



ALICE CAN NOW HELP HER MUM TO UNDERSTAND HER NEEDS

RECOVERY COLLEGE

WESTERN SYDNEY RECOVERY COLLEGE

The Western Sydney Recovery College was developed to co-design and build the capacity of people with lived experience of mental health concerns through a series of courses, training sessions, and workshops. These courses assist clients on their recovery journeys while also increasing carers, friends, family, mental health staff and service providers' knowledge, skills, and awareness of mental health so they are better able to support the Western Sydney community. Western Sydney Recovery College is a One Door Mental Health service, funded by the Western Sydney Primary Health Network.

The Recovery College occasionally invites family groups including parents, adult children and siblings, to attend courses. This often helps the client to feel more comfortable in new sessions, but it also provides the family member with an insight into the mental distress their loved one is experiencing in their daily life and what they can do to better support them.

Marie* and Alice* are a mother and daughter who attended a Recovery College class together. Alice, the daughter, had attended several classes in the past and was enjoying learning new things and becoming more social. Her increased confidence in the way she engaged in class discussions had been noticed by the educators. Having her mother attend meant a lot to Alice, as Marie could see how she interacted with other students. This part of the course specifically looked at managing mental health from the perspective of a client, a carer and a service provider. This multi-perspective activity helped learners

better understand each other's perspectives and opened up conversations between roles. The mixture of students in the same class demonstrates the benefit of having students with different mental health experiences integrated.

The class has helped initiate ongoing conversations between Marie and Alice about how Marie can best support her daughter, and how Alice can now help her mum to understand her needs.

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