

Researching recovery from substance use



Substance Use and
Addictive
Behaviour
Conference
Manchester 2014

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Recovery is hard to define ...

1. There are many pathways to recovery
2. It is self directed & holistic
3. Involves personal recognition of need for change
4. Has cultural dimensions
5. Exists on a continuum of health and wellbeing
6. Emerges from hope & supported by peers
7. Addresses de-stigmatization
8. Involves rejoining and rebuilding
9. Recovery is reality.

US Centre for
Substance
Abuse
Treatment
2009

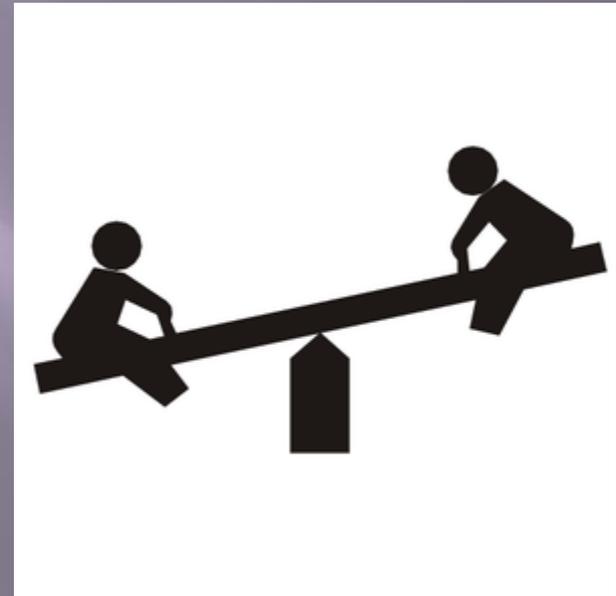
HUMAN RIGHTS IN ACTION!

- ▣ Human rights – respect, lack of stigma
- ▣ Collaboration – client centred goals
- ▣ Peer support – role models and validation
- ▣ Access to services – reduce barriers

(Jacobson & Greenley 2001)

Challenges for researchers

- Researchers need to work with the principles of recovery
- Be aware of power imbalance
- Be aware of skill sets of all stakeholders



Conflicts for service providers

- ▣ How does policy structure resources for recovery?
- ▣ Operationalising recovery requires indicators, measures etc
- ▣ How can 'recovery' be measured?
- ▣ When do service providers become controllers?



Co-productive methodology

- ▣ Collaborative based participatory research
- ▣ Members of the community are co-researchers throughout the whole research process
- ▣ A combination of co-production and community action
 - Not just participatory action research

Aims of CBPR:

Avoid traditional relationship between academics and community members!



Advantages of CBPR

- ▣ Community members benefit from the process and the outcomes
- ▣ Builds trust between partners – working with less included groups and individuals in society



Methodologies for collaborative working

- ▣ Co-production
 - Working together
- ▣ Participatory action research
 - Involving participants
- ▣ Community and social action
 - Working with the community for community benefits



Durose et al, (2011)



Co-production - an answer to the criticism: research excludes the communities it studies.

Addresses the 'relevance gap' of applied research -highlights relevant questions neglected by 'experts'

Benefits from experiential expertise and contribution from communities.

Problems to be overcome

- ▣ Communication is not seen as a one-way transfer (Pohl, 2010)
- ▣ Must not privilege theoretical work over practice oriented work (Durose, 2011).
- ▣ Not to create a dichotomy between 'the mainstream and the marginalised' (Durose 2011)
- ▣

Time & Rhythm

importance of 'lead in' and 'follow on'
periods of engagement

Staying the distance

'Hit and run' & 'smash & grab' research
causes damage to communities.

Mutual benefit

identify mutual benefits in advance. What
will everyone get out of it?

**Co-Produced
Knowledge.**

Creating knowledge
and impact together

Durie et al (2011)

Current projects:

Voices from the
BRINK

RECOVERY
WALK
MANCHESTER



VOICES
FROM THE BRINK

THE
BRINK

WHAT WE MAKE
MAKES US

The Brink,
Liverpool

Method: combining two..

