

Supported Loving

Notes of Workshop 2

Date: May 31st
Time: 11.00 – 3.30pm

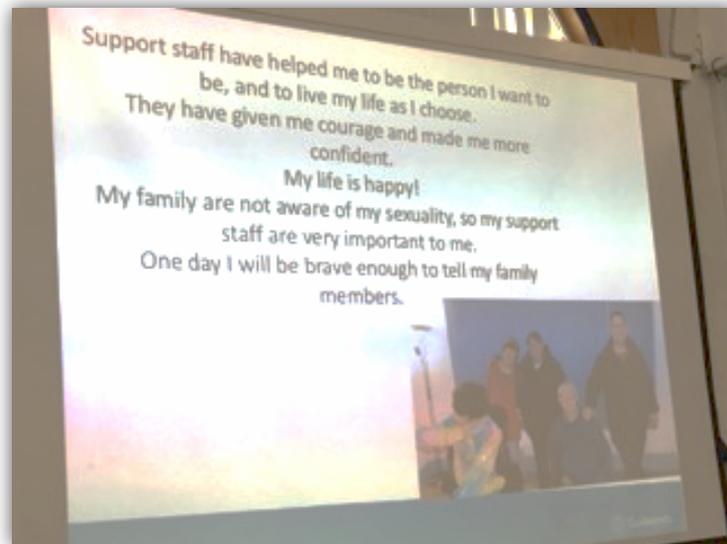


Supported Loving

	<h3>Welcome and introductions</h3> <p>A great turnout! The room was buzzing from the start with around 40 people in the room. This included a colleague in Scotland who joined via Skype! A great mix of self-advocates and supporters. Family members were missing. Wonder what we could do to include them as well?</p>
 <p>Supported Loving</p>	<h3>Why 'Supported Loving' and this network?</h3> <p>For those who were new Claire Bates explained who and how Supported Loving had been created and then we shared the amazing Channel 4 report, The Right to Love, which included footage of Workshop 1.</p> <p>The film really shows why the Supported Loving Campaign and Network are so important.</p> <p>Campaign link: Supported Loving Campaign</p> <p>Channel 4 Report: The Right to Love</p>
	<h3>Sharing action 1: The Mingle Group</h3> <p>We were told about how the group for Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender (LBGT) people with learning disabilities was set up (it's been going since 2007!) to create a safe place to be open and explore your sexuality. A place where people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• are accepted for who they are• get help with their confidence and assertiveness

- are helped to come out
- are able to discuss personal things
- think about how to stay safe.

This slide gave a very powerful message:



The discussion that followed focused on how to ensure such groups are set up and kept going. People generally agreed that there are not enough groups around the country. There was an example of one that had been set up and, because, even with a lot of work numbers are low, there was a possibility it may stop. ALL AGREED that the group should continue!!

For more information about the MINGLE group contact:

mhemmings@guideposts.org.uk

or call 01993 893 583

Facebook: @Guideposts.uk



Sharing action 2: Vicky Buckingham

Finding Love: Vicky Buckingham, a self-advocate, had us all gripped with her story of finding love. Vicky highlighted the struggles and talked about a relationship when she was young that was not good. Vicky explains that she only had her parents to support her and whilst at the time she wasn't happy with them and their advice, looking back now she can see they had her best interests at heart.

The good news is that many years later, in her work as a self-advocate, Vicky met Paul, fell in love and after much hard working planning...married Paul!

Vicky had us both laughing with her humour and thinking about what good support looks like.

Vicky has said she would like to come to future workshops so if you weren't there to meet Vicky – hopefully you'll get a chance in the future.

People were keen to ask questions after. Questions like:

1. What support may have helped your first experience of love to be easier? Vicky said an external pair of eyes, someone to listen, someone independent.
2. People also asked questions about how to support a woman who has social worker and staff are blocking her from moving in with her boyfriend. People talked about the importance of the law being on the woman's side and the need for clear guidelines, policies and procedures for staff.

People also talked about the need for good quality training for staff. Many people in this group offer such training.

Brandon Trust Policy: To follow

NDTi report: [Supporting People to develop sexual and romantic relationships](#) (Please see page 19 for links to Policies etc)

Law: Mental Capacity Act / Care Act 2014 and Human Rights Act

3. When Vicky was asked what advice she would give other people with learning disabilities about love and relationships she said.....go for it! Don't rush, have people around you but it's worth it!



Solution Circle:

We divided into four groups and a person in each group presented something, in relation to the focus of Supported Loving that they are struggling with.

The conversation was facilitated and people guided through a process to explore the challenge and come up with possible steps forward.

We don't have notes of the conversations BUT conversations included one group focusing on the difficulties people face around internet dating and staying safe online. Some advice was offered but the group decided that the best thing to do would be to see what guidance was online and bring it back to share at the next meeting. Another group focused on the real-life issues faced by a person who is gay but his family did not want staff to facilitate his exploring relationships. It was decided to get an independent advocate.

The final step of the Solution Circle was for people to agree follow up action/support. These weren't recorded..... **do you remember what your group committed to? Has the support been offered, or action taken place?**

People felt this was a useful session and said we should facilitate such conversations again next

time. We do need to listen deeply and openly to ensure the voices of self-advocates are heard.



Sharing action 4: Gillian Leno

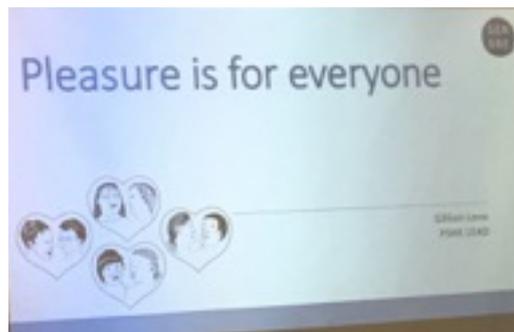
Gillian Leno is a personal sex education (PSE) trainer who facilitated a highly interactive, thought provoking and entertaining session!

Gillian started by posing two questions too the whole group:

1. What are your sexual rights
2. What are your sexual health responsibilities?

These got us all thinking and led to a long discussion!

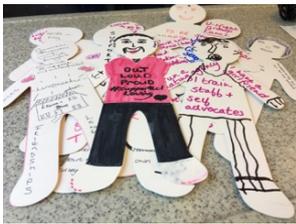
One of Gillian's powerful messages was that



Following the lively discussion Gillian facilitated an interactive session. We each had cards and as a group had to create the story line. The story from meeting, dating and on to sex. (see the pic in the left-hand column.

Gillian finished by saying.....'What ever you do, go away and think of the sex education you had. What sort of sex education would you like now and then....how can we make it better going forward.

Gillian's Blog: <http://sensre.blogspot.co.uk/>

<p>3.15pm</p> 	<p>What next?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People agreed today's format worked well. One participant asked us to ensure that the voices of self-advocates are truly heard, particularly, during the Solution Circle time. We will do this with the support of all next time. 2. Thanks to the offers of members the next agenda is full! 3. PLEASE let us know if you or anyone you know has a free venue (for up to 40 people) that we could use for the workshops. E-mail Claire: Claire.Bates@choicesupport.org.uk 4. Please spread the word share the link and get more people interested in sharing, learning and acting! Share this link! Supported Loving Campaign
	<p>So...to finish the day we asked people to record, on cut out figures what they have done (it's all about sharing, learning and ACTING) to better support people with their friendships, relationship, sexuality and love!</p> <p>To be honest it's hard to read them BUT we have photographed them all and we'll come back to sharing action at the next meeting!</p>
	<p>Next of meeting:</p> <p>Coming very soon!!!</p>

