

## December Weekend 2009



With 24 members, five therapists and three facilitators, everyone who wanted a therapy got at least one session and those who wished to have individual counselling were able to do so too. True, we were a bit tight on public spaces, so the large room was pressed into service for the open discussion groups. Thanks to the considerate cooperation of everyone – the arrangements appeared to work well.

Each Living Proof weekend is unique, although it is not always easy to say precisely why, apart from the obvious fact that no two weekends will have the same composition of members. Thanks to the Elton John AIDS Foundation award, this weekend saw more new members than I can recall, and as diverse as you can imagine, with a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and conversations in Spanish as well as English. It was the lovely ladies from Luton who, perhaps, brought an added, enthusiastic zest – despite all being new members, they immediately embraced the Living Proof self-help ethos and engaged fully in facilitated groups as well as mixing with other members and taking part whole heartedly in all social activities.

Whilst every member appeared to do their bit to ensure the smooth running of the weekend, some undertook additional specific responsibilities that helped to ensure its success. Amongst these were Ian and Steve who assisted in welcoming arrivals and Les and Paul who took charge of the raffle, which raised £241. A big thank you to all the generous prize donors and ticket buyers. Thanks too for all those who joined in the community singing before the raffle and to everyone who took part in the bingo afterwards.

A happy and healthy New Year to everyone!

Maurice Greenham

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## Evaluation Sheets

We are grateful to Ian for processing and compiling statistics for all of the 2008 Living Proof weekends. A bound copy of the results was available for members to see at the December weekend and will be on display at each weekend throughout 2010.

Almost everyone rated the accommodation at Shallowford House for the December weekend excellent or good, there were similar high ratings for feeling safe and secure. Support from other members on the weekend was considered top rate by practically everyone. Most of those who attended the facilitated groups thought them and the relevance of the issues addressed good or excellent.

Most people who chose to have complementary therapies rated them excellent or good; most people thought the same

about the social activities and opportunities to meet others. Some comments:

*"I enjoy the weekend away from home. As a long-term survivor, I enjoy passing on my experiences and learning from new and old members. It goes a long way in helping a person living with HIV, and I leave refreshed and wanting to do more."*

*"The best thing was discovering other people's example of how they deal with the virus"*

*"Peer support – sharing experiences - able to relax completely - a chance for personal recharge."*

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## Yahoo social network group

One way of keeping in touch with members between weekends is via our Yahoo group. This is a secure online social network which replaced the previous open access message board at [www.nltsg.org.uk](http://www.nltsg.org.uk) Unlike its predecessor, this is a safe environment free from spam that also has the potential to become a useful tool for ongoing peer support.

If you would like to join this group, please go to the following link and click on 'join this group'

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/nltsgmembers>

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## Recruitment drive

The group needs members to become trustees or helpers. In particular, anyone with skills, experience, contacts to help with funding raising or act as ambassadors for the group. If you would like to become more involved with the running of the group please email [chair@nltsg.org.uk](mailto:chair@nltsg.org.uk)

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## Dates for 2010-2011

Please note the date for the 2010 Summer Weekend which has changed since the leaflets were printed

<b>2010</b>	
26 – 28 March	<b>9 – 11 July</b>
24 – 26 September	17 – 19 December
<b>2011</b>	
25 – 27 March	8 – 10 July
23 – 25 September	16 – 18 December

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