



The Clubhouse Model: Co-production at Flourish House by Robert Smiley

A message of inclusion is at the very heart of Flourish House and the clubhouse way of working. At the core of that message is co-production and people working together, at all levels, to achieve a common goal: recovery from mental illness. A local community centre, the clubhouse provides a healthy environment for people whose lives have been severely disrupted because of mental illness.

Clubhouse staffing levels are purposefully kept low to create a need for the involvement of members in order to accomplish their jobs. The staff are there to engage with members as colleagues. In a clubhouse a person with mental illness is seen as a valued participant, a colleague and as someone who has something to contribute to the rest of the group. Being a member of a clubhouse means that an individual has both shared ownership and responsibility for its success.

The design of a clubhouse engages members in every aspect of its operation. In my experience co-production, working together to provide services, is a daily occurrence at Flourish House where staff and members share work which includes various services designed and run by the clubhouse for all to take part. Flourish House also holds weekly and daily meetings where the work of the day, and any other business, is discussed and voted upon, thereby, giving a voice to all involved in the daily duties of running the house.

I take part in the writing group as well as the art group. Members and staff have also set up and run a weight management class and a group meets to learn how to use smart phones. At every step of the way all have a vested interest in seeing Flourish House thrive in the community.

In the clubhouse model work mediated relationships are seen as restorative. I've sat in clubhouse meetings and enjoyed seeing how everyone comes together as a group sharing a common purpose. At lunchtime staff and members make and share a meal together. Good company, good chat, and an opportunity to work together.

For more information on Flourish house, visit this page: <http://www.flourishhouse.org.uk>