

## GROW gives hope:

GROW is sometimes our first experience of successfully taking responsibility, of providing help instead of requiring it, of caring instead of being cared for. But let Growers tell their own stories:

*In my depression and anxiety and the accompanying low self-esteem I had a tendency to avoid contact and stay isolated, which only intensified the condition. GROW is an invaluable source of support, helping me to get outside of myself, to grow in self-acceptance and confidence, and in active concern for others.*

David, Construction Inspector.

*Recurrent depressions had finally brought me to attempted suicide and repeated hospitalisations. GROW provided individuals who understand me, supported me, and challenged me to solve my problems. Growers understand because they've been there, and they succeed because of a well-thought-out program developed by GROW leaders since 1957.*

Dennis, Educator

*I was dependent on medication – I thought I had no other choice but to live in a stupor. GROW's caring and its advice on how to deal with hallucinations helped me. Under the care of a new doctor, I had reduced the medication to about 25% of the old dosage. Life is now exciting and worthwhile.*

Mariellen, GROW organiser

## Where is GROW?

GROW Meetings can be found throughout New Zealand. To locate your nearest group, contact the GROW Centre in your area:

Auckland Ph: (09) 846 6869  
[auckland@grow.org.nz](mailto:auckland@grow.org.nz)

Christchurch Ph:(03) 366 5890  
[chch.grow@xtra.co.nz](mailto:chch.grow@xtra.co.nz)

Dunedin Ph: (03) 477 2871  
[growdunedin@actrix.co.nz](mailto:growdunedin@actrix.co.nz)

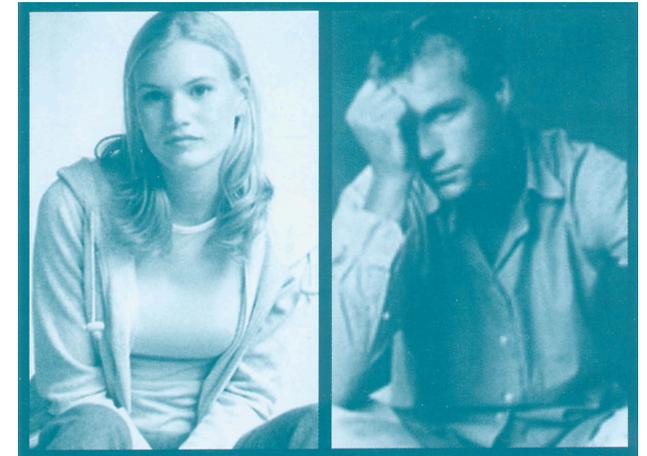
Most of the work of GROW is done voluntarily by those who have recovered or are recovering from mental or emotional distress. Any donations or bequests will be gratefully received – please contact **GROW National:** Ph: (09) 846 2970

Email: [national@grow.org.nz](mailto:national@grow.org.nz)

*“Friendship is the special key  
to mental health.”*

# ‘Oh Hell... another day...’

## HOW WILL I EVER COPE’



**If this is the start of your day  
don't despair!  
CALL GROW!**



**World Community Mental Health  
Movement**

## What is GROW

GROW is a voluntary association of people who know they are inadequate or maladjusted to life (mentally, socially or spiritually), who earnestly desire to change, and are helping one another to grow to personal maturity.

GROW began in Sydney in 1957. Its groups are run by its own members, sometimes with the friendly co-operation of a doctor, social worker, minister of religion or any mature member of the community.

GROW has no affiliation with any organised church or religion. Its broad basis of belief is in ourselves and one another as persons, and in the spiritual values of mind, heart and character which we have found to be the foundation of personal life and mental health.

## What are GROW meetings like?

GROW groups vary in size from 5 to 9 people. Meetings are held weekly, day or night, last two hours, and are followed by refreshments. They combine personal testimonies, reports on progress, group work on members' problems and adult education about rebuilding lives. Between meetings members keep in touch through friendly phone calls.



## Who can be a GROWER?

Anyone who is willing to help and be helped. Participation in GROW is strictly voluntary and anonymous, and there are no fees or dues. GROW is open to all human beings – irrespective of belief, race, colour or class. Members know one another by first names only. Many members come to GROW with a history of hospitalisation, but probably half come initially because they need help due to some life crises – a death in the family, divorce, or a change in career.

## GROW is people:

- Who really understand how you feel because they've been in the same sort of trouble.
- Who have found a way through distress and depression towards the best in life and love and happiness.
- Who want to share that way with everyone else who is down or is finding life hard to handle.

## GROW is a caring and sharing community:

GROW members share their own experiences and coping strategies in order to help one another. Members don't just benefit from one another's experience but, through the mutual sharing, build trust in one another. These supportive friendships become part of an ongoing network of resources.

## STUDY BY DR LISABETH FINN, RESEARCHER AT CURTIN UNIVERSITY IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Dr Finn has recently conducted a study into GROW's impact on mental health and wellbeing. The study indicated that a sustained membership in GROW and involvement in GROW activities is associated with improved psychological wellbeing and a reduction in the use of medication and hospitalisation. Newcomers to GROW when followed up 6 months later were found by the study to show improvement in all wellbeing characteristics measured, such as life management skills, self-esteem and the ability to take on new challenges. In the qualitative work involving observation of GROW groups and interviews with GROW members, the picture that emerged was that GROW offers not only practical benefits in terms of social skills, coping and problem solving skills, but also a sense of identity transformation in terms of GROW members coming to feel useful, valuable and a sense of belonging. This outcome is a core benefit of mutual help groups: members help each other and through doing that, they gain a sense of purpose and value.

- You alone can do it, but you can't do it alone.
- Don't be an emotional reaction – be a person
- Growth is painful – but permanently rewarding.