

## SLaM Recovery College Wellbeing Webinars for All 4<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> May Course Descriptions

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### Routines for Recovery

Many studies have shown that establishing and maintaining routines filled with healthy habits is a great way towards meaningful recovery and wellbeing. In this new, three-part programme, we will learn about:

- The importance of routine for our wellbeing
- Useful tools for establishing and maintaining our routine
- Overcoming the barriers to keeping our routine
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This is a 'blended learning' course, consisting of:

- Two webinar sessions
- An e-Learning programme (interactive, including quizzes, links, and activities that you can access at any time)

### Making Changes: how to start and where to maintain

The aim of this four-part course is to enable participants to explore, embrace and prepare for the challenges involved when embarking on a change of lifestyle. This may include reducing alcohol consumption or embarking on an exercise programme or a healthy eating plan.

The learning will be applicable to any type of change someone wishes to make in their life.

We will also look at decision making and managing and maintaining the process of recovery as it applies, for example, to relapse prevention.

### Hearing Voices

During this three-part course, we will be exploring the experience of voices hearing and of supporting people who hear voices. We will consider how voices can be both a hindrance and an asset, and how to constructively respond to them.

Enabling students to utilise self-management techniques, we will also help people find organisations and sources of support. We recommend, if it's possible, attending all three sessions, although they can be watched as stand-alones.

### Caring for Carers

As a carer it is important that we look after our own wellbeing. In this workshop, we will discuss ways that ensure we function at our best, recognising that there can be benefits to caring, and that each carer brings unique skills, abilities, and experiences.

In this workshop, we will invite you to share activities and experience that may be helpful to others and also explore what resources we may need which are accessible.

## **Moving Towards Self-Compassion**

This ten-part course explores the idea of self-compassion and how this can lead to a greater sense of self-acceptance and empathy with other people. Each week, we will explore a different topic, practise some self-compassion exercises, then reflect on our experience. There will be pre-session and post-session activities which you can complete at home. We hope this course would be of interest to, and be of benefit to, anyone who might struggle with perfectionism or self-criticism. We also warmly welcome anyone curious about this subject, and who enjoys reflecting on what it means to be human. These are the sessions we're running in May (but we'll send you the links to all the sessions).

## **Alcohol: friend or foe?**

People who drink alcohol can have very different experiences. This workshop looks at why that is and some of the things you can do when you or someone you know is having issues managing their alcohol use. The workshop will include:

- interesting facts you might not know about alcohol
- sharing of tips
- an opportunity to talk to people with professional and lived experience about options to try when alcohol becomes a problem.

## **Telling Your Story**

Mental health challenges may affect a person's confidence and even their sense of identity. This course helps students start to take back ownership of experiences and recover a sense of self alongside, or even despite, the difficulties faced.

Students will use a range of creative approaches, methods, and media to help explore aspects of life that are important to them, express themselves on their own terms, and celebrate their unique experiences and qualities.

No previous formal experience of writing or creativity is required, as students will be encouraged to find their voice and have it heard. Students will have the opportunity to share their stories at the end of the course.

***Materials you'll need to take part: writing/drawing paper, pens and pencils, colouring pencils, old magazines, card for collage, glue, and scissors. Any other materials will be an individual choice and will be discussed as the course progresses.***

***These sessions will be in the Microsoft Teams Meeting format, which means we will be able to see and hear each other, have group discussions, and share experiences and helpful tips.*** Once you have registered your interest in the course, we will ask you to complete an online

participation agreement. These sessions won't be recorded, so you'll need to take part live. There are 12 places available on this course.

## Understanding Bipolar Disorder

A two-part course. Bipolar is a mood disorder characterised by extreme changes in mood. Although we all have mood swings, in bipolar disorder these can become unmanageable and overwhelming - individuals can experience severe and/or rapid mood swings that can last several weeks or months, far beyond the normal ups and downs.

Session 1 explores how bi-polar is diagnosed, and what the symptoms and early warning signs are.

Session 2 looks at how bi-polar is treated and explores self-help ideas and how to manage during the COVID outbreak.

## Understanding Anxiety

Anxiety is something we all experience from time to time. Most people can relate to those anxious, butterfly feelings when doing something which feels uncertain or feeling fearful about sitting exams, having a medical, going to the dentist. It is a natural feeling and can be useful, as it warns us when we need to take action, when we may be in danger or can even help us to perform better.

