



**DISCHARGED**  
An Alternatives to Suicide Approach

# Evaluating DISCHARGED Suicide Peer Support Groups

## Theme 3 Summary: Transformation

This sheet provides a summary of the third theme from the participant findings of our research project *Evaluating DISCHARGED Suicide Peer Support Groups*.

We did this project with Curtin University in 2019 to investigate people's experiences of DISCHARGED suicide peer support groups. We wanted to find out the impact they have on the people who attend them and how or if they are different from the clinical mental health system. The full report of our findings is available on our website.

To make our results easy to understand, we wrote a series of summary sheets. This is the third and final summary that came from the interviews with participants.

### Transformation

This theme from our research report is about some important changes that happened for participants because they attended DISCHARGED groups. There are four parts to this theme which are described below.

- **A different relationship with suicidal ideation**

Participants spoke about how sharing and exploring suicidal thoughts in group changed how they respond to thoughts of suicide. Particularly, they are no longer as afraid of the thoughts or acting on them as quickly. When they have a suicidal thought, they are able to stop and think about what it might be trying to tell them or what it might represent for them. As participants were thinking more deeply about why they wanted to end their life, they reported being less likely to make an impulsive suicide attempt.

- **Responding to triggers differently**

Some participants reported being 'triggered' or having uncomfortable emotional responses to other people's stories. They told us how they were learning to reflect and sit with the discomfort, as well as talking it through with the group or their personal psychologist. This was not something they had experienced with other services where, in an attempt to maintain safety, many topics were off limits.

- **Stretch goals**

Participants said having a space where they can talk openly about their experiences and be heard, gives them a reason to keep living. They told us that when they were suicidal, they were holding on and staying alive until the next DISCHARGED group so they could talk about what they were going through. Then, if they could stay alive for one DISCHARGED group, they would try for the next one after that.

- **Changes in seeking support**

Participants said DISCHARGED was helping them understand how to talk about suicide in new ways. They told us that DISCHARGED had also shown them what meaningful support can look like. Since they had learnt how to talk about suicide, participants were starting to reach out to friends and family more when they needed support.