



# Support Training And Recovery Systems

## N E W S L E T T E R

November 2015

[http://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/service\\_description/thames-valley-initiative](http://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/service_description/thames-valley-initiative)  
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### Update from Services:

The Complex Needs Service in Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire have merged as of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2015 and the two staff teams have joined together. The new shared service will be headed up by Dr Steve Pearce, newly appointed Programme Director, Gill Attwood as Team Leader and Jane Turner as Deputy Team Leader. There will be five localities, each one led by a Clinical Specialist; these will be Oxford City, Aylesbury, South Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, North Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire and West Oxfordshire.

A consultation is currently taking place, as we go to print, to look at the shape of the services and groups being offered in each locality which includes input from existing service users in each of their local areas.

Speaking exclusively to Gill Attwood, she says: "We are really excited about the opportunity to develop a sustainable service across both counties. Although there will be many challenges, what we are able to develop may be sustainable."

The teams will be based at the Wing Unit, Aylesbury and Manzil Way, Oxford and to get in touch, please call them on 01865 901635, 01865 904300 or 01865 904491.

### Building Confidence

By Kate H.

I have been with Stars for a few months now - about 6 - and it's nearly 18 months since I left the TC. It feels like yesterday, and like another lifetime. Having people to meet with once a month to help sort those experiences and memories in a creative way that benefits other people has been incredibly important to me.

I haven't done much Stars work yet, I'm still learning, but I've found the confidence to start applying the Stars principles to my day job. I completed my ordination training in 2015 and work in Christian ministry. I have started to train other ministers in responding to self-harm, and to people who present with PD. People of faith are not immune to mental health problems, but our leaders are often scared to engage and I'm hoping to change that.

You probably only see members of Stars when we are out on jobs, but what we do is much bigger than that. When we meet together and share knowledge and a cup of tea, we build each other up, and that's what enables us to keep working.

### What is STARS...?

STARS (Support, Training and Recovery Systems) members work alongside the clinicians of TVI (Thames Valley Initiative), to provide training and raise awareness of Personality Disorder and to help clients engage with services and recover.

Our clients have included local councils, housing, support workers, probation services, charities, homeless hostels, AMHTs/mental health workers, GPs, forensic units, college & university students, school nurses, administration staff and the police. We also support potential and existing clients of the Complex Needs Service in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire. For more information visit [www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/service\\_description/thames-valley-initiative](http://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/service_description/thames-valley-initiative) or contact Sue Pauley at [Sue@tvi2i.net](mailto:Sue@tvi2i.net)/07815 902049

### Recovery...what does it mean?

By Marina K.

When people with long-term enduring mental conditions such as personality disorder talk about recovery, it can often elicit funny looks from others. After all people don't 'recover' from PD do they? I always explain that recovery means different things to different people. To someone whose problems have meant they hide away at home, too fearful to meet and interact with others, it may mean being able to go out and socialize without anxiety. A person who was working full-time before mental health issues caused them to give up, may only feel they are 'recovered' when they can once again work and support themselves.

Personality Disorder is very deeply ingrained and can impact of every aspect of life, so the recovery process can be frustratingly slow. Learning to think in a different, more healthy, way doesn't happen overnight. But by sticking with the process, maybe attending a therapeutic community and really working on your issues you can make a huge difference to your life, and the life of those around you.

For me, recovery means not waking up every day with dread in my heart and plans for suicide in my head. It means looking to the future with anticipation and learning to accept and actually LIKE myself.

So, what does recovery mean to you?

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### News in brief....

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Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Complex Needs Services merge

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STARS welcome 4 new members to the group since our last issue – that's 8 new members this year!

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KUF (Knowledge and Understanding Framework) contract includes delivering training in Hampshire and Surrey

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The PPP (People, Personality and Pathology) course has ended for the year with outstanding presentations from the varying project groups – new course starts in March 2016 – contact Sue Pauley for further details

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STARS deliver KUF (Knowledge & Understanding Framework) training with Family Mosaic

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STAR KUF (Knowledge & Understanding Framework) Trainers are available for delivering training with other organisations – contact Sue Pauley for more information

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## Self-harm Training Day for Foster Carers

By Helen P.

This was a new training course, designed to raise awareness and help foster carer's develop skills in managing self-harm. Due to the nature of the clients, the general aim is around the management of this behaviour in teenagers and children.

The day was successful, although the room was a little cramped. The foster carer's were genuinely interested and concerned for their charges. Children in the care system naturally have a somewhat chaotic background and they can, as was evidenced by one carer, actually arrive already self-harming, leaving the carer 'thrown in at the deep end'. As sometimes, although not always, the foster carer's get some background and ideas of what issues they may be facing before the troubled child arrives.

The day ran less formally, which was a good thing. It allowed the carer's to openly discuss their worries, concerns and knowledge. They became aware that they actually had more experience than some of them thought. Some of the clients had already been faced with self-harm issues in their children and they felt able to discuss this with the group. There were a few people who felt reassured and relieved that they way that they had already attempted to handle the situations they had found themselves in, was actually ok. There was an eagerness to participate and gain as much insight as possible from the TVI Trainer and the STARS present.

