



VOICES OF


EXPERIENCE



CREATIVITY UNLEASHED:

Breaking & Tigma

Mask titled "Head &
Shoulders" made by
Louie Christie



ZINE CREATION

CREATIVITY
IN RESEARCH



£1.00 UK

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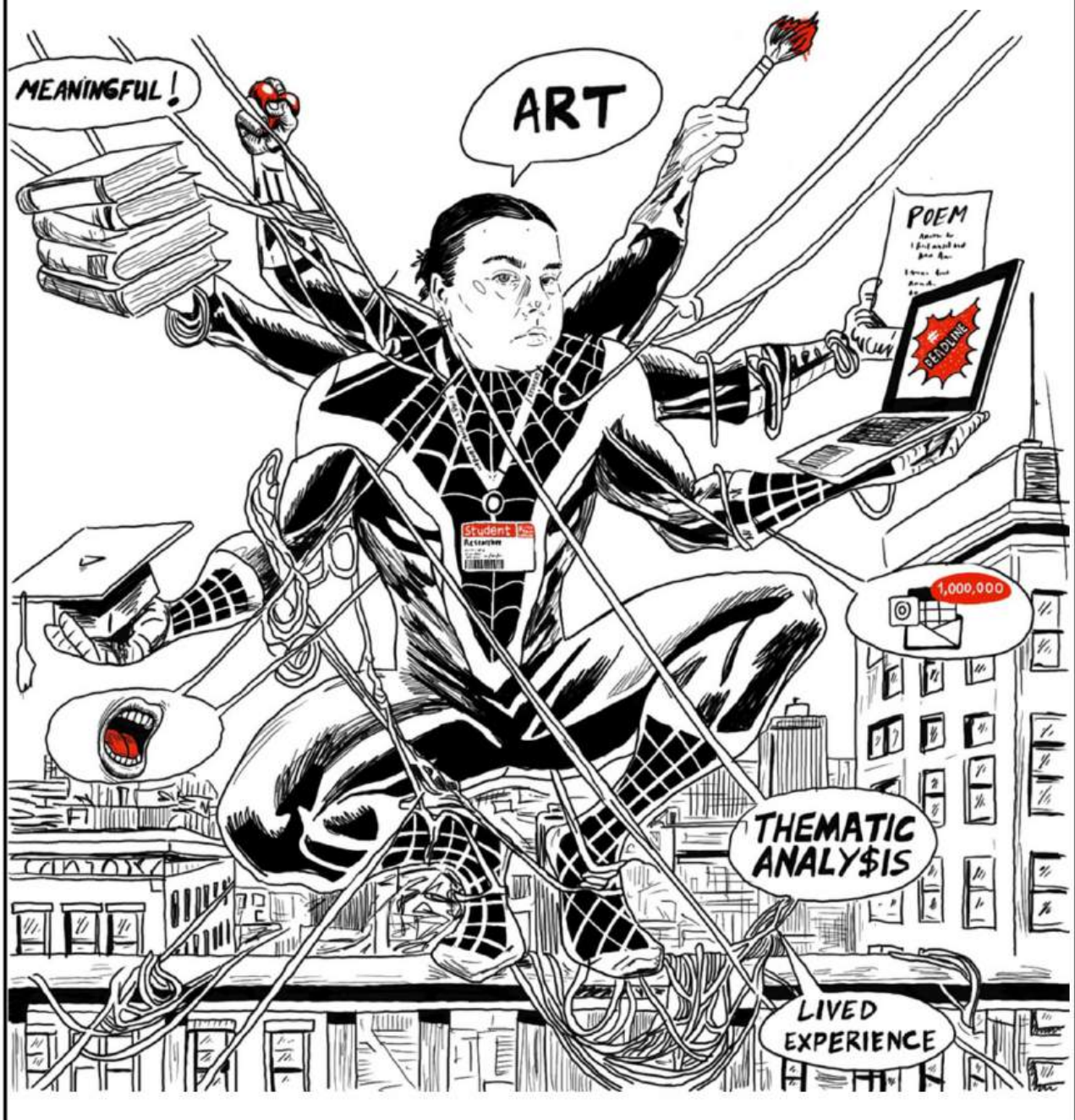
2024

