

Carer Stress Drop In Support- *Frequently Asked Questions*

Why are you having this session?

The drop-in session is an extension of a perceived need within both the Plenty Life church community and the general community and is an extension of the care ministry to provide support for those experiencing carer stress.

Who do you define as carers?

Carers are anyone who care for a family member or other people. Examples include, those caring for an older person (which may include a parent, sibling or community members), a spouse/partner, child/children who are not their biological children or caring for biological children with disabilities. This list is not exhaustive.

What is the purpose of these sessions?

- To provide a starting place for people who are carers to find the next step in navigating their needs.
- To provide a supportive emotional space where participants experience empathic support from the others in the group.
- To provide helpful resources where applicable.

How is the group structured?

After an initial welcome, the purpose and guidelines of the group will be briefly reviewed. Participants will be asked if there is anything that people want to focus on that night, and then the group will seek to cover as many of the issues as time allows.

What will be in the group guidelines?

For participants to experience a supportive emotional space, registration with the group leader is required before participants attend their first group session. Registration involves a discussion with the group leader who will provide an outline of the guidelines and answer any questions.

These guidelines include:

- That what is said in the group is confidential, except for safety concerns for the participant or others. Should this be the case then this will be discussed with the participant as is feasible to the situation.

- That group participants will be asked for their ideas, as appropriate. However, the framing of the expression of the ideas will be in terms of, “if this was my situation this is what I might do”, as opposed to: “this is what you should do”. The difference is subtle, but important. Such ideas will come on invitation, rather than unsolicited.
- That participants will listen to others as they talk.

This is a Church group, what are the expectations about faith issues and my background?

We welcome anyone from any background, there are no requirements for people to ascribe to any set of beliefs. We also acknowledge that carer stress can raise many questions around faith, heighten doubts, bring questions, and we encourage these to be expressed as participants feel comfortable.

One of the options that may be offered to participants is prayer if requested. The prayer will be offered in the Christian expression.

I am concerned that the group may not know about the complexity of caring needs, how will the group leader respond to this?

Such concerns are acknowledged and valid. Caring needs and the system that surrounds this are complex and most certainly the group will not know answers to the many questions that are raised. The group leader will seek to find out accurate information as appropriate, which will be sent to the participants. As themes develop, those with subject matter expertise will be invited into the group; these sessions will be advertised in advance. It is envisaged that group knowledge will increase over time.

Who is the current leader, and how will the group be run?

The group will be led by Russell Moore who is a Pastoral Care volunteer with Plenty Life Anglican Church. Russell in his professional life is a trained Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner (mediator) and counsellor, with significant experience and training in clinical supervision in leading such groups for many years. Russell has significant experience in dealing with conflict between siblings and elders, and parents and grandparents over the needs of elders and children.