

Good Thinking

Community Manager

Mental Health & Wellbeing Roundtable

28 March 2019

Review & Wrap up



About the event

On Thursday 28th March Dr Richard Graham & Darren Gough led a facilitated roundtable discussion on mental health and wellbeing for online community managers.

The event was overseen by Tracy Parr and supported by Kim Boyle and Dan Thomson as part of the Good Thinking initiative.

The event ran from 2.00pm to 4.45pm at Arlington Conference Centre | 220 Arlington Road | Camden Town | NW1 7HE London | United Kingdom.

The event was free to attend

First phase objectives



Community Manager Roundtable

Deliver a facilitated roundtable for community managers to learn more about the programme and to share experiences, challenges and insight from their communities.

Roundtable Review

Collate learnings and shared experiences from the roundtable to establish the priority tools and support resources that would be most beneficial for community managers.

Community Manager Association

Bring together a motivated group of online communities to form a Community Manager Association (CMA) working to improve mental health in communities.

Second phase objective



CMA Network

Grow a dedicated, private online network for community managers to connect with peers for ongoing support and to have access to free HS resources, toolkits and training.

Resource Development

Use CMA and wider feedback channels to provide community managers with resources that help them in the course of their work/duties. This will include better knowledge of how better to support members in difficulty/crisis.

Community Manager Training

Build a first of its kind training resource to help community managers feel less overwhelmed and challenged, to feel they are doing a good job and to better support their own wellbeing and health.

Attendees

The event had **25** attendees and represented communities including:



Apologies / diary clashes snapshot



It looks very interesting and we'd be keen to be kept in touch (and perhaps attend future meetings) but can't make this meeting unfortunately.

Hope this is OK, and if there are any outcomes/ future dates you're able to share them when available.



Thanks for your email and for sending through the slides. Really interesting and useful to have sight of. I'm afraid I won't be able to attend tomorrow.



Thanks for the invite. However, I have a full day already this Thursday. It is a shame as due to our involvement in the Grenfell Disaster we are dealing with lots of young people who have experienced trauma. Happy to discuss, please suggest some dates. Hope the event goes well.

Apologies / diary clashes snapshot



Unfortunately I can't make the Community Managers event next week however if you have any future sessions do let me know.

I did used to be a community manager so may have some useful contributions

SCOPE

 Equality for disabled people

This is really relevant and very timely for us. The need for mental health support on our community has really increased over the last year. We've also been looking at how we support the mental health and resilience of our volunteers, as they can be affected by the issues they're helping with every day.

We can't make that day but interested in keeping in touch.

Guest speakers : Grace Joyce



Grace Joyce
[TheStudentRoom](https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/)

Snapshot

- In the past 12 months, TheStudentRoom (TSR) have had 1.4 million views of the discussions of our mental health forum, **an increase of 20% YoY.**
- The TSR are sensitive to any romanticising of mental health problems.
- The Peer Support Volunteer (PSV) team are a team of young people themselves who help to support users who are in distress,

Challenges

- Moderating and safeguarding a large community, many of whom are under 18.
- Encouraging members to post useful support and advice, whilst not attempting to be an expert.
- Current response time is 24 hours, would like that to be shorter.
- Grace is new to the role and would benefit from additional mental health and wellbeing support and training.

Guest speakers : Syliva Mac



Syliva Mac
Lovedisfigure.com

Snapshot

- Love Disfigure was born out of a need to raise awareness and support to those living with disfigurement & differences.
- Community is a passion project run by Sylvia that supports those suffering from body image and mental health challenges associated with them.
- Community benefits from both online support and offline “real world” meetups

Challenges

- Supporting the community as an individual is never ending and creates a feeling of being “always on”
- Community suffers from trolling and body shaming commenting which needs swift moderation
- Facebook’s unannounced and uncommunicated algorithm change halved the group size by removing observing members (who might still need support but weren’t confident enough to post).

Guest speakers : Bethan Harvey



Mental Health
Foundation



Bethan Harvey
[Mentalhealth.org.uk](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

Snapshot

- Instagram community channel has grown from 12,000 followers in Jan 2018 to 40,000 in Jan 2019.
- Followers engage and offer support and advice to each other.
- An internal safeguarding programme at MHF supports and gives wellbeing space to employees.

Challenges

- Rapid growth of the Instagram channel has created an increased need for safeguarding and support.
- Understanding how to develop online digital safeguarding procedures that also continue to encourage growth.
- Prioritising work when you are stretched and understaffed to cope with the needs of the role.
- Knowing where to go to ask for help with other community professionals dealing with similar issues.
- Making your own self care a priority.

Outputs of worktask 1

What are the biggest challenges right now of being a community manager?