KINGS
College
LONDON

CO-FACILITATION

AND

CREATIVE EXPRESSION



Artwork by Emma Root

INTRODUCTION

WELCOME TO THIS SPECIAL EDITION ZINE ABOUT PSYCHOSIS, STIGMA, AND CREATIVITY. THIS ZINE WAS CREATED AS PART OF A STUDY THAT EVALUATED THE ROLE OF LIVED EXPERIENCE IN MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH AND EDUCATION. IT INVOLVED INDIVIDUALS WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE IN PSYCHOSIS IN VARIOUS ROLES, FROM CONTRIBUTING TO RESEARCH, TEACHING ON AN MSC MODULE, CO-PROCURING A CREATIVE SHOWCASE, TO CONTRIBUTING TO THIS VERY ZINE. THE GOAL OF THIS COLLECTION IS TO USE CREATIVITY AND LIVED EXPERIENCE AS A FORM OF KNOWLEDGE TO EDUCATE AND COMMUNICATE TO THE WORLD ABOUT STIGMA. WITHIN THESE PAGES, YOU'LL DISCOVER POEMS, ARTWORK, PERSONAL REFLECTIONS, AND INSIGHTS FROM INDIVIDUALS WHO OFFER THEIR DISTINCT AND UNIQUE VIEWPOINTS.

THE CREATIVE SHOWCASE THAT OUR CONTRIBUTORS CO-FACILITATED IS ONE OF THIS ZINE'S HIGHLIGHTS. WITH ARTWORK CREATED ON THE DAY AND AUDIENCE REFLECTIONS ON THE VALUE OF CREATIVITY IN MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH, THIS EVENT SHOWCASED CREATIVE WAYS TO INVOLVE PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE IN RESEARCH AND EDUCATION!

AS AN MSC STUDENT, RESEARCHER AND THEMATIC ANALYST, MY INVOLVEMENT IN THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN MULTIFACETED. REFLECTING MY LOVE OF COMIC BOOKS, I'VE DRAWN MYSELF AS A COMIC CHARACTER, WITH THE WEBS SYMBOLISING MY ATTEMPTS TO STRIKE A BALANCE BETWEEN ACADEMIC RIGOUR AND THE MEANINGFUL DOCUMENTATION OF LIVED EXPERIENCES. THE OPEN MOUTH REPRESENTS THE POWERFUL VOICE OF LIVED EXPERIENCE THAT REVERBERATES THROUGHOUT, AND THE HEART DENOTES THE PROJECT'S SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE AND RESPONSIBILITY ON ME.

IN MANY WAYS, I FEEL MORE LIKE PETER PARKER THAN SPIDERMAN, AS IF I'M THE CAMERA CAPTURING THE POWERFUL AND IMPACTFUL DISCUSSIONS THAT TOOK PLACE IN OUR FOCUS GROUPS AND THE IMAGINATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS THAT MADE THIS ZINE POSSIBLE...THIS ZINE IS MORE THAN A COLLECTION OF CREATIVE WORKS; IT IS A MONUMENT TO THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF CREATIVITY AND THE FORCE OF LIVED EXPERIENCE.

A word from the author, Emma Root

stigma

/ˈstɪgmə/
noun

1.

a mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person.

**Yes, my son wears feathers,
from his head down to his toes.**

**In his hair, in his hat
and even out of his shoes.**

Why do you look?

Why do you stare?

Haven't you ever worn feathers in your hair?

What's that you say?

You don't want feathers;

You don't want him.

You only want people who fit in.

free

/friː/
adjective

2.

able to act or be done as one wishes; not under the control of another.

"I have no ambitions other than to have a happy life and be free"

**Yes, my son wears feathers,
from his head down to his toes.**

**In his hair, out of his shoes
and what's that?**

So do you!

You do want feathers,

You do want him

You want everyone to fly,

In this fluffy azure sky.

