

## Amigos Newsletter December 2024



### Amigos Mission Statement:

Amigos provides peer support in welcoming groups to foster friendship and self-development for people who have experienced mental distress, in order to enhance their wellbeing. Everyone is welcome regardless of their lived experience.

### Amigos Coordinator:

Richard Anderson has taken over as Coordinator for Amigos. He has done the role before in 2015. Richard intends to attend as many groups as possible to say hello and to get to know everyone. Richard believes that despite our lived experience of mental distress we have a lot to offer as a community to the wider community.

### News:

Amigos has a give a little page: <https://givealittle.co.nz/cause/support-amigos-peer-support-group-keep-our-cafe>

"At Amigos Peer Support Group, we understand the profound importance of community and connection on the journey to mental wellness. Based in Wellington, we provide a safe space for mental health consumers to socialise, share experiences, and support each other. Our café meet-ups are a cherished part of this experience, offering a relaxed and friendly environment where members can stay engaged, mentally sharp, and connected.

However, recent price increases have made it challenging for some members to afford the cost of café participation. To continue offering this vital social interaction, we've started this Givealittle page to raise funds for half-price coffees for our members for the current financial year.

### Your Support Makes a Difference:

- \$10 provides a coffee for four members, helping them to join in the café meet-ups.
- \$50 helps support several members throughout the month.
- \$100 ensures that members attending our larger café group can enjoy reduced-cost coffees for a month.

By contributing to this fund, you're helping to keep our café gatherings affordable and accessible, ensuring that no one has to miss out due to financial constraints. Every donation, big or small, will help maintain these essential connections and support the mental wellbeing of our community.

Thank you for your generosity and support. Together, we can make a meaningful impact and continue to provide a space where everyone feels valued and connected."

Often our café groups are the first point of contact for people looking for connection, a good discussion and support. Many people have found being around people with lived experience and on different paths to recovery a breath of fresh air and gives people hope that they too can recover. From the café groups we have seen people try out the different groups we have on offer and pick up a new hobby, a new social group and may even feel like sticking up their hand to help out with running Amigos groups or be a part of the committee.

### Feedback:

Still interested in what we offer? Here are some Amigos talking about how being involved with Amigos has changed their lives:

“Since having retired Amigos has been a big part of my life. I found myself with too much time on my hands after retiring and have had the privilege of being able to lead coffee groups and the mindfulness group. But also being on the committee allows me to be more responsible in making decisions for and on behalf of others. I’ve learnt so much and my confidence has grown greatly.”

“Amigos is a highlight on my calendar because I value meeting face to face and a lot of people who come along to Amigos events are friends I’ve met through Buddies. Amigos provides a peer support service to the mental health community, something I have been involved in for as long as I can remember, and seeing the benefits patients at TWOM receive by joining in and connecting with other Tangata Whiora who are from the community while over the crafts table, is invaluable and encouraging.”

“I like getting the chance to talk to everyone and hear about their weeks. I like the humour and laughter we have. I love seeing people from all walks of life connecting. I like seeing people try a new exercise and get a buzz from moving with friends, exercise shouldn’t be a negative thing, it is nice when we find what suits us. I enjoy having the freedom to direct the group whilst also listening to people’s opinions and preferences.”

“Amigos is a place where like minds meet and we can start living our lives in the best way. The sharing of experiences provides a way forward and getting involved with others gives us true experiences. To know there are other people who have lived experiences of mental illness gives a lens on it, to examine where we have come from and where we are going.

The biggest thing is realising there is a way forward and the hope that, that brings. It provides a scope to look at the future and how I want to pursue it.”

As this is the final newsletter for the year. Amigos would like to take the time to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Years and to thank everyone who has been involved with Amigos whether they have been funders or group participants, group leaders or committee members. Please enjoy your holiday breaks and stay safe, keep on going and most of all be you.

Amigos Peer Support Group 2024 <https://www.amigospeersupport.nz/>