

**OTR**

**COMMUNITY**

**September 2018**

***THIS BOOK BELONGS TO...***

# ***WELCOME TO THE OTR GUIDE TO COMMUNITY!***

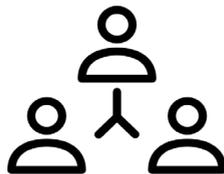
Community is one of those words that gets chucked about loads, but is also hard to actually understand what it means. Kind of like 'wellbeing', or 'No, I don't want any more pizza thanks'. However, at OTR we are firm believers in the power of community!



At OTR, a community is when a group of people are brought together because they all have something in common - an activity (like a football team), an interest (like being part of a fanbase), similar identities (like ethnicity, sexuality or beliefs) or a goal (like people on the same career path, or hoping to achieve the same stuff.) A community can even just be a handful of people if it's strong and meaningful!



This booklet is designed to help us look at the communities we're a part of, how a good community can be really helpful for us in our lives and how when we find the 'right people' to hang out with, it can give us somewhere to 'belong'. Now, get reading and go make the most of (or start finding) your crew!



# 1. HOW DOES OUR SOCIETY SEE COMMUNITY?

How we see community is influenced pretty majorly by how our society sees it too. Different societies 'build themselves' around what they value, and some societies value the individual more than the community. Now, this is a big idea - but what does it mean in real life?

Well, to start - imagine what the different types of societies value based on what they are built around... We'll give you a couple to start with!

## **SOCIETY BUILT AROUND INDIVIDUALS**

E.g. Each person's success

E.g. Each person's happiness

E.g. Each person's goals

## **SOCIETY BUILT AROUND COMMUNITIES**

E.g. The success of the community

E.g. A happy community

E.g. The goals of the community

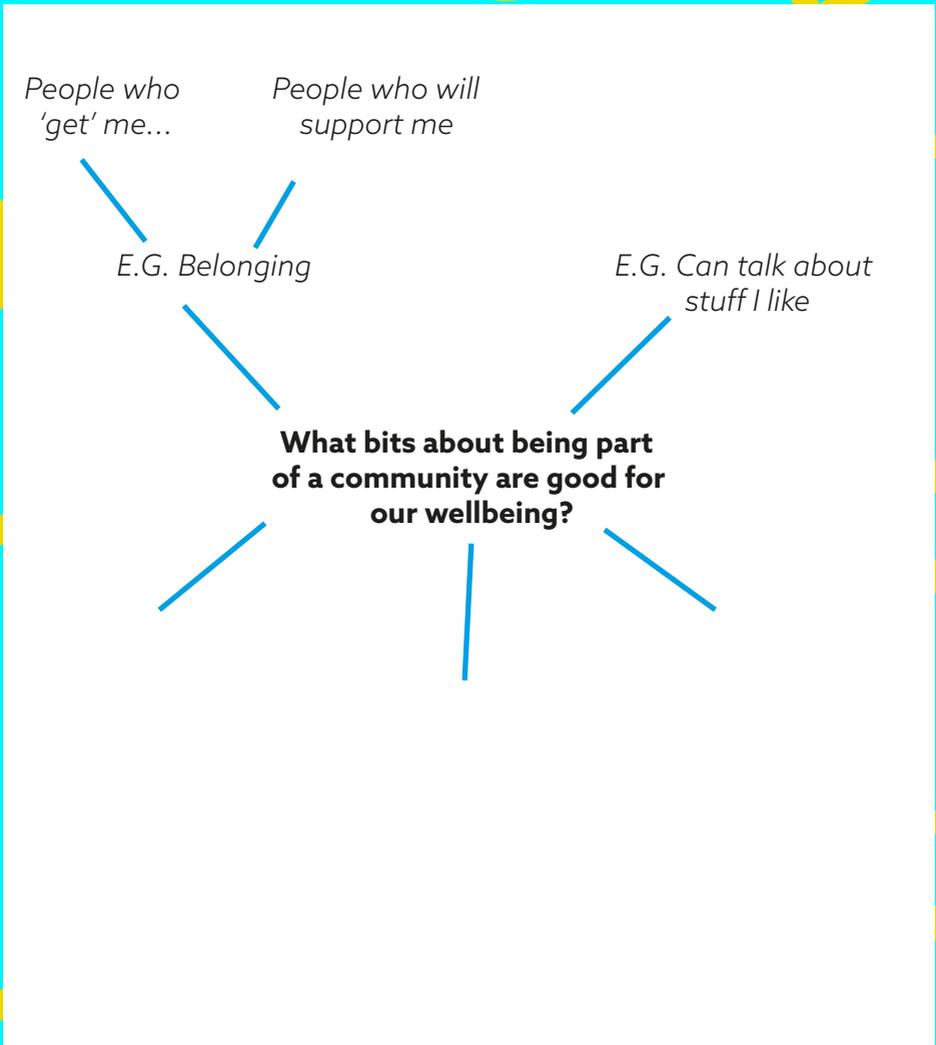
- Which type of society do you think we live in?

