BN: So, if you don’t mind if we could just start if you say a little bit about (name of organisation) and your role within it.

NA6: Yeah. Well, for me I’ve been at (name of organisation) since we were first set up really in 2014 and all I do is I do a lot of the admin stuff. I do the admin, I help get the like help with their keeping up to date with all the activities we do, like making documents and help typing up comments that people have wrote down. We’ve done quite a lot and I do that on Mondays, and I do most of my hours on Mondays and then I do like an hour Wednesdays and then because (name of organisation) do like we have the [00.54 unclear] full group on Monday. We have health and wellbeing on Tuesday, and we have work placements and community lunches on Wednesdays.

BN: Excellent. And what motivated you to work at (name of organisation)?

NA6: It’s because well before I became (name of organisation), I was a member myself because (name of organisation) help loads of teenagers of 18 and 30. I was a member myself. With support I’d been [01.20 unclear] but it didn’t quite work out because my mental health wasn’t good at that time. And then basically I went back to (name of organisation) and built myself and I started doing more volunteering because I thought giving back might be good after the support they’ve given us, and then after that it just progressed into paid employment and that brings me to where I am now. And I’ve been working with (name of organisation) since 2000— I’ve been working paid since the end of 2020.

BN: Oh right. Oh excellent. And so, what is your kind of experience with MECC, what training have you had in it, what kind of awareness have you got?

NA6: I’ve done like we done, like during the…got MECC during the pandemic it was I did a lot of the COVID awareness stuff and I went up and did a I course and became a COVID champion back then, to obviously to make sure like obviously to make sure there’s no like…to watch out, like check information kind of thing and give the correct information by fact checking and stuff like that.

BN: Yeah. OK. And so, have you done the MECC train the trainer course before?

NA6: The train the trainer?

BN: Yeah.

NA6: I don’t think I’ve done that one.

BN: OK.

NA6: I don’t have a really good memory, you know.

BN: It’s OK. And so, can you remember when you first heard of MECC?

NA6: It was with (name of organisation). We’ve done stuff with Making Every Contact Count. We’ve done like a lot of the…we did a lot of the like I think it was a lot of health and wellbeing side, and obviously during COVID we worked with them quite a lot to work together and obviously it’s to help distribute information.

BN: Yeah. And can you—

NA6: Such as the COVID champions.

BN: Right.

NA6: Scheme thing.

BN: Yeah. So, you don’t remember doing the train the trainer where you learn to become to deliver MECC training yourself.

NA6: No. Actually, now that you say it I don’t think I have actually done that course yet.

BN: Right. OK. So, do you know about, I think because (name) delivers MECC training, doesn’t she?

NA6: Yeah. She does most training. Like I do, I’m mostly the admin person.

BN: Right.

NA6: So, I do sort of more background stuff and (name), she does a lot of like applying for funding applications and apply for funding applications and helping and obviously and then when she sees the group when she can and we’ve just, for me and (name) and a few others have become part of a trustee committee.

BN: Oh right. Oh excellent.

NA6: And what we had is because we were just like a committee at first and now, we’ve all become trustees. Everyone who’s in the part of the committee meetings we’ve become trustees.

BN: Oh, excellent. So, can you remember what your first thoughts were around MECC when you first heard about it and learnt about it?

NA6: I think it’s very good. I think it’s very good at engaging the community. I think a lot of the group have got a lot out of it. I think youse have been really good at engaging the members and helping keeping information, keeping in contact really and I still get the occasional emails about possible MECC meetings that I could take part of but usually I’m at work at that time, so I’ve never really been able to participate.

BN: Yeah. Right.

NA6: But I do see in the emails, and I think with MECC it’s we’ve done a lot of stuff. I think, I’m sure MECC was involved when we did the (name of programme) as well. I can’t remember.

BN: Right.

NA6: But I think I’m sure there was something to do with that as well and engaging with the group’s been really good, helpful, supportive and the group’s got more out of it.

BN: Oh, that’s really positive. Yeah, so when you say about the groups you’ve been invited to, the MECC groups, are they sort of like the strategy meetings, the forums?

NA6: The regular meetings. The regular meetings. I think they’re just regular MECC meetings.

BN: Yeah.

NA6: But like I said, usually I’m at work so that’s never…I’ve always had to miss them.

BN: Yeah.

NA6: Because I’ve been, obviously I’ve got work and I’ve got to earn money, yeah.

BN: Yeah. Fair enough. So, have you kind of heard of the MECC train the trainer? Is that something that you’re aware of?

