



September is Alternatives to Suicide Month

Each year, when September rolls around, we take some time to talk “Suicide Prevention,” and Alternatives to Suicide month. However, there are a lot of problems with Suicide Prevention. These problems include:

Suicide Prevention efforts and initiatives often encourage forced hospitalization; Suicide Prevention efforts and initiatives often mistake suicide for 'the problem' and see the answer as stopping such thoughts, rather than looking at the larger context and actual problems that may be driving people to consider death as an answer; Suicide Prevention efforts are often ineffective; and Suicide Prevention efforts often cause harm.

Recent research suggests that rates of suicide have increased by 30% over the last 20 years in spite of ‘Zero Suicide’ projects, increased suicide screenings, and laws that allow for people to be held against their will if they are considered to be a “risk to self (or others).” Despite popular perception that suicide is not as significant of an issue within black and brown communities, young black people actually have the fastest rising suicide rates in the country.

No one can say for certain why Suicide Prevention efforts are failing so dramatically. But, we can report on research that is telling us that suicide assessment tools are ineffective. The best assessment tools have a success rate of about 50% or the same as flipping a coin). We can talk about the tangible harm that these risk assessments cause which is considerable, particularly since many people will just shutdown and stop talking about their inner turmoil altogether once they realize that the person they’ve reached out to is assessing them for a possible hold on a locked psychiatric unit. We can also point to the reality that such holds seems to be associated with a substantially increased risk of attempting suicide, and how loss of power and control over one's life can lead them to consider no longer wanting to be in this world. Not surprisingly, research has begun emerging that suggests that even the perception of coercion in regards to treatment of someone who is contemplating killing themselves can increase their risk of death by suicide. *(continued on next page)*

Alternatives to Suicide (continued from first page)

So, instead of continuing to push more of the same, we urge you to consider joining us in celebrating Alternatives to Suicide rather than Suicide Prevention Month. Joining us at a When Conversation Turns to Suicide training is just one idea of how you can get more involved! (See below for details!)

Alternatives to Suicide Group Facilitator training

This 3-day training is based in an approach developed by the Wildflower Alliance. It focuses on Alternatives to Suicide groups that create space to have real conversations about taboo topics like wanting to die without assuming illness and without punitive action like taking away someone's freedom.

Applications are due by September 17th, and can be completed online. Check with www.wildfloweralliance.org

Zine Making Workshop for Voice-Hearers Aged 16-25

Hearing the Voice is currently collaborating with Voice Collective and artist Liv Wynter to run a series of online zine-making workshops for young people (aged 16–25) who hear voices or see visions that others don't. The workshops will take place on Zoom over four weeks in September on the following dates:

Thursday 9 September 2021, 1.30–3pm (EST)

Thursday 16 September 2021, 1.30–3pm (EST)

Thursday 23 September 2021, 1.30–3pm (EST)

Thursday 30 September 2021, 1.30–3pm (EST)

More information about the workshops and information on how to express an interest in participating can be found at www.wildfloweralliance.org

BAY AREA HEARING VOICES NETWORK



Working with Hearing Voices and Unusual Beliefs with Peter Bullimore and Company

Participants in this 6-session training will learn how to better understand and support people to make meaning of their experiences with voice hearing and/or unusual beliefs or what gets called “paranoia.” Attendance at all sessions is required to fully complete the training. All sessions will be held on-line, and all times listed are in Eastern USA time. *Registration is required.* Space is limited.

<https://sable.madmimi.com/c/12931?id=902044.18763.1.3bf92d10f5fe840a626e222847d4adfa>

Tuesday, October 19, 10-2pm: **Three Stages of Hearing Voices**

Thursday, October 21, 10-2pm: **Three Stages of Unusual Beliefs/”Paranoia”**

Tuesday, October 26, 10-11:30am: **Maastricht Interview Overview**

Thursday, October 28, 9-4pm: **Using Maastricht for Voices**

Tuesday, November 2, 9-4pm: **Using Maastricht for Unusual Beliefs/”Paranoia”**

Thursday, November 4, 10-2pm: **How to Use What’s Learned from Maastricht**

Resources

[Download the PDF](#) of our recommended introductory books, articles, videos, and web sites on the experience of hearing voices, the history and philosophy of the Hearing Voices movement, this family & friends group, and ways to support loved ones who hear voices. (We are limited to 35 downloads per month, after which you'll receive an error message.)



HEARING VOICES GROUPS

The Bay Area Hearing Voices Network offers five, online groups Monday-Thursday. **To enter the on-line support group meeting go to our website: www.bayareahearingvoices.org and click on the link at the bottom of the page to the Wednesday group.**

Monday Meetings:

BAHVN in partnership with Berkeley Mental Health offers separate support groups for adults and family members, The 2 separate Support Groups meet Mondays from 6 to 8 pm.

Tuesday Meeting:

BAHVN in partnership with [HealthRIGHT360 of San Francisco](#) offers an online adult support group Tuesday evenings from 6 to 8 pm led by trained facilitators with lived experience in the mental health system.

Wednesday Meeting:

BAHVN, in partnership with the [Mental Health Association of San Francisco](#) (MHASF), offers an online adult support group Wednesday evenings from 6-8 pm.

Thursday Meetings:

The HVN-USA Family and Friends Group (friends, lovers, and caretakers) are welcome too) meets online for 90 minutes every Thursday 3-4:30 pm PST.

To join contact cindy@westernmassrlc.org

Thursday BAHVN Game Night, 5-7 pm, Game play is free of charge to BAHVN adults, TAY, and family members, an on-line weekly night of fun and games. All attendees are required to open an [account at boardgamearena.com](#), where the game night will be held online. Go to the [BAHVN homepage](#) for a Zoom audio link to Game Night.

The Bay Area Hearing Voices Network is a non-profit 501©3 organization. We seek to expand public awareness, provide community support, and refuge for those who hear voices, see visions, and experience other forms of extraordinary perception. To submit articles contact edherzog48@gmail.com For more information about us visit our website:bayareahearingvoices.org