Stigma at work

— A
personal
experience

My new manager, my schizophrenia I did disclose
Your misunderstanding, you're face just froze
Phoning my support worker for no reason at all
Wanting to send me home, it's safeguarding, it's the rule
You said 'let me know if your are going to attack me'
You lied, you deceived, you lost your integrity
A barrage of insults, you continued to persist
Telling lies of missed deadlines that didn't exist
Coming to work with deep trepidation
I'm not ready for your onslaught of intimidation
You didn't win, you picked on the vulnerable
You didn't admit it, you hid it, you eye culpable
My work there is done now over 15 years
My mind more important than a careerr

Poem by
Nicola Sirey





Personal Reflections

When I was very unwell and I was diagnosed with schizophrenia, some people used to call me crazy behind my back.

...Because of it my mental health got worse and I started to isolate myself. That time I used to live with a couple and 3 kids, I was very ill and they wanted me to move to another place...

...because they were afraid of me, and they were thinking I could hurt their kids. I felt really bad because a lot of people bullied me.

...I had a very tough time, it was difficult living with people that don't understand about mental health.

...Because of this my trusting of people was gone, i had no one to trust.

Reflections from Marisa...

OK

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Visual by Amy Grant

HOPE FOR PSYCHOSIS

Psychosis
Scary and intense
Left confused
Wondering how to get out of bed

How can I move
When aliens surround me
How can I breathe
When I feel scared

I'm not scary
I'm just scared
I'm not violent
Except to myself

Please understand
I can get better
But right now
I'm under the weather

I will have hope again
But right now I'm alone
Maybe I'll get help
Maybe I'll phone
A professional

I hope for a day
I can be myself
Regardless of what people say

I hope for a day
I can be free
From voices
Delusions
Paranoia

I'll get there
I believe in me
Psychosis isn't my fault
I wish you could see

POEM BY NIKKI MATTOCKS



All I can Be

Poem by Nicola Sirey

*All I can be
Voices are part of me
I'm trying to cling onto reality
Trying to be me
All I can be*

*The psychosis feels like some sort of hypnosis
I feel hopeless, worthless, unable to focus
Am I enough?
All I can be*

*Hallucinations- I hear their constant conversation
Is it real or my imagination?
Please set me free
All I can be*

*Delusions, confusion, takes me back to my seclusion
It's a painful reality- all I can be*

*Demons rule, everything is cruel
They control me, hear me, they see it all
Struggling to be me
All I can be*



The Insight Within

Beneath the surface of clinical words,
A world of experience lies unheard.
Psychosis, a journey misunderstood,
Until those who've walked it are truly viewed.

In ivory towers where knowledge reigns,
Theories abound, yet something wanes.
The human essence, the depths to plumb,
Can only be grasped when lived experience comes.

For how can one truly comprehend
The winding paths that psychosis will bend?
The fears, the visions, the altered state,
Unlocked by those who've traversed that gate.

So let their voices ring clear and true,
Guiding academia's quest anew.
Enhancing research with wisdom untold,
Shattering stigma's confining hold.

Through creative zines and personal tales,
Academia's vision will finally unveil
The richness that lived experience imparts,
Illuminating psychosis in all its parts.

For in that sacred space of understanding,
Compassion blooms, and healing is commanding.
Let lived experience be the guiding light,
Dispelling darkness, embracing insight's might.

Shattered Mirrors: A Glimpse into Psychosis

Not a fractured mind, but a fractured world, A kaleidoscope spins,
reality unfurled. Whispers turn to shouts, shadows take on form, lost
in a labyrinth, weathered by the storm.

Misconception's Mask: We're monsters, crazed and wild, A danger
lurking, a predator unfurled. But fear not the madness, the visions we
see, We battle the chaos, just trying to be free.

Truth's Gentle Voice: It's a storm in the brain, a chemical fight, Not
weakness or folly, but a desperate plight. We grasp at the anchor, the
pieces to hold, Islanded by voices, a story untold.

This Zine, a Bridge: We share our experience, a mosaic of light, To
shatter the mirror, and bring forth the right. Understanding whispers,
where empathy blooms, Acceptance a seed, dispelling the gloom.

Join Hands, Not Walls: Let knowledge be our weapon, To break down
the stigma, a collective ascension. We are not defined by this internal
fray, But warriors of spirit, each and every day.

