



Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles

Our Vision

An equitable and just mental health system, driven by Lived Experience perspectives of mental health challenges and suicidality.

Our Mission

We deliver Lived Experience governed, managed, and run supports for people experiencing mental health challenges and suicidality, and demonstrate their effectiveness along the way.

Our Guiding Principles

1. We are guided by our Lived Experience at all times.

Brook RED is a community bound by our diverse experiences of learning from mental health challenges and suicidal distress, and our interactions with mental health services and systems. Lived experience is the personal and firsthand experience of mental health challenges and suicidal distresses that have caused so significant a change in our lives that we have needed to redefine and reimagine ourselves, our places in the world, and our plans.

We openly identify with and share our firsthand experiences and we connect with others around claiming agency over these experiences. Our lived experience is the lens through which we carry out all of our work.

2. We believe in possibility.

Our work at Brook RED is to create spaces, invitations, and opportunities where we can learn, grow and explore our own possibilities. We know that healing, growing, and thriving are always possible. We believe in our ability and right to determine our own futures and we reject limitations and labels placed on our community. Our experiences tell us that change is possible regardless of what has come before. With possibility comes the potential for risks; we will make mistakes and sometimes it will take us a while to find a path that is right for us. We believe risk is an element of learning and growing and we are comfortable and tolerant of risk. This doesn't mean we aren't considered and balanced when we evaluate risks. We trust our capacity to be resilient and to work through difficulties when they arise. We don't always like being uncomfortable or uncertain, but we understand that it is a necessary part of living fully.

3. We love the diversity and difference our community is made up of.

Our community is stronger when it is welcoming and responsive to people's individual and collective needs, identities, cultures and perspectives. We know that individuals understand and experience mental health and suicidal distress and interactions with mental health services and systems differently and that for many people, culture informs their experience. Our services are not uniform or homogenous and they reflect the unique characteristics of our communities.

4. Our work is Socio-political.

We know that experiences of mental health challenges, suicidal distress, and interactions with mental health services and systems are shaped by adversity including social factors such as access to resources, discrimination, and societal expectations. Seeing things differently and challenging existing norms, structures, and systems is at the core of what we do and we consider that our work cannot be done without questioning and working to change these.

We acknowledge that, while viewing and acting through this socio-political and critical lens, we are also of the system and that this creates an inherent tension between our business and our social objectives which requires constant attendance and which sometimes cannot be fully reconciled.

5. Relationships are at the core of what we do.

We know that relationships support everything that we do. Amazing things happen where relationships are built with compassion, kindness, and integrity. The why and the how of what we do must always precede and guide the what of our work. We are not detached and objective observers; instead, we have skin in the game and are a community with collective interests and responsibility. Our practice is relationally-based and exists to support belongingness and connectedness.