

Dorset Wellbeing and Recovery Partnership

Welcome to the Autumn Newsletter. As the seasons change we too feel we are entering into a new season with the Dorset Wellbeing and Recovery Partnership (WaRP). A tremendous amount of work has been happening over recent months. The work of many has been reflected in receiving the huge accolade of the Chairman's Award at the recent Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust O*S*C*A*R*S. We would like to take this opportunity to say a big "thank you" to everyone who has been involved in the work of the WaRP. This Award celebrates the efforts of many; so celebrate this achievement, we intend to!



(c) Peter Thomson

World Mental Health Day (Week!)

In order to celebrate World Mental Health Day/week (it is so important we celebrate for a week!) the WaRP have been working with a number of local mental health services in a slightly different way. A Peer Specialist from Dorset Mental Health Forum and an artist have been running sessional workshops providing people the opportunity to express Recovery and their experiences through a creative medium. Whilst the saying goes "pictures speak louder than words" putting words and pictures together can be even more powerful. Participants have therefore also been encouraged to produce a narrative to accompany their artistic pieces.

The arts and narratives workshops have been taking place at the Crisis Day Hospital; Hahnemann House, Kings Park Day Hospital for older people and Kimmeridge Court; Eating Disorders Unit.

The participation in the arts and narratives workshops and work produced within them has been phenomenal. Everyone who has participated in this project has offered valuable and very real insights into their experiences. In order to celebrate such an amazing response we are holding an exhibition.

'Transitions'- Mental Illness to Mental Wellness is taking place from 10th to 14th October 2011.

If you're ready to be inspired or even just curious about how a project like this can work, please come and visit the exhibition. Everyone is welcome!

Details of the exhibition are as follows:

Monday 10th October: *Private View*; invitation only, 4pm – 6pm, The 'Shop', 843 Christchurch Road, Pokesdown, BH7 6AR

Tuesday 11th October: 11am – 3pm, The 'Shop', 843 Christchurch Road, Pokesdown, BH7 6AR

Thursday 13th October: 11am – 3pm, The 'Gallery' 29- 29A Durngate Street, Dorchester, DT1 1JP

Friday 14th October: 11am – 3pm, The 'Gallery' 29 - 29A Durngate Street, Dorchester, DT1 1JP



Gordon, Kings Park Day Hospital
Bournemouth

Spirituality

The Dorset Wellbeing and Recovery Partnership (WaRP) recognises that there are parallels with the concepts of Recovery and Spirituality. Many people who talk about their experiences of mental illness also speak about these experiences in spiritual terms. These may or may not be religious. For many people, experiencing mental distress often involves a “search for meaning” or questioning “what is life all about?”.

Within Dorset, Developing Recovery Enhancing Environments Measure (DREEM) audits have highlighted that spirituality and meeting the spiritual needs of people who access services has been neglected at times. This local finding is consistent with national findings that mental health professionals approach spirituality with ‘trepidation’. The Mental Health Foundation (2007) usefully cites causes of trepidation as being:

- Fear of over-stepping professional boundaries
- Fear of eliciting false beliefs

Isabel Clarke and Hannah Wilson (2011) usefully compare common core philosophies between Recovery and Spirituality. The table below highlights these commonalities:

	Recovery	Spirituality
Hope	Central to Recovery.	A defining aspect of spirituality. Asking “what gives you hope?” is a way of tapping into spirituality even for people with low awareness of it.
Working with Strengths	Regaining or developing valued roles.	Looking at the whole person not just the pathology. Spiritual traditions recognise intrinsic worth in all people, with an emphasis on placing special worth on the outcast and person devalued by secular society.
Normalisation and Validation	Building on a life outside of the services.	Suffering seen as intrinsic to human life in most spiritual traditions.
Common Humanity; Common Vulnerability	Experts by experience. Emphasis on wellness. Relapse is part of Recovery process.	Spiritual traditions value the potential for growth and development through accepting and working to overcome adversity.
Collaboration	Person accessing the service sets the agenda.	The message of equality and respect means taking the person’s concerns and working with them.
Accepting Reality	People taking ownership of their future.	Acceptance is a concept adopted by therapies from spiritual traditions.
Response to Risk and Challenge	Individual responsibility for maintaining wellness and specifying what should happen in case of breakdown.	Moral codes about respecting others, non violence and respect for life will be proactive in risk situations. A spiritual perspective can be a strong ally.
Idea of Balance and Finding a Middle Way	Balance between learning to live with symptoms and a relapsing condition, making the most of life.	Moderation and harmony are spiritual virtues.
Unique Features	People who access the service lead, not professionals.	A transcendent element, and in some but not all traditions, a transcendent authority.

Despite professional fears of addressing spirituality, it forms part of everyone’s identity and core-being. In order to work in a recovery orientated manner, spirituality and the spiritual needs of people accessing services should be considered.

We feel considering the parallels between recovery and spirituality are helpful. The WaRP has worked to produce a statement that we feel reflects the importance of spirituality in people’s own recovery.

“Spirituality can be considered in a broad sense, it does not necessarily relate to an individual’s religious ideas and beliefs. Recognition of a person’s spiritual beliefs is essential when working in a recovery orientated manner; acknowledging and understanding the identity of person within the context of their whole life. Considering spirituality in a broader sense will enable people to explore what gives their life meaning and purpose.”

Available from: www.tewv.nhs.uk/.../Spirituality/Common%20Core%20Philosophy%20-%20Isabel%20Clarke.pdf [accessed 16/9/2011]

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