Together We Heal: So walk with us kindly, a hand to extend, For in
shared compassion, the healing will mend. This zine is a promise, a
bridge we create, where truth finds its voice, and shadows abate.

by TS

INSIGHT AND VISUALS FROM AMY GRANT

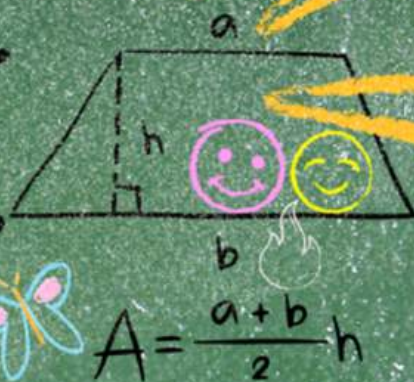
Q: What is your experience of psychosis?

A: It's like knowing obviously whales are real but the talking vampire whale from another planet floating outside my window can't be real. Vampire space whales do not exist. That's not a thing... So yeah, it's sometimes logically knowing I've never casually seen an immortal jellyfish at Sea Life but I know they exist and are real. But seeing Count space killer(whale) still doesn't make it real. That's just a really weird hallucination and possessing a cool imagination!



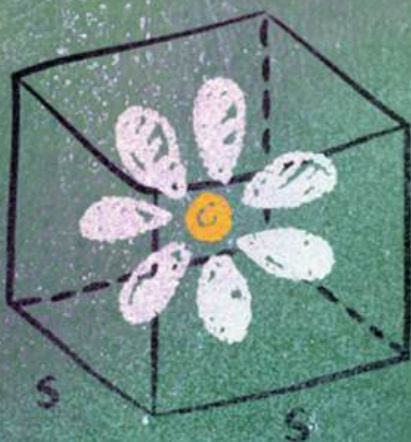
Back to the
drawing board

$$V = \frac{4}{3} \pi r^3$$



**IT FEELS LIKE HAVING ALL THE
ANSWERS BUT EVERYONE TELLING
YOU, "YOUR WRONG." LIKE HOLDING A
CALCULATOR AND DISPLAYING YOUR
EVIDENCE. SHOWING HOW YOU KNOW
THIS ALL ADDS UP AND 'I AM
CORRECT!' AFTER ALL, THE
CALCULATOR CAN'T BE WRONG. RIGHT?**

**ONLY TO BE DISCOUNTED AND TOLD
CONDESCENDINGLY. "YOUR
CALCULATOR AND CALCULATIONS ARE
BASIC. AND YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND
WHY $x = 2$ BECAUSE YOU DON'T HAVE
A SCIENTIFIC CALCULATOR."**



