LECTURE

Mutual Help Groups after Stroke

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Abstract

Mutual help groups, social clubs, self-help groups, supporting groups... it might have several denominations, but its name is probably the least important concern! Groups for and with stroke survivors are the simplest form of action to answer, perhaps, the most serious problems for those who have suffered a stroke: isolation and closure in oneself and in their concerns. In fact, if not "fought against", these problems tend to become progressively bigger and are often accompanied by other problems, such as social self-exclusion, depression, among others.

The social, architectural, professional and any other context often do not help. People have been fighting for many years for a progressive alteration of this panorama, and, slowly, something is being changed. But this is a fight that can only be won with the presence of the affected ones, the stroke survivors, who, with very rare exceptions, are not united and organized. Here too, groups, no matter how informal, can help!

These groups are the cells in the basis of organizations (and of rights recognition!) that we often admire, and are found everywhere: in the United Kingdom (± 500 groups), Germany (± 480), United States, Canada, Australia, and even in other realities with a socioeconomic context similar to ours!

The creation, maintenance and consistency of these groups are not easy tasks, but they are also not difficult: all it takes is will and minimal organization! Curiously, this time, the requirements are not the funds; it is rather some volunteer work!

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