

Click  
hereto plan your week with our new **My Life** section

## Getting help to grow

LOCAL NEWS 5 OCT 11 @ 07:30AM BY NADINE BISHOP

2

Recommend

Send

5 people recommend this.



SAFE HAVEN: Dean Gant of Coromandel Valley has experienced mental health issues in his lifetime. Picture: Helen Orr.

SUPPORTING others with mental illness has given **Dean Gant** a positive outlook on life.

The leader of the Blackwood branch of GROW, a peer-supported program for people living with a mental illness, said the group provided a safe haven.

"It's a friendly environment where people understand what you've been through," Mr Gant, 60, said.

"It's anonymous so people can share their stories with those who are objective."

The Coromandel Valley resident joined the group when it started in 2002 after experiencing his own challenges.

"My mother suffered depression and I found that hard to accept," Mr Gant said.

"Through various circumstances, I had some issues myself and found myself in the same boat."

Mr Gant saw an advertisement for GROW at a local supermarket and decided to attend. A year later, he found himself running the group sessions.

"GROW has been a part of my strategy - I have always been interested in cognitive therapy and the power of positive thinking," he said.

"GROW has been a good support mechanism for me."

Mr Gant said the group had helped more than 100 people since it first started in Blackwood.

"Mental illness doesn't pick and choose, it can affect anyone from all walks of life," he said.

"But GROW is about telling your story in a safe environment. There is no magic wand but we always give people a practical task, something to write down, so they can formalise what they're thinking."

The *Hills & Valley Messenger* has launched the Open Your Mind campaign, in partnership with mindshare, a mental health website launching October 12.

Mindshare is an online community created by the Media Resource Centre with the Mental Health Coalition SA.

Blackwood GROW meet at the Blackwood Uniting Church, each Monday at 7.30pm.

**For information on depression, visit [beyondblue.org.au](http://beyondblue.org.au) or 1300 22 46 36.**

**If you or someone you know suffers from depression, phone Lifeline on 131 114.**



### Hills & Valley Messenger

Like

130

<http://www.whereilive.com.au>



All times ACST