$$a = \sqrt{c^2 - b^2}$$



$$V = s^3$$

$$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$$

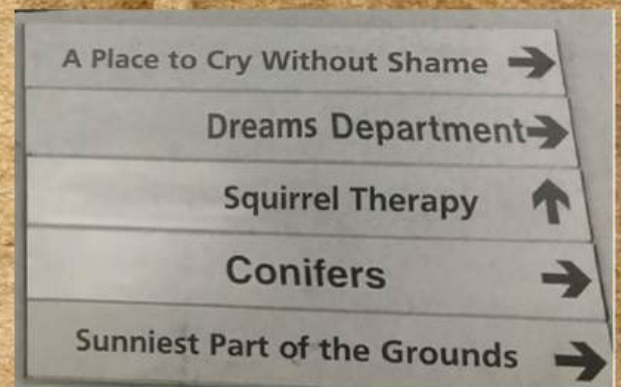
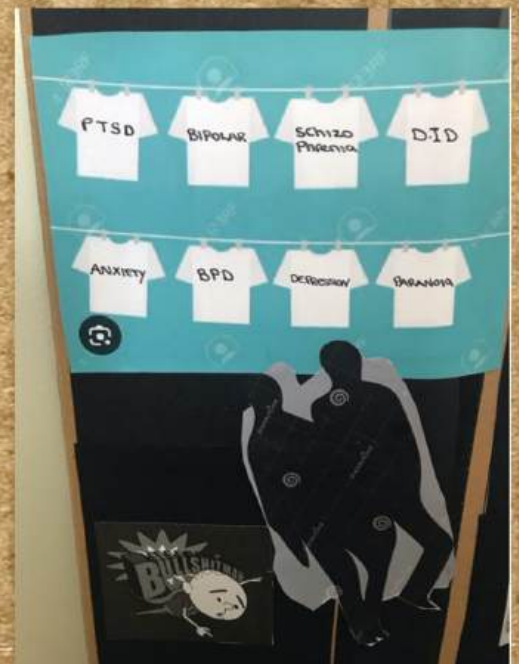
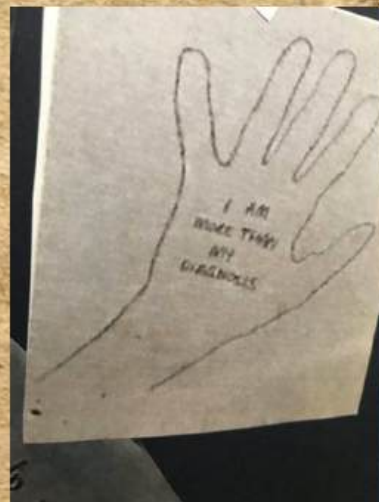
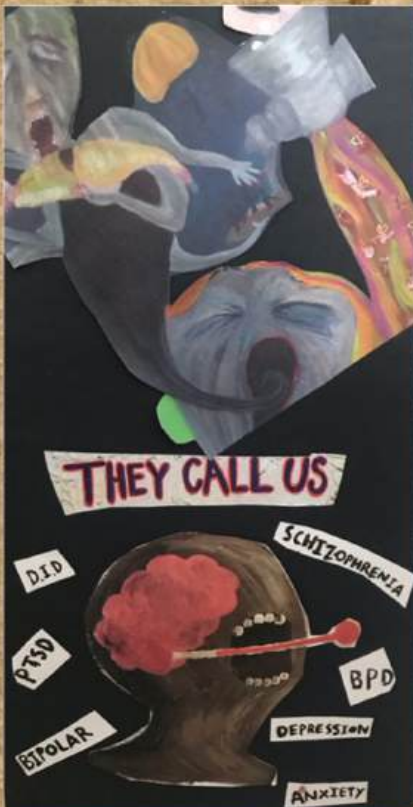
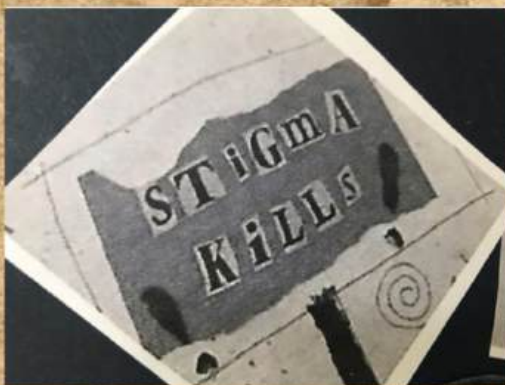
$$V = \pi r^2 h$$