- How do you think living in this type of society may have changed how we see or feel about the importance of community?

**Struggling for more answers? Here are more suggestions!**  
a) mental health? b) physical health? c) Opportunities? d) having a job?

## 2. HOW CAN COMMUNITY HELP?

Now we've looked at how our society sees community, let's have a think about how we see community, and how they can be a useful part of our lives with this mind map. We'll get you started!



# 3. WHAT COMMUNITIES ARE WE ALREADY A PART OF?

If a community is a group of people brought together because they all have something in common, then we're almost certainly a part of loads of communities already! Using activities, interests, identity and goals, let's have a think about what these might be...

<b>Activities?</b> E.G. Rock climbing, sport... etc.	<b>Interests?</b> E.G. Part of a music or art scene, part of a fanbase... etc.
<b>Identity?</b> E.G. political beliefs, following a religion, ethnic heritage...	<b>Goals?</b> E.G. Career goals... achievements...

Where are your communities? Are they online, at clubs, school, friends houses etc... Jot down some ideas!

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# 4. HEALTHY AND UNHEALTHY COMMUNITIES!

As great as a community can be, it's important to recognise that some communities can be unhealthy. This might mean a community that doesn't accept someone for not 'fitting in' 100%. For example, a community not accepting a member for their sexuality based on the community's beliefs. Here's a short list of a few ideas of how to tell the difference between 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' communities.

## Healthy Communities

- Want you to be yourself!
  - Celebrate differences
  - Power/authority is shared between all
  - Value individual growth and community growth in the wider world
  - Are open and neutral to people not in the group
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## Unhealthy Communities

- Want you to be like everyone else in the community
  - Celebrate sameness
  - A few people have most of the power
  - Don't value change or challenge it's members to grow
  - Are closed off or hostile to people not in the group
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## 5. WHAT IS YOUR IDEAL COMMUNITY? (OR, HOW TO FIND YOUR CREW!)

So we've looked at how communities can help us, thought about what communities we're already part of and learned the difference between healthy and unhealthy communities... Now, let's look at what being part of 'a good community' means to us as individuals, and how to search for it!

**If you were part of a community that was perfect for you, how would you know?**

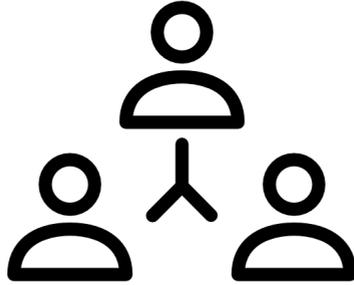
(E.G. What would the community be like? What would be its "vibe"? How would people in it act? What would bring and keep you guys all together?)

**Think about some of the communities you're already in... Which of them give you what you want?** (E.G. An art group that lets you be creative.)

**Take the community that gives you the most.**

**i) Is there anything you can do to help make this community closer to your 'ideal' community?** (E.G. Encourage the group to share more tips and tricks to help each other get better!)

**ii) Is there anything you can take, keep or learn from this community to take into others you're a part of (new, or old)?** (E.G. The creative thinking!)



**This booklet was made by OTR Bristol,  
a mental health social movement by and  
for young people aged 11-25 in Bristol  
and South Glos.**

**For more information on what we do,  
come and see us at one of our Hubs:  
[otrbristol.org.uk/what-we-do/hubs](http://otrbristol.org.uk/what-we-do/hubs).**

**You can also call us for free on  
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