This four-part course will examine the facts about anxiety, how it is diagnosed and what it feels like to experience anxiety. We will discuss professional support available, practical techniques to help to relieve anxiety as well as lifestyle changes for wellbeing.

## Introduction to Beth

SLaM's Beth website, designed for us on laptops and PCs, tablets and smartphones, is a free and secure way for our patients and carers to stay connected with their care team. For service users, Beth is very friendly and easy to use, and supports personal choice and autonomy. You can link your Beth account with your NHS number to access your health records and:

- see who is in your care team and support network
- securely message your care team
- access your current care plan
- see all your appointments
- keep track of your mood and sleep
- use free and trusted online health resources

For people caring for someone under SLaM services you can create your own account to look after your own wellbeing and securely message their care team. **This is a stand-alone session, repeated twice in May, so there's no need to register for more than one.**

## **Bereavement: coming to terms with loss**

This stand-alone webinar gently leads us through the four phases (or 'layers') of mourning as described by John Bowlby, the founder of attachment theory. We will be thinking about, and sharing, ways of supporting the grieving process. We realise that, taking part in this session, you may recently have been bereaved, or know someone who has and would like to help them. Your emotional wellbeing at this sad time is of absolute importance to us. With this in mind, we ask you to let someone who you trust know that you will be doing this webinar - this person will be your support contact. When you join us, please keep your mobile beside you in case you need to call or text your support contact. Ask them to check how you are when you start watching, and also when it ends. Perhaps your contact might be able to join with you online. We want you to know that you are warmly welcome, and that you are not alone in your grief.

## **Understanding Depression**

Depression is a common mental health condition which can take hold of your life and just won't go away. Understanding the signs, symptoms and causes of depression is the first step to overcoming the problem.

This course runs over 4 sessions and will explore what depression is, its causes and how it is diagnosed. We will discuss what can help overcome the hurdles to recovery such as negative thinking and what professional support is available.

We will offer practical tools to help overcome depression as well as how we can support others.

## **Tree of Life**

The Tree of Life is a recovery approach based on narrative theory that focuses on culture, heritage, spirituality, strength and hopes. It introduces psychological ideas of strength, resilience and relationship.

The Tree of Life uses a tree as a metaphor for someone's life; different parts of the tree represent different aspects of an individual's life. For example, the roots are about where we come from both physically and in terms of the values and commitments that influence us. The trunk represents our skills and resources, the branches our hopes and dreams. Leaves are those people who are important and influential in our lives. The fruits are the gifts we have received from others – not necessarily material; these could simply be gifts of love and tolerance.

The Tree of Life invites us to tell a different or preferred story of ourselves, outside of the influence of problems. This can be a difficult story to tell especially in problem-focused mental health services. In this workshop day we will explore different stories of ourselves by creating our own trees and sharing our trees to make a forest built on our collective strengths and resources.

The sharing of our trees is an important part of the workshop based on the idea in Narrative Therapy that 'stories told are stories lived ' and that our stories will develop more richly when shared and responded to by others. After we have created our forest of trees we will look at the storms of life and how the forest can respond to these storms as hazards that we all face together. When the storms pass we will end the day with a celebration to appreciate how we have all contributed to each other's' stories.

***Materials you'll need to take part:*** all you'll need are some paper and pens /pencils for drawing.

***This session will be in the Microsoft Teams Meeting format, which means we will be able to see and hear each other, have group discussions, and share experiences and helpful tips.*** Once you have registered your interest in the course, we will ask you to complete an online participation agreement. This session won't be recorded, so you'll need to take part live. There are 20 places available on this course.

## **Understanding Personality Disorder**

Personality disorder is a phrase used to describe a group of common, long-lasting conditions that affect how people view and manage their emotions and how they relate to other people.

This three-part course explores what is meant by personality disorder in general and how it can affect other aspects of a person's mental and physical health.

We will also discuss specific treatments and how people can help themselves to regain a measure of control in their lives.

## **Being an Ally. Part of SLaM Recovery College's New BAME\* Curriculum**

[\* Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic]

This four-unit course uses Yvonne Coghill's 7 A's of Allyship as a model to explore the internal and external work of allyship.

