even more. It can impact everything in my life. when I get depression from it I can sleep for weeks which impacts my physical health too

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LittleSteps (PSW)	Hey @chibam 😊
Jacques	hi chibam
chibam	Hi @LittleSteps (PSW)! I forgot this was on! I guess I hadn't subscribed to the reminder stream. I thought I had.
Jacques	It really destroys any self-confidence and self-esteem too.
LittleSteps (PSW)	Invalidation has had an impact on me in that it makes me feel like my emotions and experiences are worth less than those of others'.
Sirius (PSW)	Hello @chibam 😊
the magician	The statement shell be right means a lot. I completely empathise with the women out there who find that unfair. But it is that mantra that got me up in the morning and school every day. It worked.
chibam	Hi, @Jacques! 😊
the magician	what it means is that I have put up with very insincere and s
the magician	what it means is that I have put up with very insincere and unsupportive people
chibam	@the magician, but it works both ways, doesn't it? Like, my experience is that when you aren't what people want, you end up having to play-act a character that you aren't to meet their standards. I don't know about others, but I can never get the role right. So we end up becoming pretty insincere ourselves, IMHO.
the magician	It's a confidence booster.
Sirius (PSW)	Question 5: On the other hand, what emotions are linked with the experience of being validated?
Captain24	I actually have trouble believing it. I usually think that they are just making fun of me.
chibam	Hi, @Sirius (PSW) (just noticed your greeting! 😊)
chibam	Re Q5: Connection... whatever the direct opposite of loneliness is. But that's only when you're being validated for the stuff that's the real you, not for the fictions that other people coerce you into playing.

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LittleSteps (PSW)	I feel that when my emotions are validated, I feel human.
Jynx (Moderator)	Good point @chibam - Which tends to mean that when I'm feeling validated, it's like being accepted for who I am
the magician	Be yourself. Not to live up to others expectations or view of what you should be...
Jacques	I agree with captain again, it does feel like people are lying or making fun, I struggled when my partner was so nice to me, it took me a long time to believe her. she has been amazing to support me and at the start she was hurt she understood why I felt the way I did
Jynx (Moderator)	That's a really difficult headspace to pull yourself out of hey @Jacques, I remember how much effort I have had to put in to just believing it when my friends are nice to me.
the magician	You can feel in a situation when you're not yourself. Either through confidence or unacceptance. I focus on positive interactions. if I'm not happy what's the point
chibam	@the magician It's never that simple. Sometimes you have to play by others' rules to avoid doing harm, both to others and in some cases, to yourself.
Captain24	Jacques that is why I'm single. I don t believe I'm worthy of someone loving me
Jacques	Yes jynx, the saying I like to use it some people think glass half full or half empty, I am a glass completely empty guy. I expect hate, and when something nice happens it really throws me. I sometimes wonder if I'm drawn to negativity.
Jacques	Everyone deserves love Captain24, but I do understand, I always felt unlovable, I got such a shock when someone actually loved me. I hope one day you find someone who loves you for just being you. 😊
LittleSteps (PSW)	Absolutely it does @the magician
Jynx (Moderator)	Aww @Captain24!! I know you absolutely are worthy of love, and I hope one day you are able to believe that 😊
the magician	it's a sign of strength when you walk away from negative or disrespectful people towards you

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chibam	@Jynx (Moderator) IMHO, the absolute worst thing is when their nice to you when your acting "normal", and so that makes you feel a bit safe to start showing your true self, and then they start getting turned off by that.
the magician	I only know of unrequited or unobtainable love in partners. Relationships! Unless it's something extraordinary I'd rather the company of a low maintenance cat being whole.
Sirius (PSW)	Question 6: Why is validation important? How can you validate your own emotions?
chibam	@the magician I wish I'd had people around me with that sort of attitude when I was surrounded by toxic relationships. Back then, my avoidance of the bad company always had me being painted as having something wrong with me, e.g. avoidant personality disorder, etc.
Jynx (Moderator)	@Jacques I think for me, it took a while to realise that I was drawn to negativity because that is what felt familiar. We are creatures of habit after all. It actually felt super uncomfortable to find friends that helped me feel valued... but over time it got easier. @chibam Yeah agree! That can be so so hard, because it makes it even more difficult to want to open up and show your true self to the world again.
Jacques	Validation for me helps improve self-worth, self-esteem and self-love, to believe in myself again, it is only in the past 6 years I'm slowly learning I am worthy and I do matter. That probably sounds silly.
the magician	I think its positive refreshing and whole
Jynx (Moderator)	Agree! Not silly at all!!
LittleSteps (PSW)	@Jacques In my eyes, that doesn't sound silly! It sounds like validation has had a really profound impact on you.
the magician	Sticking up for yourself no matter how difficult that seems, a changed strategy to a situation/relationship.
Jacques	hi Louise
Jacques	Sorry for the random question, but how do you tag people in the chat?
Captain24	Sorry guys. I can't do this
LittleSteps (PSW)	Welcome @Louise 😊

