

HEARING VOICES GROUP GUIDELINES

- ▶ **Is a self-help group and not a clinical group offering treatment**
- ▶ **Accept that voices and visions are real experiences**
- ▶ **Accept that people are not any the less for having voices and visions**
- ▶ **Respects each member as an expert**
- ▶ **Sanctions the freedom to talk about anything, not just voices and visions**
- ▶ **Sanctions the freedom to interpret experiences in any way**
- ▶ **Sanctions the freedom to challenge social norms**
- ▶ **Encourages an ethos of self-determination**
- ▶ **Values ordinary, non-professional language**
- ▶ **Focuses primarily on sharing experiences, support and empathy**
- ▶ **Members are not subject to referral, discharge or risk assessment**
- ▶ **Members are able to come and go as they want without repercussions**
- ▶ **Members are aware of limits to and constraints on confidentiality**
- ▶ **Accept people as they are**
- ▶ **Make no assumption of illness**
- ▶ **Are a self-help group not a therapy group**
- ▶ **Can be a community to which people belong**
- ▶ **Work towards upholding equity in the group**
- ▶ **Decide on the limits to confidentiality not the facilitator**
- ▶ **Work out problems collectively**
- ▶ **Share responsibility rather than the facilitator solely**
- ▶ **Members join for as long as it suits them**
- ▶ **Are open to people from other geographical areas**
- ▶ **Facilitator is not under clinical pressure to report back to anyone else**
- ▶ **Encourages, supports and enables voice hearers to take a co-facilitator or facilitator role.**

These are guidelines for self-help groups.

Over time groups may vary or develop their own guidelines as they deem appropriate.

Acknowledgement: Our thanks to the Hearing Voices Network Australia for permission to use their Guidelines