Labels

AND

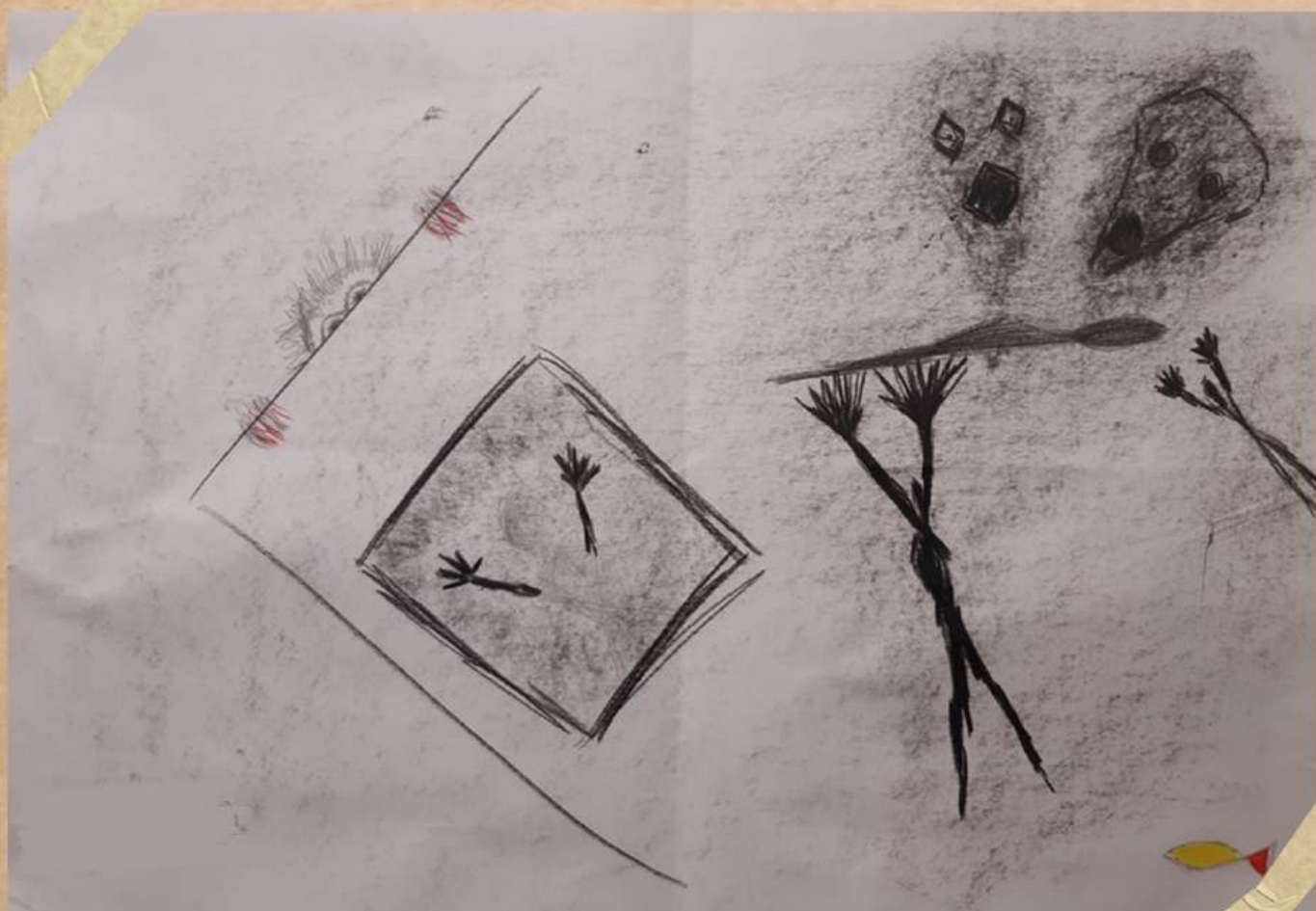
Diagnoses

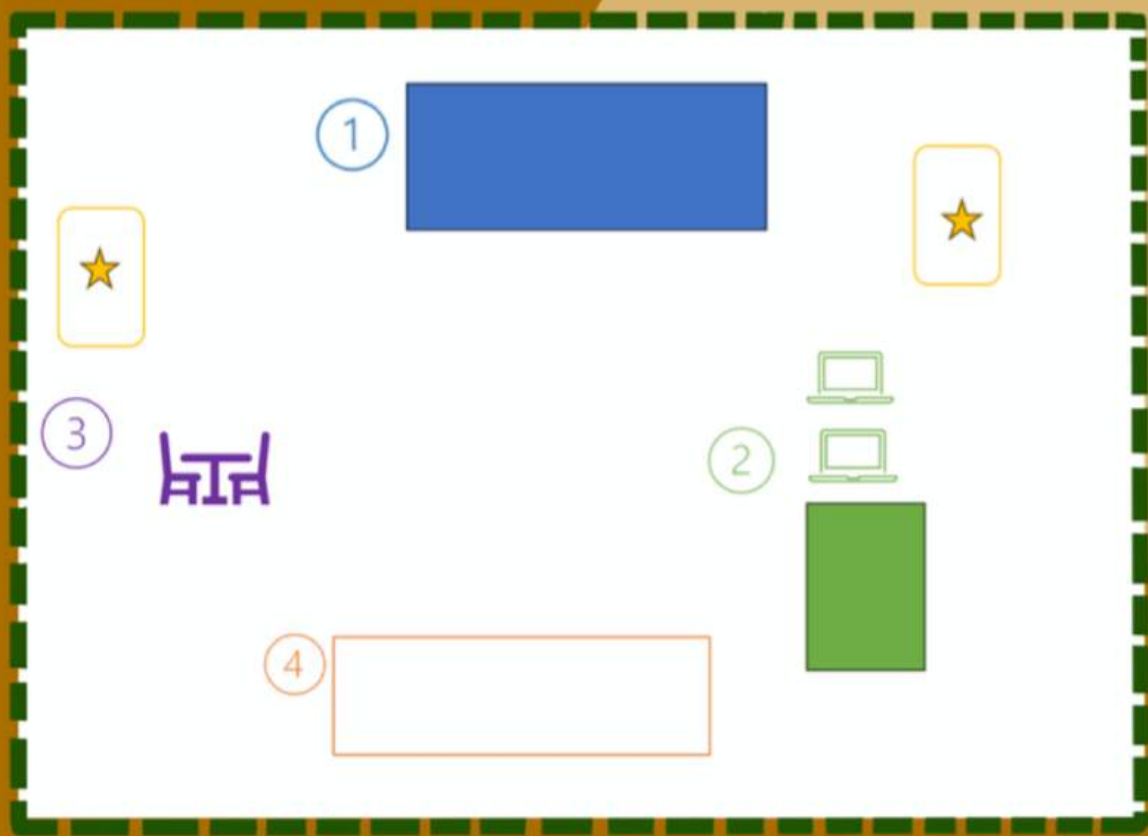
By Nicola Sirey



CHARCOAL

I created my drawing by using charcoal and a very small amount of paint for the fish. The figures are of dark demons that were trying to attack me in my sleep. That's me lying asleep below the 2 ghost skulls. There is a framed window with a demon banging on it, trying to get in and another one hanging on the door and 2 below me trying to get in through the floor. The colourful fish at the bottom right is probably the good of the world telling me that everything is going to be OK. This was a regular nightmare that I had for many years... a most difficult and traumatic phase of my life. I eventually started to enjoy eating fish-fingers with my buttered toast.





Thank you for joining our interactive learning event, showcasing creative ways to involve people with lived experience in research and education across different projects at King's, displayed in 4 "stations":

1 Main Collection

Explore a dynamic multimedia display of creative work created and curated by our team of lived experience experts who have contributed to research or taught at the IoPPN, showcasing their unique perspectives and personal stories.

3 People Library

Discover our People Library, where you can "borrow" members of research, teaching, and co-production group, for brief, 5-minute conversations to learn from their experiences.

2 Multimedia

Enhance your experience with our multimedia display by using headphones to listen to personal stories and soundscapes for a more personal and immersive journey.

4 Creation and Reflection

Stop by our final station, a space to reflect, share insights and feedback about the event, and question and challenge ideas, fostering a collaborative atmosphere of growth and exploration.