NA6: I think I heard a bit about it. As we were setting up this meeting, I think I heard a little bit about it.

BN: Right.

NA6: Obviously I need to do my research, but I think I know a vague idea of it.

BN: Right. Yeah. So, do you know, have you been invited to do the train the trainer or anything like that?

NA6: Not as far as I’m aware. I think the only thing regarding MECC I think is just the regular meetings that I’ve seen.

BN: Yeah.

NA6: And other course that I have done have been like three courses on other things.

BN: Right.

NA6: And different deliverers.

BN: OK. So, not MECC. Different [06.58 unclear].

NA6: I think that definitely because I think the last time I did a MECC course was the COVID champions one.

BN: Right. Yeah. So, do you think you would be interested in becoming a MECC trainer and delivering MECC training?

NA6: Good question. I’ve never really thought about it. Firstly, I’ll have to do my research first and see what it entails, what being a MECC trainer is and what the roles would be, and then I would probably decide then whether it’s good, whether it will be good for me or not.

BN: Right. Yeah. And what kind of things might you weigh up when you’re deciding if it would be good for you or not?

NA6: Well, I think firstly it’s…I think who for me, it’s like being in too much of a big crowd, like big crowd of peoples would be…would kill my nerves basically. Because I do have anxiety so it’s like when it comes to engaging people, I get quite nervous.

BN: Right. Yeah. And so, have you delivered training before?

NA6: No. Never have. I have never delivered training before. I’ve supported groups to do it, but I’ve never been like the tutor, if you know what I mean.

BN: Yeah. Yeah. And how do you think you would feel about delivering training?

NA6: I think…I think for now, at the minute, I think I’m…I think that’s quite anxiety inducing just being in front of a like I would need to know more first.

BN: Yeah. And how would you feel in your sort of knowledge of MECC to deliver MECC training to other people?

NA6: Knowledge? I would probably…I would…sorry.

BN: That’s OK.

NA6: Yeah. I think I would do, obviously like I said, I’d probably need to do some research first. Before I do deliver that kind of stuff I need to do more research. I think I’m still…I’m [09.21 unclear] I think I’m still a relative new, like beginner when it comes to that.

BN: Right. Yeah. So, you’d maybe want to know more about the training before you signed up to do the training.

NA6: Yeah. I would need to know full what it entails.

BN: Yeah. And do you mean by what it entails sort of what it would demand from you?

NA6: Yeah. That’s what…that’s what…yeah. Because if it’s too much then I’d quite simply and simple I wouldn’t be able to do it because it would be just too stressful.

BN: Right. Yeah. And so how, at this moment in time, how motivated do you feel to become a MECC trainer would you say?

NA6: I would say now that I think it’s been on the back burner for me quite a while since I’ve had like other stuff that I need to [10.15 info] for but I think the more I know about it I think the more motivation I’ll get.

BN: Right. Yeah. So, when you say it’s kind of gone on the back burner, what kind of things have been prioritised?

NA6: Well, the jobs. Like working towards the jobs. Obviously, I’ve been…I’ve just on my other jobs with (name of organisation) I’ve just moved department from finance to fund raising, so I’ve had that and then it’s just…and then there’s obviously there’s been a lot of funding that we’ve needed to help get done for (name of organisation) and there, and there and obviously with that obviously that’s had to be prioritised. Like my paid jobs have basically been on top of my priority list for quite a long time now.

BN: Yeah. Yeah. So MECC has kind of been on the back burner a little bit.

NA6: Yeah.

BN: Yeah.

NA6: Yes, because like basically (name of organisation) and (name of organisation) have basically dominated my more progression, my career path if you know what I mean.

BN: Yeah. Yeah. So, what have you sort of bosses at both of those, so (name of organisation) and what did you say the other place you work at, what has—

NA6: (name of organisation).

BN: Yeah, yeah, so what has been their kind of attitude towards you doing MECC training and learning more about MECC?

NA6: I’ve never really spoke to (name of location) Autism about MECC because, like I said, having MECC on the back burner, like I’ve never really felt because (name of organisation) don’t, as far as I’m aware, don’t seem to have any sort of connection because there’s no mention of MECC at all, whereas (name of organisation) they’d support us.

BN: Right. Yeah. So, what do you think they’ll be like in if you wanted to become a MECC trainer?

NA6: I think it would be helpful for (name of organisation) for starters. Like I think it would probably be helpful to like (name of organisation) maybe distribute the knowledge to the group members that use (name of organisation).

