

Transcript of the Our Voices Video prepared by ATD Ireland for the European Meeting – March 2017

Intro- Whenever men and women are condemned to live in poverty human rights are violated. We Come together to ensure these rights are respected.

Elaine how would you explain in a few words the project we are starting together ?

I think its about people, europeans, fellow europeans coming together that know something of what its like to live on the margins or to be excluded in some way or form from society coming together and discoverig the similarities between those experiences and then speaking about them and then hopefully coming up with some clarity or thoughts or ideas about progressing something in the future at a european level that would affect other european countries apart from Spain, Poland and Ireland.

[in Spanish] I am interested in this project because in Spain I am fighting a lot for living conditions, for work, and for health. From all I have already experienced and what I know, coming here allows me to learn even more things and also gain more experience for myself, and to me, this matters a lot.

There needs to be more support in areas youth centres you know wherever it is that you are, just tagging around street corners.

I think with our experience with addiction or whatever we`ve been through we can really help young people and say not from a oh this is what you should do but from a this is what happened to me to tell our story in an honest way. And we can really help people avoid the fuck ups that we did, or you know the shorter way out of this, or a better way because you know we really have learned through our journey

Theres no actual centre thats radiating out into the community positive recovery, look at this informing people about their rights, putting in place, and equipping them and then letting them speak to their entirety about these issues because a lot of people go in and there overwhelmed when they're faced with entirety and the extent of keeping with the energy, and its just- Paul where's paul- Pauls was saying that a doctor can give you the solutions, put you in a bad frame of mind. So you`ve got coming away from that and you've nowhere to go theres no heart within the community, the heart has been ripped out of our community thats the problem as I see it, and if you had some sort of centre I dont know it could be promoting anything we've discussed a lot about it.

The whole idea of people even in the health system that actually know how to make a complaint procedure and how to go about that wether it be a local treatment centre, or maybe it be a G.P. Or a hospital that theres a complaint procedure there and that everybody can take it.

I feel very passionate about this, you know, because I had a care worker, you know, and as a care worker bringing someone to a hospital and being told you have to go here and you have to go there. It might be your blood it could be this it could be that and you're not being listened to. So access to treatment has been cut by half, its a huge problem, it gived you stabilisation.

Our health is our resoonsibility, but its our doctors responsibility too. If you go to them they turn us all on the same brush. Once you're on methadone you're alone

For the likes of a drug user or an alcoholic, something like that, they'd be going to these doctor and they'd be like " yeah okay put the stout over there yeah, you have to cut it theres nothing wrong with you". They dont even deal with you " yeah theres nothing wrong with you, theres your script you`re an addict youd be delighted to do script" you know what I mean like and they just try that...

Its also difficult to be responsible when you fear to meet the professionals of the health service some people are to scared to go to a doctor and some people dont want to go because they dont want the medication.

It is difficult to be responsible with your health when you dont have a sense of security in your life, when I felt more secure I took time to manage my health.

Most of my life I have never really cooked for myself because I spent a lot of my years in prison so I was being fed by the state. If I did get my own place I probably would be going for the easy option and the processed food because I have no experience in cooking. If I was to try to go in there into the kitchen and cook a meal to be honest I wouldn` t have a clue. I know I could take some cooking classes or look up some youtube videos. Thank you.

Song: People always ask us, people always ask us. Who we are, who we are. Where do we come from-

(In Polish) – Marta - Why are you joining this project? Why? Because world needs to be nice and good for people.

The discussion was good, the discussion was on relationships with social workers and what is the barrier in those relationships. Which formed a nice heated passionate discussion, yeah yeah toy can imagine, because people have bad experiences with social workers

And they were very nice as well that day it was good to know the drug problem over there. It`s different than it is in Ireland. What main drug choice is in Poland? And its actually alcohol.

I think what was really good was the fact that there was a lot of translation like yourself and Fabienne spoke Polish as well so it was really really easy to communicate with the group. It was lovely seing Martha again, we remember Martha from our visit in Saol when Poland came over so it was nice to see her again.

I think it's really fantastic that it's at european level and my first impression is that people are surprised at discovering that outside their own country people are living similiar experiences. I think that was a very strong element that I discovered yesterday, that it was a surprise for them to discover.

Whenever men and women are condemned to live in poverty human rights are violated. We Come together to ensure these rights are respected in equality. Equality equals dignity. Everyone has to be treated equally.

Song: Its been that way before, I set on the best foot . Waiting for light to shine, Ive been selling myself for a long time, looking for the chance to shine.I set on the best foot, waiting for the life to shine Ive been selling myself for a long time, life was always bright.

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