- ▣ Co-production
 - Sharing of resources
 - Shared decision-making
 - Acknowledge difference and inequality
- ▣ Community/social action
 - Has non-academic benefits
 - Partnership is maintained
 - Ethics is not a tickbox

VOICES FROM THE BRINK

Aims:

- ▣ to explore the use of digital media to engage people in recovery in self discovery
- ▣ Explore stories and experiences of recovery
- ▣ Outreach recovery among key stakeholders and the public





Procedure

- Work with community group to survey, outreach and capture recovery stories in the community and connected agents.
- Archive and curate self stories, experiences and reflections on change, impact and key self determined experiences of recovery

Activities (just some!)

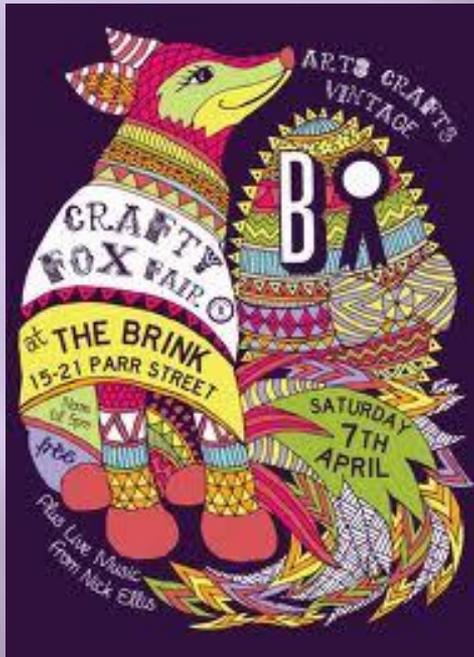
- Outreaching with the VoiceBox
 - Collecting stories and views – what is recovery, how does it feel?
- Inreaching with the Voicebox
 - Reflections on self experience – change.
- Activism
 - Presenting at conferences NHS Expo, INTAR, Big Sista, SUAB launch!
 - Recovery Walk – outreaching and inreaching, networking, contributing
 - Speaking up for recovery

VOICES FROM THE BRINK: archiving



- ▣ *Made me proud of my recovery*
- ▣ *People believe in you*
- ▣ *Turning taboo into pride*
- ▣ *Active and productive member of this community*

Next steps: curating



- ❑ What stories epitomise recovery?
- ❑ What represents the experience of recovery?
- ❑ Where is recovery going?
- ❑ What questions should we be asking?

Check out the installation here!

Mouch, Mingle, Mull.....

Substance Use and Addictive
Behaviour Research Group



Pause, Ponder, Pounce
Research PosterFest



'Strengthening
Communities'
PhotoVoice Gallery



Meet the VoiceBox..
Conscious Connected
Living



Capture, Curate, Create
Film Screenings
Mick Roach
(Singer Songwriter)



RISEN premiere
'Harnessing the power
of intention'



Feel the Groove
Research the impact

Recovery research: what have we learned?

- ▣ Cannot do co-production without community action
 - The community agenda becomes the researcher's agenda
 - ▣ The research becomes part of the community activity
 - ▣ The results must feed back into the community agenda
- ▣ Cannot do community action without co-production
 - Without co-production, community action becomes 'us' and 'them' again – researchers act as fly-on-the-wall observers -uninvolved

Issues arising along the way..

- ▣ Need a gatekeeper/ liaison agent
- ▣ Need time spent to build relationships
- ▣ Need partners who are committed
- ▣ Need to agree what to research and what to do with it
- ▣ Funding needs to be joint: the fund holder is the power holder

References

- ▣ Durose C. et al. (2011) Towards Co-production in research with communities. AHRC Connected Communities Project.
- ▣ Jacobsen, N. & Greenley, D. (2001). What is recovery? A conceptual model and explication. *Psychiatric Services*, 52, 482-485.
- ▣ Pohl, C. et al (2010) Researchers' roles in knowledge co-production. *Science and Public Policy* 37(4) 267-281.