



Facilitating Therapeutic Reading Groups for Older People

Who should attend this training?

Essential

- Older people and/or people with experience of (and/or a strong interest in) working with, supporting or caring for older people
- People who have a strong interest in literature and enjoy reading
- People who would like to learn how to co-facilitate therapeutic reading groups, and intend to volunteer to do this
- People who would be able to commit an hour a week to volunteer to co-facilitate a therapeutic reading group, and additional time preparing for each group
- People who have agreed with an organisation that a therapeutic reading group can be delivered for their service users, or who intend to set up an independent therapeutic reading group

Additional (non essential)

- People who may want to gain experience through volunteering that will help them to find employment
- First-time volunteers

What are 'Therapeutic Reading Groups'?

Therapeutic reading groups aim to inspire a feeling of community and belonging within a group; provide a regular social activity; increase confidence and self esteem; promote wellbeing for group members and inspire discussion. All group sessions are self-contained, so people can join the group at any time, and there is no requirement to attend all sessions. All reading materials are chosen to be relevant to the group and relate to their interests and needs.

As all materials are read aloud (by the Facilitator and any group members who wish to do so), the groups are suitable for people with all levels of literacy, and for people who cannot read alone, due to mental or physical ill-health or medication. Reading aloud has additional therapeutic benefits for people with dementia, mental ill-health or acquired brain injury.

The groups are designed to provide an enjoyable, relaxing, therapeutic activity for all participants through listening, reading and discussion.

Training Overview

Time/Date: 10am – 5pm 24th –26th January 2012 (inclusive)

Venue: New CLR James Library, Dalston Square, Hackney, London

Training is funded by Team London, and free to all participants. There is a strong focus on practical work, with therapeutic reading groups running at each session. The training covers all elements of setting up, preparing and delivering therapeutic reading groups for older people. Practical support is provided for two months after the training to help participants and organisations set up and deliver therapeutic reading groups for older people.

The outcome of the training is that therapeutic reading groups for older people are established within organisations/sheltered housing projects in Hackney, Barking and Newham.

Course Content

Session One

- Ethos and background to therapeutic reading groups
- How to run a group – practical information and ground rules
- Choosing materials, preparation and identifying themes
- Practical work

Session Two

- Reading aloud – techniques
- Materials: Sourcing and matching
- Know your group: Choosing relevant materials and themes
- Practical work

Session Three

- Facilitation skills and techniques - how to run a group successfully
- Recording sessions and follow-up
- Setting up your groups – first steps
- Practical work

Additional Information

Homework is set for all sessions. A wide selection of materials is also provided as part of the training package. There is an application process for this course. Potential applicants will need to complete the application form and attend a short interview if places are limited. There is no requirement for qualifications or experience – the only essential criteria is a strong interest in literature. Successful applicants will need to commit to attending all three sessions.

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