“Reputational risk”

“Developing our own good practice”

“No clinical supervision”

“Safeguarding & crisis management”

“Self-care”

“Recognition & regulation”

“No recognition for all the different skills [we need]”

“[Need for] a shared group or union”

“Role not understood”

“Ethical values [need to be] shared/taught”

“Specialisation in mental health”

“Healthy behaviour”

“Self-care [second specific mention]”

“Harder to develop in role”

“G.P. of many subject areas”

“Looking after volunteers and mods”



Outputs of worktask 2

What are the mental health and wellbeing challenges in your community/work?

“What’s right? Levels of escalation/de-escalation, self-support and signposting”

“Identifying issues”

“No clinical supervision”

“Identifying anger”

“When does it become an issue?”

“Resilience & awareness of mental health”

“Safeguarding including escalation to the police and working with IP address”

“Continued support versus signposting”

“We have to deal with these issues but have no training or accreditation to help”

“Community Managers are just expected to cope but it’s hard to shut off”

“We wear so many hats yet rarely get the recognition we deserve”

“We’d love to be able to reach people offline”



Final questions

Do you think there is a need for an NHS supported community, beyond what Good Thinking offers?

Would your members like to be supported in the communities they value and contribute to?

“There is a need for self care and equality in online forums”

The room was more in favour of being able to receive support in their communities primarily, and believed a secure space for online community managers (CMA) to connect was a bigger priority than an NHS supported community for their members.

They did acknowledge the NHS supported community could have value, but were interested in whether the private CMA space could broaden to colleagues and peers in social spaces that would benefit from the opportunity to connect.

GP OF
MANY
SUBJECT
AREAS

LOOKING
AFTER
VOLUNTEERS
& MODS

HARDER
TO
DEVELOP
IN ROLE

Self care

Healthy
Behaviour

NO
RECOG
FOR
ALL DIFF
SKILLS

A
SHARED
GROUP OR
UNION?

ROLE
NOT
UNDERSTOOD

ETHICAL
VALUES
SHARED/
TAUGHT

Specialisation
in
mental health

Recognition
+
Regulation

Self-Care

Safeguarding
+
Crisis Management

No clinical
Supervision

Developing
own
Good Practice.

Reputational
Risk

Key learnings

- Community Managers feels isolated and lacking support
- There is a need for formal mental health and wellbeing training for both communities and those who run them
- There is a need for a private space where Community, Social and associated parties can access for tools, support and discussion
- Attendees were interested in some form of certification or accreditation for completing training
- Attendees recognised the need for specific self care guidance to prevent stress and burnout in themselves
- Community Managers often feel unsupported in their roles, and underappreciated by their wider organisation

Next steps

Pre Easter 2019

- Distribute review deck to attendees
- Collate any further feedback

Post Easter 2019

- Invite attendees to join Community Manager Association online community
- Share review deck with internal steering committee
- Draft roadmap for prioritised toolkits, training and support
- Share roadmap with CMA for feedback

Social Media reaction



Craig Donaghy @CraigIDonaghy · Mar 28

Fantastic afternoon of very interesting talks and discussions. Biggest takeaways: the importance of self care and of signposting appropriate care to your community.



MK_dragon
@csylong_mk

Follow

Replying to @CraigIDonaghy @Darren_Gough and 14 others

Great afternoon discussion, although I am not community manager, but I have listened a lot of the progress, challenges, and future works of mental health community. I hope my experience in NLP/text mining can help mental health communities in the future.

8:20 PM - 28 Mar 2019



Serena ♡
@serenastweeting

Follow

Replying to @nickyruneckles @Darren_Gough and 14 others

Thanks everyone, it was a really useful afternoon. Three key things for me:

- Resilience - tools and space for reflection
- Good practice - shared experience to improve daily work
- Development - improving and maturing skills

8:39 PM - 28 Mar 2019

2 Retweets 6 Likes



Love Disfigure
@LoveDisfigure

Following

Fab people who gave me insight to importance of Mental Health
@GoodThinkingUK @Darren_Gough @rgraham120 #cmgrldn @mentalhealth @thestudentroom @MumsnetTowers @NHSGreenwichCCG @csm_news @WatfordFC @GoSuperAwesome @nickyruneckles @serenastweeting @csylong_ @mik0ton @alzheimerssoc



Social Media reaction



Following

Replying to @CraigIDonaghy @Darren_Gough and 14 others

Agree with that. It really highlighting the Metal Heath topic across the #cmgr environment and the different approaches that are being taken to support it. And not forgetting the need for self care for those cmgrs.

6:01 PM - 28 Mar 2019



Follow

Replying to @LoveDisfigure @Darren_Gough and 12 others

It was a privilege to see your inspiring presentation yesterday <3

9:58 AM - 29 Mar 2019

3 Likes



Love Disfigure @LoveDisfigure · Mar 28

Replying to @GoodThinkingUK @Darren_Gough and 13 others

Thank you all for showing me that there are other wonderful people out there supporting communities. I no longer feel alone & look forward to meeting you all again 🙌



Special thanks

To Neil Morris from Together4change.org who flew in from Frankfurt, Germany, for one day to attend our roundtable. We're very grateful!



Together 4 Change



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