

The Recovery Experience Study of People with Bipolar Disorder

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Abstract : The purposes of this qualitative research were to study the recovery experience of people with bipolar disorder and also to propose a development approach to the Bipolar Friends Club. The participants were eight people with bipolar disorder for six to twenty years (four women and four men). They have been members of the Bipolar Friends Club for two to ten years. They have no mental symptoms in order to provide sufficient information about their recovery experiences and have returned to everyday life with their family, community, and work. The data were collected by doing an in-depth interview. Two interviews were done, each from 45-90 minutes and four to five weeks apart. The researcher sent the results of the preliminary data analysis to the participants two to three days beforehand. Confirmation of the results of the preliminary data analysis from the first interview was done at the second interview. The research study found that the participants had a positive experience of being a Bipolar Club member. The club continued its activities following Recovery Oriented Service: ROS to the participants. As a result, they recovered in eight areas as follows. 1) Intellectual: The wisdom of joining the group has brought knowledge and experiences from an exchange with others in self-care as well as a positive thinking in life. 2) Social: The participants have set up a group to take care of each other and to do activities which have brought warmth. Their social network which was normally little has also been increased. 3) Spiritual: The concept of religion has been used to lead the life of the participants. 4) Occupational: One participant is a student while the others do work. All of them have done well. 5) Environmental: The participants would be able to adapt to the environment and cope with their problems better. 6) Physical: Most female participants have difficulties with losing weight which leads them saying that they are 'not fully recovered'. 7) Emotional: The participants feel calmer than before entering the club. They have also developed more tolerance to problems. 8) Financial: The participants would be able to control their spending by themselves and with the help of their family members. The people with bipolar disorder have suggested that the services of the club are perfect and should be continued. The results of the study encourage the Bipolar Friends Club, as well as other clubs/associations that support the recovery of patients. Consideration of the recovery has highlighted the need for ongoing and various life-enhancing programs for the caregivers and their loved ones with bipolar disorder. Then, they would be able to choose the program that suits their needs to improve their life.

Keywords : people with bipolar disorder, recovery, club, experience

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