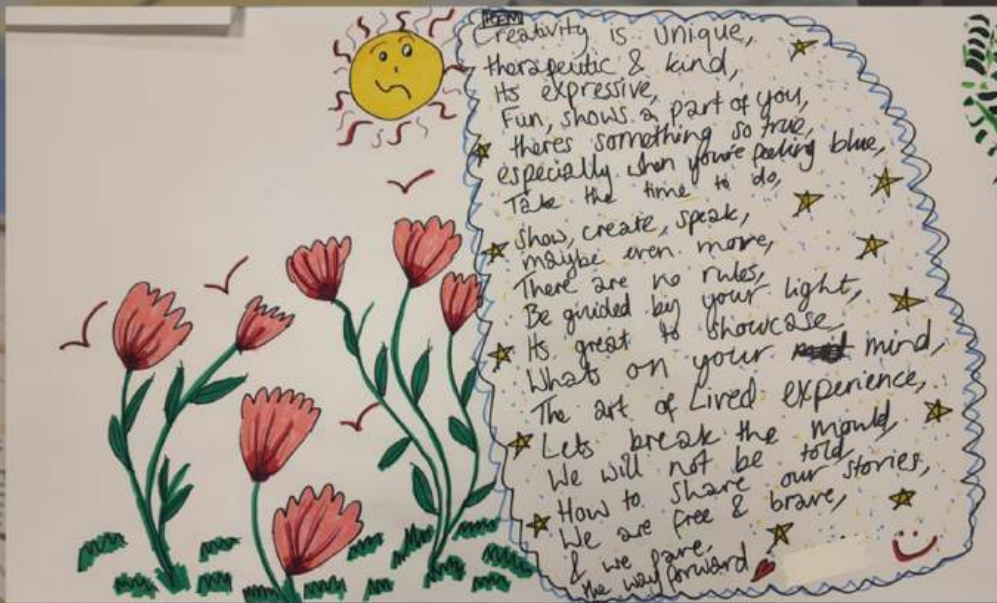
Poster boards
displaying printed
artwork and poetry



creative



Workshop



Black Out

recovery
refer to
that they are,
self
peoples' problems
interview
something
ability
protect
people
serve
their

It is [redacted] important that [redacted] hope [redacted]
[redacted] identifies [redacted] a better future' [redacted]
[redacted] for some people [redacted] not [redacted]
[redacted] 'a prognosis of doom'. [redacted] the
importance of [redacted] mental health [redacted] being
'hope inspiring' [redacted] is [redacted]
[redacted] a tool to aid recovery [redacted]
[redacted]

[redacted] also reported [redacted] a diagnosis is imparted with a sense of hope for recovery. [redacted] identifies the importance of 'hope for a better future' in promoting recovery. This current research [redacted] for some people where this did not happen, [redacted] is experienced as 'a prognosis of doom'. The [redacted] literature emphasises the importance of relationships between mental health professionals and service users being 'hope inspiring', and this is particularly important in relation to diagnosis. Diagnoses should be imparted and discussed positively as a tool to aid recovery [redacted] a life sentence to illness and exclusion.

[redacted] implications for psychiatrists in their role of imparting [redacted] to maximise the [redacted] positive [redacted] while minimising the more negative aspects. [redacted] sensitive diagnosis is made about when [redacted] relation to an individual's illness (e.g. in early phases of psychosis, it can be very difficult to [redacted] accurate [redacted] and this has led to a recommendation that [redacted] embrace diagnostic uncertainty). support is identified [redacted] as important in normalising diagnosis and [redacted] individuals with hope [redacted]

POETRY

work and employment
research ensures that the topic
interest to services users
psychosis potentially stigmatising
surprising
valuable contribution
of diagnosis on people
who experience psychosis

BLACK OUT POETRY

experience clients' perspectives
could be contradictory; very powerful but
personal and
potentially positive
and possible to be helpful to
feel more knowledgeable.
emphasised some aspects particularly
associated impact
widespread
and relevant for those with
could provide a helpful framework to understand and explain
mental distress.
"a relief" to finally
legitimise their experience and enable them to gain more
understanding

stigma towards people with
a psychosis-related diagnosis.
stigma towards people with a diagnosis of schizophrenia
prejudice and discrimination
Avoidance/withdrawal
coping strategy for stigma leading to social isolation and
social exclusion.
Diagnosis
experiences
"a relief" to know
helped to legitimise
support
to understand and explain
the experience of
They felt
mental distress
enabled them to gain more
family

ARTWORK BY EMMA ROOT





You can use
ART TO
CONVEY your
Thoughts.

creative ways
to demonstrate
lived experience
of MH
problems.

Creativity is
important
in
remission/
recovery

Feedback

Breaking
The
Mould
Showcase
Evolution

Thoughts?

Co Producing
activities
for
Research

improves
pathway
from research
to real
world

get an insiders
view on
the affects of
mental health

Keep doing it!
It is helping to
make a big
impact for service
users.



find your

VOICE



You're gonna
need a bigger
zine...

