

## Self-help groups

Self-help groups meet regularly. Each group decides for itself exactly what they want to do. Some groups focus on discussions. Others meet for various activities or they lobby publicly for their interests.



When I join a self-help group, first of all I can see if I feel comfortable there. I decide what I want to say about myself and which activities I want to participate in.

Respect and mutual trust are very important for a self-help group. Personal information given in the group must be kept confidential.

Self-help groups are not a substitute for medical or social services, but they can complement them very well.

Self-help groups are not led by professional helpers (e.g. doctors or psychologists). Nevertheless, they are an important form of support for many people because here the members can try out new ways of understanding their problems and coping with them.



Details of your local Self-Help Advice Centre can be found here:



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**Selbsthilfe-Büro Niedersachsen**

Deutsche Arbeitsgemeinschaft Selbsthilfegruppen e.V. (DAG SHG)

[www.selbsthilfe-buero.de](http://www.selbsthilfe-buero.de)

## Self-help groups in Lower Saxony

Are you looking for information about self-help groups?

Would you like to join a support group?

Do you want to start a support group?

Do you have a professional interest in the topic "self-help"?





**We make a difference – that's what connects us**

Self-help groups in Lower Saxony

## Self-help groups

Many people are members of self-help groups. They deal with issues that can affect anybody. They help and support each other and work together on various activities.

**People join self-help groups for numerous reasons.**

### Because ...

- ... they want to **COMMUNICATE** with other people
- ... they want to **MEET** people who have similar experiences
- ... they are looking for **INFORMATION**
- ... they want to **SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES**
- ... together they want to **DRAW ATTENTION** to their problem
- ... they want to **CAMPAIGN** with others for change
- ... **SHARED PROBLEMS** are smaller problems
- ... they want to **JOIN** others outside their own family
- ... they want to get together outside the group meetings to **SUPPORT** one another



We help each other.

MS (Multiple Sclerosis)  
- and what am I going to do now?

I have never found such useful information before.

I can't control my alcohol consumption on my own.

I don't know how to deal with my panic attacks.

Here I have met people who are in the same boat as me.



## Self-help on local level

If you are looking for a self-help group, you can go to your local self-help advice centre. Self-help advice centres offer support and advice for self-help groups and for people interested in them. They also provide information for professionals and social and health care institutions and they connect regional self-help groups with professional services.

### Self-help advice centres

- provide information on self-help groups,
- arrange contact between people who are looking for a self-help group and appropriate groups,
- create, encourage and support self-help groups,
- raise awareness for self-help groups through publicity,
- encourage cooperation between self-help groups and social and health-care organizations.

More information about self-help groups and support for self-help groups in Lower Saxony can be found on the website of the regional coordination centre for self-help groups:

[www.selbsthilfe-buero.de](http://www.selbsthilfe-buero.de)

