



# Bipolar Australia

*Recovering together...*

## **Lived Experience Leadership Co-designed Bipolar Disorder Psychosocial Recovery Supports**

Australian Psychosis Conference 2023

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# BIPOLAR AUSTRALIA

A lived experience founded and led national not for profit organisation



Raise local  
community  
awareness

Eliminate  
stigma and  
discrimination



Engaging in and  
supporting  
research

Providing  
evidence-based  
education  
programs



Bipolar support  
groups

Bipolar  
resources and  
directory

## Prevalence

Bipolar conditions affect

2.2% of Australians aged 16-85

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/mental-health/national-study-mental-health-and-wellbeing/2020-21>)

over 568,000 Australians

<https://psychology.org.au/for-the-public/psychology-topics/bipolar-disorder>)

# BIPOLAR AUSTRALIA CURRENT RESEARCH

**Title: Needs of those living with bipolar disorder in Australia project**

**Summary:** The aim of the study is to explore the needs of those people living with bipolar disorder in Australia. It will assess health, education, social, housing and treatment needs for people living in Australia.

**Conducted by:** Dr Tania Perich, Senior Lecturer, School of Psychology, WSU in partnership with Bipolar Australia

**Funding:** School of Psychology, Western Sydney University.



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**WESTERN SYDNEY**  
UNIVERSITY



# Moodwise Hub - Bipolar Disorder Courses

START COURSE



## Moodwise Hub - Bipolar Disorder Courses

40% COMPLETE

- ☰ What is Bipolar Disorder?
- ☰ Treatments for Bipolar Disorder
- ☰ Information for carers, family and friends
- ☰ References
- ☰ Resources



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# PSYCHOSOCIAL RECOVERY SUPPORTS

Support groups

Services directory

Coming home with bipolar booklet

Staying home with bipolar booklet

Carers rights

Education



## What are mental health support groups?

Support Groups are among the best and most widely proven methods for empowering and connecting people. All our support groups are peer to peer support with sessions led by a facilitator. Our focus is to motivate, inspire and educate you to help achieve better mental health.

## What happens in a Support Group?



### Talk

A Support Group provides a safe and confidential space for all participants to speak up about what they are going through. For most people just asking if they are okay and listening to them can make a huge difference.

By simply being there for someone, can make them feel less alone and more supported to open up and talk about how they are feeling really.

The participants are encouraged to speak in a fair and inclusive environment which makes them feel supported.



### Listen

Just being there for someone and lending a listening ear can make a difference.

Listening empathetically allows the listener to really hear and understand what is being said. It also makes it easier for the other person to feel they can talk freely without being judged.

All participants are encouraged to upload a non judgemental attitude.



### Support

All participants share their experiences, strategies and ideas to overcome the situation. Meeting people with similar experiences and symptoms can give hope to the newly diagnosed. Coping mechanisms and strategies are discussed, while also sharing details on what services are available and how to access them.

Getting early help can help someone. Our support group welcomes members, family and friends and carers of those living with a mental illness. It is not necessary for anyone to be diagnosed to be able to attend the support group.

Professional help is encouraged in all support groups and support groups are not a substitute for professional diagnosis or advice.



### Benefits of attending the support groups

Support Groups provide great opportunity to connect with people with similar concerns in a safe, confidential and non judgemental space.

1

Realizing you are not alone, others have similar concerns and are there to help and encourage you.

2

Feeling comfortable expressing your feelings in a safe and supportive environment with the group.

3

Support groups offer lots of practical tips with identified concerns, and members share the strategies that helped them move forward in their recovery.

4

By meeting and talking with other group members, you also have a chance to practice social skills and interact more effectively with others.

5

You gain better understanding about yourself, your needs and your own unique personality. You can also gain increased insight about the factors that have contributed to your current challenges and the strategies that seem to work best to help you move toward your goals.

6

Just as you benefit from the group experience, you can also help other group members as you grow and make progress. Others will be affected positively by hearing about your successes and by your kind and caring demeanor.

7

One additional advantage of support groups is they are free of cost, and aims to provide mental health support and awareness.



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(Source: [mhfa.org.au](http://mhfa.org.au))

# THANK YOU!

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[www.bipolaraustralia.org.au](http://www.bipolaraustralia.org.au)



ADVOCACY

RESEARCH

SUPPORT



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