

Mental Illness Fellowship Victoria  
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Family Support Program  
Education courses

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**T**he Mental Illness Fellowship is Victoria's leading membership based not-for-profit organization working for people with mental illness, their families and friends to improve their wellbeing.

**S**tate wide organization with 20 service outlets providing the following comprehensive range of psychosocial rehabilitation services.

- **Family Support**
- **Home Based Outreach**
- **Supported Accommodation**
- **Respite**

# FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Family Support Program assists families and friends of people with mental illness to manage the impact of mental illness on their lives.

The Family Support Program consists of:

- Telephone Helpline
- Face-to-Face Counselling
- Facilitated Support Groups
- Mental Health Library & Resource Centre
- Specialist Family Education courses:
  - Well Ways
  - 14 Principles
  - Double Trouble

# WELL WAYS

A Travellers Guide to Wellbeing for Families and Friends  
of people with Mental Illness

- **Aim:** *Well Ways* is designed to increase the capacity of families and friends to care effectively for themselves and the relative/friend living with mental illness.
- The course provides a broad and sensitive perspective to the many issues faced as they manage the impact of mental illness on their lives.

# WELL WAYS

- **OUTCOMES:** Upon completion of *Well Ways*, people will:
  - **H**ave increased information about mental illnesses, treatment and support options
  - **G**ain new ideas and further develop skills and coping strategies to address the impact of mental illness on their lives
  - **I**ncrease confidence in dealing with the challenges of mental illness
  - **S**hare and learn from the experiences of others and have the opportunity to develop on-going support mechanisms

# Course Structure

## Well Ways

- \* 8 X 2.5 hour sessions over 8 weeks
- \* Facilitated workshops using group discussions, videos and practical demonstrations
- \* Comprehensive course materials

# Course Content

# Well Ways

The course includes:

- **Current information about most major mental illnesses**
- **Information about Mental Health and Carer Support Services**
- **Practical insight to behaviours associated with mental illness**
- **Practical frameworks to improve communication and problem solving skills**
- **Dilemmas and challenges of the caring role**

# 14 Principles

## For Coping with Schizophrenia and Allied Mental Illness

Aim: The *14 Principles* Course aims to provide relatives of people with serious and enduring mental illness with practical and emotional strategies.

### Outcomes:

Upon completion of the *14 Principles* participants will have:

- A checklist of coping techniques to assist them to manage the difficult behaviours associated with mental illness
- Develop a personal sense of how to cope long term

# 14 Principles

## Outcomes continued

- **Develop strategies to manage the anxiety, guilt and disorganisation that the family experiences as a result of serious mental illness**
- **Enhanced confidence in dealing with the challenging situations created by mental illness**
- **Share and learn from the experiences of others and have the opportunity to develop on-going support mechanisms**

# Course Structure

## *14 Principles*

2 x 6 Hour Sessions, (sometimes offered as a weekend residential) structured interactive workshops.

*Content:* The course covers:

- Early family feelings of isolation
- Early disorganisation of the family and the road to recovery
- The causes of mental illness
- The pressures on relatives
- Coping with stress, loss and grief
- Commonly used defence mechanisms
- Problem solving approaches
- The impact of anxiety on relatives

# DOUBLE TROUBLE

A Support and Information Program for Families and Friends of People with Dual Diagnosis (Mental Illness & Substance Use)

**Aim:** The *Double Trouble* course aims to increase the capacity of families and friends of people with dual diagnosis to care effectively for themselves, the person with dual diagnosis and other family members.

# DOUBLE TROUBLE

## Outcomes:

Upon completion of *Double Trouble*, participants will have:

- Increased information about mental illness and their interaction with drug and alcohol issues, and treatment and support options
- Increased skills in managing the extremely challenging behaviours that are often associated with dual diagnosis
- Enhanced skill in problem solving issues related to dual diagnosis in the family context
- Experiential information exchange and the opportunity to develop on-going support mechanisms

# Course Structure

## *Double Trouble*

- \* 6 x 2.5 hour modules over six weeks

- \* Facilitated Workshops based on problem solving vignettes

# Course Content

## *Double Trouble*

The Course includes:

- Current information about marijuana, LSD, heroin, alcohol, ecstasy and amphetamines and the behaviours associated with each of them
- Current information about psychosis and the major mental illnesses including signs, symptoms, treatment and recovery
- Information on the interaction between mental illness and drugs and alcohol
- How to manage violent situations effectively
- Presentations by Police, CATT and a Psychiatrist

# MENTAL ILLNESS FELLOWSHIP VICTORIA

Specialist Family Support Program Education Courses

- **Well Ways**

  - 2 x 2.5 hours sessions ( over 8 weeks)

- **14 Principles**

  - 2 x 6 hour sessions

- **Double Trouble**

  - 6 x 2.5 hour modules (over six weeks)