Allyship is about building relationships of trust, consistency, and accountability with marginalised individuals and/or groups of people. Although you might not be a member of an underinvested or oppressed group, you can support them and make the effort to understand their struggle and use your voice alongside theirs.

The sessions are structured as an hour-long webinar followed by a 10-minute break, then a discussion session in small groups of 5 people. Each group will be facilitated by someone who has been involved in developing the course for the last six months.

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participation agreement. These sessions won't be recorded, so you'll need to take part live. There are a limited number of places available on this course.

**Unit 1: what is an ally, and why are they needed?**

**Unit 2: making whiteness visible (bringing privilege and fragility into view)**

**Unit 3: seeing the person (rehumanising interracial communication)**

**Unit 4: starting work (allyship into action)**

## **SLaM Recovery College's New BAME Curriculum**

Although this project was initially inspired by the *Black Lives Matter* movement, we are not aligned to or affiliated with any political aims of this or any other organisation. Our purpose is to use education to expose and address ongoing systemic failings throughout society, to raise awareness, and to discover and explore what might most help us all move forward together.

The general aim of this set of courses is to re-programme thinking around racism. We do this by providing a reflective space where it is possible to explore the lived experience of racism along with its many social and psychological impacts on BAME people, non-BAME people and on society as a whole.

This space is provided to raise questions and discover solutions that have a positive impact on the lived experience of BAME people within our culture. Our intention is to help facilitate understanding and growth in those parts of our culture where discrimination, injustice and persecution of people perceived to be different still persist.

The other planned courses in this project are:

- **Traumas of Racism**
- **Uncomfortable Truths**
- **Colourism**

## **Keeping Safe Online**

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown, many of us have relied, much more than previously, on the internet to live our daily lives. Seeing and communicating with family and friends, our working lives, studying, shopping - all those activities we once took for granted - have shifted over to cyberspace: "*we're living online now!*"

This four-part course explores what we can do to protect our privacy, finances, and mental health when we go online. This course is recommended for people who already use personal email, social media, and online shopping.

## **Smoking and COVID-19**

In this session, Mary Yates, Nurse Consultant in SLaM, outlines why it's more important than ever before to quit smoking during the COVID-19 pandemic. She will give an overview of the

best ways to quit and how to access support. She will also explain why some researchers think that nicotine (NOT SMOKING!) may help protect against COVID-19.

## **Recovering Our Purpose**

Having a purpose is a vital aspect in our personal recovery. Purpose brings direction and intention into our lives, and our intentions count for so much more than we usually think. Our purpose can be like a GPS for our lives, it can be a source of wisdom and energy enabling us to accomplish things we didn't think were possible. But how are we to discover the distinctive direction and purpose of our lives? In this two-part course, drawing on the work of Jan Chozen Bays and others, we will work together to recover our purpose, and navigate and reinvigorate our lives.

## **Managing Your Mood**

This two-part course will help students explore practices around managing our moods. Learning to improve the way we manage our emotions is often an important first step for many people with mental health difficulties. Topics covered will include:

- the evolutionary context of moods & emotions
- influencing mood changes
- self-compassion
- behavioural activation
- gut & mood

## **Motivation**

How do you get out of your head and stop thinking about what you do and start doing it?

This two-part course explores what holds us back from utilizing our motivation, what environment best harnesses our motivation, and looks at the reality of motivation in terms of its role in our daily lives.

This course provides tips that help launch us into action and explains the theory that helps us to close the gap between what you know you want to do and taking action to make it happen.

## **Understanding the Impact of Substance Use on Mental Health**

This three-part course explores the use of substances (drugs and alcohol) and their impact on mental wellbeing. At times, using substances can appear to be a solution but it often has a longer-term impact on our wellbeing.

During these sessions we will explore why this happens and what support is available to aid recovery.

## Parks, Walks and Walking Meditation

Lockdown has meant that a lot of us are spending way more time indoors. This two-part course aims to encourage and inspire you to:

- Learn about the benefits of walking for wellbeing
- Learn about Peckham Rye Park and parks in your locality
- Discover activities you can do in your local park and London walks
- Discover how to practice walking meditation (complimentary walking meditation MP3 available to all workshop attendees)

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