



# SUPPORT TRAINING AND RECOVERY SYSTEM

## Newsletter - December 2016

### Focus Group

**STARS had already taken part in a course for nurses run by the Researcher Simon McArdle, from the University of Greenwich. So when he wanted ex-service users for his research - he thought of us.**

About ten of us met for an hour and discussed our experience of being in TCs, with reference to his research topic of Autonomy in Therapeutic Communities.

It struck me how well being in a TC has trained us to discuss things in a group - everyone spoke up clearly and their comments were brief and to the point. There weren't many pauses but everyone had a chance to voice their opinion and nobody tried to talk over each other.

The Researcher told me afterwards that although he had been careful to come to the group without preconceptions, he had noticed several comments as we went along which he would find very useful. He's looking forward to transcribing and analysing the recording he made of the session and I think he'll be able to hear every word clearly!

### Knowledge And Understanding Framework

**TVI and STARS are responsible for delivering the National PD KUF awareness level course in Central Southern England, aimed at any people who work with clients who may have Personality Disorder.**

Since we started in 2010 we have trained over 1500 students. They have the opportunity to give us feedback in an online survey, which we use as the basis for an annual report. Last financial year, 91% of the students who returned a survey either agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the course as a whole.

They were asked their satisfaction with various aspects of the course and gave the expert by profession's knowledge the best rating. When asked what was the most helpful thing about the course, about 1/3 of them mentioned the expert by experience. 91% were prepared to identify some improvement to the way they worked and/or their attitude to people with PD as a result of the course.



### Moving on Group

**My experiences and long struggles with my mental health, followed by my journey through TC - has changed my perspective on what really matters.**

I'm a Graphic Designer and have been for over a decade. However, the skills and awareness I gained in TC, coupled with the passion I have developed for helping others and making a difference to their lives (which the STARS work has only strengthened), directed me towards a new career in Mental Health and recently gaining a job in healthcare. This also means I am now one step closer towards my professional goal of working in Mental Health as an Art Psychotherapist, hopefully within early intervention services.

The work I have been involved in as a member of TVI STARS, has been absolutely invaluable in making this complete change in my life even remotely possible.

Training GP's, Psychiatrists, Crisis Teams and a variety of other professionals has really built up my confidence and sense of self worth, as well as maintain a working routine which is absolutely invaluable for me.

STARS really helps to remind me that I am still worth something and capable of helping people - no matter how bad I may be feeling. Carrying this through in my new job makes a huge difference to me and subsequently the people I care for, every single day.



"The trainers were excellent - they communicated complicated concepts very clearly, facilitated discussions very relevant to my practice, and gave examples which helped illustrate positive ways of working".

"This is invaluable for people working with individuals with PD. It can be a hard and sometimes discouraging area of work, I found the training gave me hope that change in people is definitely possible".

KUF  
Students

## Young People Services

**This was the first time I had come in to contact with any young people services since my own experience of them, and I found myself surprisingly afraid.**

I think the child in me was still expecting to meet a room of monsters; like the angry 'bulldog' social worker I vividly remember, or the cold 'squirrel' psychiatrist who scratched away with a pen and almost never looked at me - preferring the notes they were writing or the clock on the wall.

This has been the most valuable training I've done since I've been working as a STAR. For the first time ever, my experiences of mental health services as a child were suddenly a gift: an opportunity to help others.

At the end of the first day of training, everyone was asked to name one thing they found valuable and I openly admitted that meeting everyone was what I found most valuable, a chance to get to know them as real people - instead of monsters from a child's eyes.

Much to my surprise, the amount of people who came to see me afterwards, telling me how much what I had said really meant to them and the difference it has made, has encouraged me to do as much early intervention training as I possibly can.



Rachel

"Meeting Ruth and Rachel and hearing their personal story has really helped get an insight into what 'shapes' PD, such as early childhood experiences".

"The training course has been incredibly valuable. I liked that we were able to hear the views from 'real' people and hear their stories, which were fascinating. Thankyou to you both!"

"Now I'm going to try and encourage clients to talk about what is going on for them, before things escalate".

Young People Services Professionals

## Poem "Mother knows best"

The early years of my life I was taught to walk and talk.  
When I had learnt these procedures, I was ordered to sit down and shut up.

There was nothing sexual about uncle Pat,  
He just liked children.  
His lap is where you sat.

I didn't send you away.  
Nobody forced you.  
You could of had your say.  
It was just an extra holiday.

You wanted to go,  
Nothing you say is true.  
You were a child, what did you know?  
Here are the pictures, look at you, you're smiling.

Yes I remember you wetting the bed.  
You started telling lies.  
Of course I was interested in what you said.  
Nobody wants to listen, when a boy cries.

Stop crying or I will give you something to cry about.  
That was just an expression,  
I don't understand you.  
There was no reason for you to shout.

Nobody hurt you.  
Nobody turned off the light.  
Nobody locked the door.  
You were loved.

What you recall is false.  
I have the facts.  
I know what is true.

I was there.  
After all these years, don't expect me to believe you now.

Even as a child you were different from others.  
Always living in your own fantasy world.  
I did what was best for you.  
You don't understand how it was.

I am right.  
You are wrong.  
Your childhood was bright.  
You need to learn to be strong.

Yes we needed to share a bed.  
We had no heating.  
All this is in your head.  
I don't remember you having a beating.

You say, you feel like the skid mark on societies under pants.  
This is all nonsense.  
There was no-one but yourself to blame.  
You're talking like someone INSANE.



Tim



More Information



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