

RCT & Merthyr Tydfil Mental Health
Service User Network
Newsletter

Newsletter of the Rhondda Cynon Taff & Merthyr Tydfil Mental Health Service User Network

March 2012

**1st March is
Self-Injury Awareness
Day (SIAD)**

Self-injury / self-harm affects people of all ages, genders, sexualities, races and religions. The chances are that you know someone who self-injures, even if you don't know about it. Self-injury is a coping mechanism which people use to deal with intense emotional distress.

On 1st March you might like to show your support by wearing an orange ribbon.

Why do people self-injure?

People self-injure to deal with their emotional distress. There are various ways in which people cope when they are in distress or upset, and self-injury is a type of coping mechanism. Specific reasons behind an individual's self-injury are so varied it would be impossible to list them all. But some of the most common reasons people give are bullying, pressure at work/school, abuse, relationship problems, financial worries, or a combination of smaller

things, which build into something big.

Can't people just stop self-injuring?

It's not that simple. People cannot stop self-injuring until they have another way to cope with their emotions. It can take a long time to find a more healthy coping mechanism. Because self-injury can become a habit (or even seen as an addiction) it can be a very difficult cycle to break. Usually people will need help and time (sometimes a very long time) to overcome it.



Doesn't self-injury only affect teenage girls?

No! Self-injury affects people of all ages, male and female, all sexualities, religions, cultures and

racess. The media tends to use stereotypes of teenage girls, but this is really misleading. The message needs to be got across that self-injury can affect anyone.

What can do instead of self-injuring?

If you want to self-injure at the moment there are many things you can use as distraction techniques - reading, painting, sports, having a bath, eating a favourite food. Write down a personal list of things which help you that you can read when you have the urge to self-injure.

Further information about self-injury can be found on the Scar Tissue website- www.scar-tissue.net

If you are concerned about self-injuring, talk to your G.P or other mental health professional.

Alternatively you can call the Community Advise and listening line (C.A.L.L) on

0800 132732 or text 'help' to 81066.

Ingredients

- 10 stalks of rhubarb, trimmed and cut into 5cm chunks
- 1 tbsp water
- 2-3 tbsp caster sugar
- 1 tbsp chopped, preserved ginger, in syrup
- Ice cream or double cream to serve

For the crumble

- 100g butter, softened
- 100g Demerara sugar
- 180 - 200g plain flour

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200C/gas 6. Place the rhubarb chunks on a shallow roasting pan, sprinkle the water and caster sugar and bake for 10 minutes. Remove from oven and sprinkle with stem ginger.
2. Reduce the oven temperature to 190C/gas 5. Tip the rhubarb mixture into a baking dish about 4cm deep.
3. **For crumble:** combine the butter, Demerara sugar and flour into a bowl. Rub with your fingers until mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Sprinkle the crumble evenly over the rhubarb

- and bake for 10 minutes, until golden.
4. Allow to cool slightly before serving with ice cream or double cream

Poem of the month

Spring is coming

Spring is on the way
 Do we need help from others
 Do others need help from us
 But very seldom get it
 Maybe others need help from us
 Or are we like the birds
 Who need help now and again

The blackbirds in the cold
 They take comfort from the warmth of my chimney
 In the cold the robin still sings
 Where is my pretty bumble bee
 My pretty bumble bee is asleep
 Maybe thinking about waking soon
 Will he get help to wake
 Or even when he is awake

When will I wake
 When will we wake
 Or are we like my pretty bumble bee
 The Senedd says we should be should be equal
 Are we equal or in hibernation and vulnerable
 Will we need a call to wake
 Spring is not far away

Maybe in the spring with all the wonderful
 Magic of a sunny day we will not notice and be equal
 The robin still sings

What will happen my bee
 And snowdrops, daffodils, crocus', buttercups and blossoms
 We will overcome and forget that we need help and take the lead
 And join in and just be equal
 And join as equals and be accepted
 As does my lovely bumble bee
 Then everybody will help each other

The Robin still sings
 spring is coming closer
 Or will we be like our precious bee
 Does he no whether he will survive the winter
 We need a little positive help to survive the winter
 With the coming of spring
 We have survived with a little positive help from each other
 The bee, the blackbirds.
 The sunlight and the flowers, the glistening dew.

