



May 2011



Creative Writing: In The Saddle by Kevin

The Sun blazed down ferociously in a leaden sky; scorching the carob grass to the colour and texture of burnt parchment. A bald eagle soared above the barren landscape; making a momentary landing on a peyote cactus that stood like a lonely sentinel surveying the hazy panorama shimmering in the noon-day sun, before rising with an outraged squawk and taking to the heavens once again. With eyes squinted against the searing glare Wyatt Earp watched its flight as he reined his horse to a halt. Removing his Stetson he wiped

his brow and took a long swallow from the hip flask he always carried in the breast pocket of his frock coat. Three long swallows later he replaced the flask and sparked up a cheroot before nudging his horse into a gentle canter and proceeding on his way. About twenty minutes later signs of human habitation began to appear, a broken buggy wheel at first; then a deserted ramshackle cabin. Before long he passed the outskirts of the OK Corral and another fifteen minutes bought him to the main highway leading into Dodge City. He

dismounted outside the Schemas Saloon and tied his horse to the rail; so no one would steal it. Pausing momentarily to stretch and limber up his aching torso he entered the saloon through the swing doors and suddenly his foot slipped, causing him to stumble. Catching his footing before he fell he realised that he had slipped on an evil smelling turd that now smeared the saw dust strewn floor. A cowpoke lounging at a table near the entrance; feet nonchalantly resting on Earp shot him.

Trip to Frontiers by Katherine

With some difficulty we found "Frontiers" in the middle of the countryside and congregated in the little tiny weenie wooden hut by the barbecue. With an industrial scale picnic, fantastic home made food, drink, coffee, tea; even a camping style stove and everything we could need. Some of us went off in little groups to 'explore' the area, woodlands and paths with soft bark and interesting clusters of logs to sit on, where they probably work with young people during the week. I, for one, felt transported back to being a kid, as it

was like being in an adventure playground of sorts. On our return from walks, the entertainment for the day had arrived -a drumming teacher. So, whilst some of us started the Bar-b-q up and did cooking the rest of us, went into the Yurt to start drumming. The Yurt itself was very well insulated and sturdy and slightly dark, but not dank, thank god, and nervously we started to pretend we knew what we were doing. The instructor put us at ease immediately and before long, ancient Chants and Earth Songs were being belted out and whizzed around

and repeated and harmonized as though we were 'born to do it!' I think I speak for everyone by saying it was mesmerizing and fantastically enjoyable. It had started to rain, first lightly, which meant I and some others ended up under two umbrellas roasting sausages in the rain. Everyone seemed to be having a good laugh at the whole situation and somehow, the rain added to the atmosphere rather than spoil it. Thank you to everyone who made it so special.





Forthcoming Events:

- Knowledge And Understanding Framework Training (KUF) - Various dates
- Self Harm teaching Day— 8th June
- Engagement groups—various dates

STARS offer bespoke training and consultancy services to suit your needs, please contact us to find out further information

Did you know that STARS now have a website.

Visit us online to find out more about our training and consultancy services.

Reflections of the therapeutic journey by Tim

Oh! Dung in a bucket, what the **** am I doing here? I do like her

and figure out who is staff and who are the

been very PC, more WC.

dozen people from various backgrounds, twin-set and pearls next to ripped jeans and T shirt, male, female, a range of ages, colours and religions. The one thing we all have in common, is that is we are all people with a bit of a problem

derline personality disorder)

with a smile. Feelings for me were all about comparisons, my head had been in far worse places than it was today, so for now everything

though in reality I was *****ed.

Some of the thoughts rampaging through my befuddled brain. My doctor had suggested I sign up for Complex Needs, I thought she

replied.

to lots of support and therapy sessions, one to one and in groups, I was also a guest at the local mental hospital on three separate occasions.

Complex needs should be a walk in the park, I can handle this (being arrogant was part of my defense system).

I completed this therapy with various degrees of tears and laughter, I nearly left several times, however, the alternative is not a place I wished to return to. I find it difficult to say what any one thing it was that helped me to change my life. I

believe it was the complex menu.

On completing the Complex Needs course I waited six months while everything I had learned had time to register and I had time to adjust my thoughts. I applied to STARS (Support, Training and Recovery System).

Rather than believing my whole life had been a complete disaster, I now prefer to see it as a rather difficult apprenticeship. I am now an expert by experience.

Working with STARS I am able to assist others. I wish I had had someone to be there for me when I was younger. There

be writing this now, and for me this is a very good day and tomorrow looks quite promising too.

Reflections of STARS work by Pauline

Engagement groups:

I have attended several engagement groups over past four years. These groups are set up to provide information to prospective Therapeutic Community members and for them to have an

opportunity to find out more about the process.

As a STAR this creates an interesting opportunity for me to reflect on my journey and to remember how far I have come. I think the service users, find our presence reassuring and become

interested in a STARS

For many, I believe, this means they find reassurance that there is help that is effective.