CULTURAL SUPPORT FOR YOUR LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY:
Straight From a Queen’s Mouth
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BEN HIPPENSTEEL

• Program Manager, FOCUS Recovery and Wellness Community
• Ohio Certified Peer Recovery Support, Supervisor
• In Long-term Recovery
• Son, Brother, Father
• Artist
• Cat Lover
CANDI, WANTSOME?

• Program Manager, FOCUS Recovery and Wellness Community
• Ohio Certified Peer Recovery Support, Supervisor
• Super Sober Drag Queen
• Costume Designer
• Motivational Speaker
• Recovery & LGBTQ+ Advocate
• Multimedia Artist
• Vlogger
• Internet Sensation Hopeful

SoberDragQueen.com
THE PLAN TODAY!

How to Support your LGBTQ+ Recovery Community

Draft your own LGBTQ+ Support Meeting Plan

Brainstorm how to keep it supported $$$
SUPPORTING YOUR LGBTQ+ RECOVERY COMMUNITY, THE BASICS

• Welcoming to all Pathways, all People, and all “Letters.”
• Recovery comes first, our LGBTQ+ factor second, so don’t judge.
• If you don’t know, find someone and ask.
• Be honest and vulnerable.
• Create an open atmosphere.
HOW FOCUS DEVELOPED OPEN AIR
What did we think about?

- What Day, What Time?
- Location: Church, VFW, Library
- Safety: Entrance, Parking, Anonymity X 2
- What’s in a Name?
- Promotion: Word of mouth, social media, paper flyers, post cards, local calendar
HOW FOCUS DEVELOPED OPEN AIR

What else did we think about?

- To Rainbow or not to Rainbow...Logo?
- Atmosphere, Theme, Décor
- Food and Fare
- Meeting Guidelines, Q&A, and Content
- Social Time: Before and After
- SAFTEY!!!
Open Air is a support group for the LGBTQ+ Community, Family, Friends, and Allies.

The First and Third Friday of every month, 7:30pm-9pm.
Located at FOCUS Recovery and Wellness Community
509 West Trenton Ave.
Findlay, OH 45840

Open Air conversations could include:
- Support
- Recovery
- Self-Acceptance
- Disclosure/coming out
- Addiction
- Gender
- Social Issues
- Mental Health
- Trauma
- We are Open to anything...

Community, Games, Music, Fun, Snacks, FAMILY... See you there!

“Open Air” Question and Answer

- Is Open Air trying to be a “dry bar”?
  No: The group meets at Focus On Friends, a Recovery Center for Mental Health, Trauma, and Addiction. So, the space does require that it stays drug and alcohol free. The group is evolving as we speak and all input is valuable. I did design the space to be very “Loungy” or “Club’esc,” because growing up that is where I went to find my community. This makes me feel happy and safe, that is why in photos or videos you see club lighting and hear music.

- Is Open Air open to High School Students?
  Yes: High School and College Students are welcome. Younger members of the community should contact Ben to be sure we are the right group at the right time for them.

- Do I have to be LGBT+ to attend?
  No: we are a group of likeminded people who are looking for a sense of community and support. Whether you are a friend, family member, or just a Cool person who wants a place to be Yourself, Open Air is for you!

- Do I have to go to the “meeting” part of the evening?
  No: Basically, the evening is structured to have something for everyone. We have a Lounge Area, Meeting Space, Kitchen, and a Recreation Room with Pool, Ping Pong, Darts, Books, Arts & Crafts. If you’re looking for a safe place just to hang out, come on down. When part of the group gathers to hold the support meeting you can hang out in the Rec Room and play pool or talk with friends. No Problem!

- Do I have to talk at the Support part of the meeting?
  No: our meeting is an Open Forum. If you would like to speak please do, if you prefer to listen that’s fine too. We always try and be cordial to all who would like to share in the conversation so we try to always be conscious of time.

For more information please contact Ben @ 419-428-5971 or ben@focusonfriends.org and check us out on FB @ OpenAirFindlayOH
Bitmojis
A Champion is a leader and or Ally that has a STRONG recovery and big shoulders.

- Stigma is two-fold: LGBTQ+ and recovery.
- Depending on your own community and the amount of understanding or hate.
- Needs to be able to listen and communicate calmly to opposing opinions.
SUSTAINING YOUR COMMUNITY AND MEETING
Finding your Champions and Funds

Stigma, Misunderstanding, & Fear
DRAFT YOUR OWN “OPEN AIR”
Based on your community and needs
Open Air

Space: Building/Center/House/Area

Day(s): Daily, Weekly, Monthly

Time: Morning, Noon, Afternoon, Evening (1 1/4 hours)

Snack: Salty/Sweet/Savory/Sassy

Introductions: First name only, Name, Question of the Day, Name Toss

Agenda: Theme, Programming, Games, Conversation, Activities

Marketing: Website, Facebook, Posters, Handouts, Business Cards, Text Group

Meeting Name

Hosted by: Organization’s Name

Location

Day, Date, Time

Who is invited?

Why show up?

What’s happening?

More Info, Phone, Email, Social Media, Contact
Questions?

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Thank You!

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