Brian Mitchell

If you would like to know more about any of the opportunities mentioned here contact:

Rachel Wyatt or Helen Rees: 01443 846200 rwatt@interlinkrct.org.uk or hrees@interlinkrct.org.uk

Merthyr Tydfil & RCT Mental Health Service User Involvement Project

Interlink, 6 Melin Corrwg, Cardiff Road, Upper Boat, Pontypridd CF37 5BE

Mental Health First Aid Training



This 2 day course facilitated by Journeys will help give you an understanding of mental health.

The course will look at:

- How to recognise the signs and symptoms of someone with mental health problems
- How to respond to various mental health crises
- How to engage with, support and signpost people to appropriate professional help.

Monday 5th & Monday 12th March

**Muni Arts Centre,
Gelliwasted Road,
Pontypridd**

9.30am - 3.30pm

Travel expenses, refreshments and lunch provided

Recruitment training

Thank you to everyone who took part in the recruitment training at the Feel Good Factory, last month.

The training was a huge success with Service Users, Carers and Mental Health professionals learning together.

The 2 day course covered equality and diversity, the recruitment process, how an interview panel works, designing interview questions and trainees had the opportunity to take part in a mock interview.

Would you like to take part in a study on voice hearing?

If you are currently, accessing voluntary services and live in the South Wales area. Jayne Whitney would be interested in listening to your story or voice hearing to gain a deeper understanding of what has been helpful or unhelpful towards your recovery.

Voice hearing is a phenomenon, which is best understood through personal and meaningful accounts of recovery stories. However, some mental health nurses find it difficult to talk with people about their voice hearing experience and have inadequate knowledge and information to offer.

Personal stories of

recovery can help inform professionals, especially community mental health nurses' to understand the voice hearing experience and can help develop new knowledge and skills. If you would like further information about this study you can contact Jayne Whitney on 01639 888000 (Monday - Friday between 9am - 5pm). Jayne is a Community Psychiatric Nurse who is studying for her Masters' degree and has a special interest in Voice hearing and recovery. She is happy to travel to you

Mental health Service User Reps Meeting

**Tuesday 6th March
11am - 2pm
Muni Arts Centre,
Pontypridd.
CF37 2DP**

As service user reps ourselves, we would like to take the opportunity to meet with other service user reps from different areas and groups in the RCT and Merthyr Tydfil.

We feel it is important for service user reps to meet together on a regular basis to share information and

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experiences about local mental health services. Service user views gathered at rep meetings can be presented at meetings with senior managers from the local health board and local authorities. We look forward to meeting you.

Brian Mitchell and Gareth Rees

A buffet lunch will be provided and travel expenses reimbursed. For further info contact Rachel or Helen



Service User Recovery forum

Come along and find out what's happening in local mental health, meet likeminded people and get your voice heard.

Tuesday March 20th

**Muni Arts Centre
Gelliwasted Road
Pontypridd.
1pm-3pm**

James McMahon will be attending to talk about the progress of Part 1 of the Mental Health Measure (Wales) - access to services in Primary Care.

UPCOMING



MEETINGS

ABERDARE MEETINGS

**Cynon Valley Museum & Gallery
Depot Road
Gadlys
Aberdare**

**Tuesday 24th April
Tuesday 31st July
Tuesday 30th October**

MERTHYR MEETINGS

**Soar Theatre
Portmorlais
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8UB**

**Tuesday 29th May
Tuesday 21st August
Tuesday 29th November**

PONTYPRIDD MEETINGS

**Muni Arts Centre
Gelliwasted Road
Pontypridd**

**Tuesday 26th June
Tuesday 25th Sept**

All meetings are between 1pm - 3pm, light buffet lunch & travel expenses reimbursed.

NEW!!

WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT GROUP

This meeting is open to

women living in the RCT or Merthyr area who use or have used mental health services and want to have their voices heard, in a safe and supported environment.

**WEDNESDAY 18TH APRIL
6PM - 8PM**

**Muni Arts centre
Gelliwasted road
Pontypridd**

A light buffet will be provided and travel expenses will be reimbursed. For more information, please contact Rachel or Helen.



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