

# VALUE OF PEER SUPPORT

## PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

In DBSA support groups, people with mood disorders and those who care about them share experiences, discuss wellness skills, and offer hope to one another. The groups

- provide a safe and welcoming forum for mutual acceptance, understanding, and self-discovery;
- give people the opportunity to reach out to others and benefit from the experience of those who have been there;
- motivate people to follow their wellness plans;
- help people understand that mood disorders do not define who they are;
- help people rediscover strengths and humor they may have thought they had lost.

Peer support group members experience decrease in family stress, improvement in interpersonal relationships, and increase in identified support persons (Thompson, Norman 2008)

## DEFINITIONS PEER SUPPORT

people with similar mental health experiences giving each other hope, guidance, and understanding that leads to wellness and recovery.

## DEFINITIONS PEER SUPPORT SERVICES

people who have personal lived experience in recovery from a mental health condition who have been trained to support their peers in gaining hope and moving forward in their recovery journeys.

## PEER SUPPORT SERVICES

**Reduce expensive inpatient use**  
(Sledge, Lawless, and Sells, 2011)

**Improve individual's relationship with their health care providers**  
(Solomon, Draine, and Delaney, 1995) (Wexler, Davidson, and Styron, 2000) (Davidson, Stayner, and Chinman, 2000)

**Increase individual's ability to manage their symptoms**  
(Lucksted et al., 2009) (Solomon, Draine, and Delaney, 1995) (Wexler, Davidson, and Styron, 2000) (Davidson, Stayner, and Chinman, 2000)

### 2016 DBSA IN-PERSON SUPPORT GROUP PARTICIPANT SURVEY RESULTS

**97%** of people feel welcome at the group all or most of the time.

**94%** of people feel safe sharing in the group all or most of the time.

**89%** of people feel that the support group helped improve their lives.

*I don't know what I would do without this group. The power of "Me Too" should never be underestimated! Love it here! Thank you for all the new info I learn every time I come. -DBSA Online Support Group Participant*

*I loved the fact that we were able to openly share experiences and wellness strategies we have used with the group. It was really encouraging to be able to actually talk to people who are going through the same things I am. -DBSA Online Support Group Participant*

*These meetings calm me and offer me hope and make me feel so much less alone. -DBSA Online Support Group Participant*



## HOW TO FIND PEER SUPPORT

- Go to [DBSAAlliance.org/FindSupport](https://www.DBSAAlliance.org/FindSupport) to find more than 250 chapters, nearly 650 support groups
- Start a chapter in your community: [DBSAAlliance.org/Startup](https://www.DBSAAlliance.org/Startup)
- Try a live, online peer support group: [DBSAAlliance.org/OSG](https://www.DBSAAlliance.org/OSG)
- Access 24/7 parental peer support and information: [DBSAAlliance.org/BMPN](https://www.DBSAAlliance.org/BMPN)