

***Igniting and Maintaining Hope: The Voices of People
Living with Mental Illness***

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People with lived experience of mental illness have said that hope is critical to their ability to recover and lead a meaningful and satisfying life. Hope is expecting and believing that the future holds good things that you value. It can be a reawakening after despair or believing that change is possible. A team of researchers, including lived-experience researcher, Karen Wells, asked 74 people living with mental illness to write about an experience that had helped them to feel hopeful.

While experiences that inspired hope sometimes involved others, people were active in finding hope for themselves. They used activities, strategies and environments that were uniquely meaningful to them to ignite their hope. They sought out and tried to spend time with people who cared for them, respected them and believed in their ability to recover. People with lived experience of mental illness also had a critical role to play in inspiring hope in others.

They acted as role models, shared stories of recovery, formed an accepting community, and shared information and strategies.

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