BN: Yeah.

NA6: That would probably, if I knew that then I would probably feel more comf— like because I already know the group members of (name of organisation), so if I was going to deliver this training, I would obviously need to work in a team but I would be more confident engaging with them.

BN: Right. So, people you knew.

NA6: Yeah.

BN: Yeah.

NA6: Basically.

BN: Yeah. That makes sense. So, just kind of zooming back a bit, so you mentioned you have a wellbeing day, what is the attitude towards health promotion like at (name of organisation) would you say?

NA6: It’s very important because (name of organisation) believe that obviously a lot of their purpose is to help people find employment but they also, the purpose of the health and wellbeing groups to support members in their wellbeing development and we’ve done all sorts. We’ve done gardening. Like a lot of DIY stuff.

BN: Oh right.

NA6: We’ve done gardening, we’re doing…we do [13.29 unclear] which is like a fun activity we do on Tuesday afternoons now and we’re working, and we just created a new project that we’re doing as well which involves making like stuff to sell.

BN: Oh right.

NA6: Key rings. Key rings, that’s it.

BN: Yeah. Oh excellent. So, it’s quite positive towards health promotion already.

NA6: Yeah. It helps members and in turn it motivates, it gives them more confidence to apply for if ever a job opportunity comes up.

BN: Yeah. Excellent. And so, if you were offered MECC training, or to become a MECC trainer, do you think you would…that will be something that you would be interested in looking into more?

NA6: I’d definitely look into it more. Definitely. Yes.

BN: Oh, that’s excellent. And so, is there any sort of needs you would have for the training in terms of the time of day, being able, for you being able to go whether it was online, face to face?

NA6: I think face to face is probably better for us because it means I can be more engaged. And obviously I would have to work around my hours and the activities I do for the charities I work for. So, I think it’s just a bit of flexibility, I guess.

BN: Yeah. And I suppose it’s a bit harder to kind of look forward and predict what you might need, but do you think there’d be any resources or extra support that you would need to help you becoming a MECC trainer apart from the training itself?

NA6: I think because as long as I get the relevant guidance for it then I should be fine.

BN: Yeah. Oh excellent. And so, have you ever done train the trainer for anything else before? Have you became a trainer for [15.32 unclear]—

NA6: No. I’ve always been the one in the background. Because like I’ve never had…I’m mostly the admin person whereas (name) and (name) and other people that work for (name of organisation) are more capable to do the delivering sessions side of things.

BN: Right. Yeah. And so, do you have any kind of thoughts about the train the trainer model for ultimately encouraging MECC conversations?

NA6: I think if I do train the training and if I first [16.07 unclear] you never know, maybe some of the other group members might, it might click with one of them and at least one of them and they might want to do it.

BN: Yeah. Could have a knock-on effect.

NA6: Yeah. Yes, kind of a bit like when I did the COVID champions training and it’s like there’s…to the ones that are tutors and then to me and some of the members and then onwards.

BN: Yeah. Oh, that’s good.

NA6: So, I think it would probably be a similar kind of thing.

BN: Yeah. Yeah. So, I suppose if you think, if you maybe compare it to being a COVID champion, if you did want to become a MECC trainer do you think those sort of peer support groups would be helpful in any way?

NA6: I think so. I definitely think so. Peer support’s like very this is like at (name of organisation) with our members, they support each other so it kind of is like peer support. And peer support would also be helpful for me to do to complete this training if I do it.

BN: Yeah. OK that’s great. And what about sort of refresher training?

NA6: Is this for the train the trainer?

BN: Yeah.

NA6: Yeah. Refreshing training maybe either once a year or once every two years.

BN: Yeah.

NA6: That would be how it would, for me personally, that would be probably how it will work for me.

BN: Yeah.

NA6: Just because you know, well maybe yeah, maybe yearly because you never know what updates come up within each year.

BN: Yeah.

NA6: So, like it will update constantly so maybe yeah, about a year, annual thing.

BN: Yeah. OK. Sounds good. So, that was everything I had to ask you. Is there anything you wanted to add, you feel like we haven’t gone over?

NA6: I think I’ve covered everything like how I would be interested. Like doing the training would be good. I think if I do the training then I can pass it on to the group members. I can then…and then basically with the group one of them might end up being interested to do it. You never know.

BN: Yeah. That sounds really positive. Yeah. Great. Well thank you so much (NA6), I really appreciate it. I’ll just stop recording.

[End of recording]