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Jacques	Yes I feel the same way Jinx it does take time, but it does become easier to accept kindness.
Jacques	Is captain ok?
chibam	@Jacques , you start with the "@" symbol, then keep typing the user's name letter-by letter until a popup with a list of names comes up
the magician	when you accept and like yourself you draw others to you
Jacques	hugs captain24, please be gentle with yourself
Jacques	ok thank you @chibam
CeeCee	I was having trouble typing. Hello
CeeCee	It's important because everyone wants to be seen and understood and accepted
Jynx (Moderator)	Seems like @Captain24 has had to step away, we are going to check in with them but sounds like they have recognised their own needs and acted accordingly. If anyone is concerned you can always flick me a private message.
chibam	Hi @Louise, @CeeCee !
Sirius (PSW)	Hi @CeeCee nice of you to join us this evening 😊
CeeCee	I can accept that I am human and that my emotions are valid though I don't need to always act on them
the magician	A lesson I recently learnt when you've only achieved half of something or less than you felt it means you're showing your potential. That your ceiling isn't drawn. That applies to relationships and emotions too.
Sirius (PSW)	Question 7: Do you have people in your life who can validate what you are going through? If not where might you find these people?
chibam	Re Q7: Nope! And that is the million-dollar question.
LittleSteps (PSW)	That is very interesting @CeeCee

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the magician	In the same street. Something you value about each.
Jacques	I am very cautious who I let into my life, I keep most people at arm's length, yes, and my partner is amazing she understand me because she is going through the same things. My mum tries to understand but she can't fully because she does not have mental health issues. I'm sure there are some amazing psychologists, psychiatrists and councillors that can really make a difference.
LittleSteps (PSW)	I think these forums and groups are a start to finding people who can validate what we are going through and also understand 😊
Jacques	Yes @LittleSteps (PSW) these forums are truly amazing, I would not be here if it was not for SANE.
chibam	@LittleSteps (PSW) That's certainly better than nothing. But I think in this COVID, Zoom-based world where everybody is trapped at home, behind a screen, we're all yearning for some positive real-person contact.
CeeCee	Relying on professionals at the moment and hopefully using Sane to find people who already understand
the magician	report of a psychiatrist and psychologist help in stepping outside your comfort zone to empower you build momentum in your life trying new things putting self out there and finding at least one positive.
the magician	Mental health pop up centres should have F2F peer groups regionally.
Jacques	Any men here men's sheds are meant to be amazing for mental health support. I have a friend who goes. It is a community project.
CeeCee	So I've decided to stop trying to make them understand and instead find my tribe
CeeCee	I find it's always hard when people haven't walked in your shoes or been through complex mental health issues to understand
the magician	Sometimes people don't understand until they're in the family and then they find you bazaar.
CeeCee	@Jacque totally

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Sirius (PSW)	Question: 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?
Jacques	Oh yes @CeeCee it is so hard for people who can't relate.
Jacques	Learning I'm not alone with being hurt and knowing it is not right or normal.
CeeCee	That I'm not alone in this issue
Sirius (PSW)	@CeeCee you are definitely not alone ♥
the magician	each week this group keeps me centred
CeeCee	But that we can validate each other, which is comforting
the magician	Change is possible.
CeeCee	@Sirius ♥
the magician	there is potential to get a win out of this family member and put long in the past those others that I didn't deserve
Jacques	Hugs to everyone here, these topics are so difficult sometimes.
chibam	Boy, you said it, @Jacques. I get totally burned out on here, sometimes.
Jacques	I have so much respect for everyone here.
Sirius (PSW)	@Jacques aww big feels! :heart:
Sirius (PSW)	Question: Tonight's topic may have brought up some heavy feelings as we talked about Healing from Invalidation. Would some self-care be helpful for you after we finish? If so, what might you do?
the magician	Be absorbed into a fantasy book. Hot drink and heater with oodie. Maybe some music therapy. Chat to mum.
CeeCee	Changing the subject a little before I leave the chat, I'm 1 month sober today and this helped me not to relapse which with my mental health and meds I cannot afford. So a huge thank you to you all.

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chibam	I didn't get a lot of sleep last night, so TBH, there's a big likelihood I might just hit the sack early tonight.
chibam	Congrats, @CeeCee ! 😊
Jacques	Omg @the magician I have my oodie on right now!!!!!!
LittleSteps (PSW)	I think I will have a filling dinner 😊
Jacques	Reflection for me, some music tonight when I go to bed. And maybe using my worry beads.
CeeCee	@chibam Thank you so much
the magician	omg they're the greatest
Sirius (PSW)	congratulations @CeeCee
CeeCee	As sensory bath and bed
the magician	thanks for letting me listen to all your contributions
Jacques	agreed @the magician
chibam	@CeeCee , NP 😊
Jacques	congratulations @CeeCee an amazing achievement, wishing you all the best in your recovery
CeeCee	Good night every body
CeeCee	@Sirius (PSW) @Jacques thank you both so much
Sirius (PSW)	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
the magician	Goodnight people. :kissing_heart:

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chibam	Goodnight, all! 😊
Jacques	good night everyone, love to all
LittleSteps (PSW)	Goodnight everyone! 😊
Sirius (PSW)	Good night @CeeCee
Sirius (PSW)	<p>Here are some further resources we recommend having a look at:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Reasons Why Others Invalidate Your Emotional Experience https://psychcentral.com/health/reasons-you-and-others-invalidate-your-emotional-experience#why-its-done2. The Function of Emotions https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tR-O12A78hw3. Recovering From Invalidation https://eymtherapy.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/recoveringfrominvalidation1.pdf
Sirius (PSW)	Thank you all! 😊
LittleSteps (PSW)	Thanks all!
Jynx (Moderator)	Thanks everyone ❤️
Sirius (PSW)	<p>Thank you for joining, and we hope you enjoyed the discussion 😊</p> <p>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!</p>