

SOCIAL INCLUSION: WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

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What does it mean?

There are no agreed definitions of what social inclusion is. It will mean different things to different people in different areas and can only be lived and experienced by individuals or groups

Different definitions

Social inclusion must come down to somewhere to live, something to do and someone to love. It's as simple- and as complicated- as that (Charles Fraser).

Broadly speaking, social inclusion is understood as a process away from exclusion, it is a process for dealing with social exclusion and integrating individuals into society.

Social inclusion is the process by which efforts are made to ensure that everyone, regardless of their experiences and circumstances, can achieve their potential in life (Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion).

What do service users say about social inclusion?

Social inclusion is not about disability, symptoms or treatment management it is about an individual's activity of daily living and how they relate to the outside world. It is about bringing the world into a life.

It should be a simple term whereby you are accepted into life and try to accept all in that life, work, play, enjoyment, money, education, relationships...

I believe that inclusion is all about belonging - to take part in society fully, to be needed and to need

What do service users say about social inclusion? – 2

To me Social Inclusion means to facilitate the involvement of people like us who are usually left out of the community because of our physical/mental condition or because we belong to a minority. It means giving a chance to those who are usually deprived of opportunities that others take for granted.

Social inclusion is particularly important with regard to employment and vocational opportunities because it can significantly increase people's independence and autonomy.

Critical perspectives: people are angry and cynical

Social inclusion! That's just a Government buzzword that actually means: lets force these malingerers back into work and save the treasury money from the benefit system

Bit of a buzzword phrase- Government speak- not sure what it means, most people won't

It's the theory of there being opportunities for people to be involved in society

Critical perspectives: people are angry and cynical -2

Ask the Doctor

I do not get accepted in most situations

We're all part of society anyway – like it or not. Social exclusion is about the fact that people are discriminated against, marginalized, invalidated, by people with power over us. And this especially happens by us being labelled 'mentally ill', 'mentally disordered', having 'severe and enduring mental health problems'

Social inclusion as a goal and process.

How is the process of social inclusion facilitated?

Principles of engagement

The primary principle underpinning any helping process must start with- in an emotional, social and practical sense- where the person is.

Building up a good relationship first, not using an assessment form that puts people in boxes. Listen and find out what peoples' needs are and their major areas of concern, by having a free flowing conversation.

Try and replace the fear with real support and possibilities

Principles of engagement - 2

Find out what people want to do, what their assets are and work out some clarity about the next steps. Be creative and open minded.

Let them be adults to make mistakes and to learn life's tricks. Nurture not control, facilitate not dictate, listen not tell.

The path will never be straightforward, people have to find their own way, but it is crucial to allow emotions to be registered fully. Keep a faith that it all can work out positively.

Insights from a Peer Supporter

5 Years of working in social inclusion and peer support. 1-1 and group social opportunities, community and ward based.

Working style holistic, person centred approach, non directive based on equality, respect and mutuality

Shared experiences can be drawn on for relationship building

Insights from a Peer Supporter

Role to mentor, and encourage the person to see their skills – but not direct. They are their own expert – they know what's best for them.

Awareness of boundaries, their importance and be mindful of your own limits.

Balancing expectations – outcomes and hope.

Insights from a Peer Supporter

Self Care – awareness of own limits

Supporting independence – not creating dependency

Connecting into communities – professional and personal

Putting it into practice

What next- ideas for how we go forward?