I found the day very enjoyable, despite the subject matter, it was easy to engage with the group and they were keen to understand the motivations behind the behaviours that we discussed with them. There was an atmosphere of caring and openness, and a willingness to not judge and attempt to understand, I wonder if this is mainly because of the client group – as these are all attributes necessary in a good foster carer.

For a first attempt at something which is out of our normal comfort zone, I would say it went very well. I think that the less formal 'teaching' aspect worked well, although on occasion this led to the discussions going a little off tangent.

It would have been a little more helpful to have had more than a couple of minutes to discuss the role play, as I had to quickly come up with a character role that wasn't going to trigger my own issues, but that I thought I could play with the scenario I was given. However, despite this, the role play came off well and opened another area of discussion.

The client's seemed to genuinely appreciate the day and the team, they were grateful to have a little more insight and I believe they left feeling more confident in their ability to manage any children in their care exhibiting this behaviour.

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## A life without scars is a life unlivd

By Jackie J.

The link between the recovery process of physical trauma and that of mental or emotional trauma has often be a difficult one to explain. And yet; it is often said that, if you saw someone with a plaster on a broken arm, you might understand but with psychological trauma it is much more difficult to relate to.

After a lifetime of both physical trauma, as a result of accidents mainly, through riding and car accidents, and; what I have come to own as a traumatic childhood, I believe I have finally been able to create a link between the recovery process of physical and psychological trauma. It is in fact, a very simple link and hinges on understanding the concept of INTERNAL FIXATION and EXTERNAL SUPPORT.

Having been through the eighteen month psychiatric recovery programme developed to meet people who live with complex needs, I left the Therapeutic Community feeling like my brain had been somehow rewired and that I had; in some way, been reborn.

I had often said that I did not know how it worked, but 'work' it has and I will be eternally grateful to everyone, both 'Expert by Training' and 'Expert by Experience', who helped me through my therapeutic journey. It is often said, that you never leave therapy once you have gone through it, and that is also true. And it is because of my experience of the Therapeutic Recovery Model, I am now able to make the link between that process of recovery and that of the physical recovery I have been through; having smashed my elbow.

The relationship between to the two is simple. In the TC, the people are the equivalent to the plaster cast on the broken arm. By surrounding broken people with support and love, the broken person can create some sort of internal fixation, a bit like when the body throws up bone around a break.

Therapy of any sort is there to enable healing and recovery of the self and of those around us. If I had not been through the TC, I would not have broken my elbow. If I had not broken my elbow, I would not have fully been able to comprehend the recovery process or achieved the better than expected recovery of a severely traumatised elbow. I have often said, a life without scars is a life unlivd. I have many scars but I am now able to embrace them and look forward to living a meaningful life in the future.

## H A L T

Hungry, angry, lonely, tired.  
I'm guessing you recognise the feeling.  
And then these dreaded words, "you're tired"  
Take to my bed, discover the ceiling.

Reality, now there's a scary place.  
To have conformation that I'm surplus to  
requirement.

Easy to get lost, without trace.  
Not yet ready for retirement.

Good luck, bad luck, I've had my share.  
Words from songs running through my brain.  
Why should I care?  
As I dissolve, Spiralling down the drain.

When I think of all the good times that I've  
wasted

Having good times.  
Mere words from another song.  
Laying here, making up rhymes.  
Trying to figure out where I belong

OK, it's time to be positive.  
I didn't like the job, glad that I'm out.  
What can I do to be constructive?  
Get out of bed, see what's about

Finding it difficult on my own.  
Time to accept some support.  
Find someone where relations haven't been  
blown.

Think hard, where may I report?

There are people who really do care.  
Someone to talk to, who won't point the finger.  
The thing is, am I ready or able to share?  
I could write a song, however I'm no singer.

That's it! I've sussed it.  
Write things down, try to be true.  
It's like having a good sh\*t.  
Remember to poo in the loo!

Feeling better now.  
I'm actually doing something about my fate.  
Negative thoughts passing away, I'm not  
asking how.  
I'm in the driving seat, I hope it's not too late.

Where am I now?  
Where so I wish to be?  
How do I get from now?  
To somewhere by the sea.

The problem with moving from here.  
I'm obliged to take my head.  
So get my brain into gear.  
No more wallowing in my bed.

I do enjoy a project,  
I'm amazed at what I am able to achieve.  
Avoid words like reject.  
If things go well, I shall not have to leave.  
Perhaps all I have to do is..... believe!

By Tim C.

### Some of the STARS/TVI training courses include:

- ❖ Knowledge and Understanding Personality Disorder Awareness Training (KUF)
- ❖ People: Personality and Pathology (PPP)
- ❖ Dealing with challenging behaviour
- ❖ Personality Disorder Skills Day
- ❖ Self-harm Skills Day
- ❖ Workforce Development

Contact Sue Pauley for more details.