

Autumn/Winter 2023 Term Course Descriptions

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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

Ayurveda: Self-Massage for Feet and Hands

Ayurveda, the “wisdom of life”, is a traditional system of healing from South Asia. These sessions were co-developed by Ayurveda experts in Sri Lanka and the UK, Buddhist scholars and monks in the Theravada tradition, UK registered mental health professionals, and SLaM Recovery Trainers who have direct lived experience of mental health problems.

In these sessions you will learn about the benefits of self-massage for your feet and hands, and you will learn how to do this using oil. N.B. You will need a towel and warm sesame oil or sunflower oil for these sessions.

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.

Coaching Courses with SLaM Recovery College and SLaM Partners

Introduction to Coaching Skills

Coaching is a way of opening spaces for personal reflection, helping people become aware of their strengths and resourcefulness, and supporting them to achieve their goals. Coaching is a series of conversations between a coach and another person aimed at bringing out the best in the person being coached.

Whether we are mental health professionals, people who use services, or carers and supporters, we all know that the quality of the relationships and the conversations we have are very important. Coaching tools and techniques can support people’s recovery by helping them tackle the challenges and everyday stresses of life. SLaM Recovery College currently offers opportunities with our colleagues from SLaM Partners, our organisations’ team of improvement experts, experienced organisational consultants, and coaches.

This introductory webinar is open to all students. Those who participate in the online webinar will learn about the benefits of coaching and what to expect in the Basic Coaching Skills course.

Basic Coaching Skills

Coaching is a way of opening spaces for personal reflection, helping people become aware of their strengths and resourcefulness, and supporting them to achieve their goals. Coaching is a series of conversations between a coach and another person aimed at bringing out the best in the person being coached. Whether we are mental health professionals, people who use services, or carers and supporters, we all know that the quality of the relationships and the conversations we have are very important. Coaching tools and techniques can support people's recovery by helping them tackle the challenges and everyday stresses of life.

These sessions are only available to students who can demonstrate a connection to SLaM (as a service user, staff member, carer, volunteer, peer supporter or involvement register member).

Coaching Skills Masterclass

Coaching is a way of opening spaces for personal reflection, helping people become aware of their strengths and resourcefulness, and supporting them to achieve their goals. Coaching is a series of conversations between a coach and another person aimed at bringing out the best in the person being coached.

Whether we are mental health professionals, people who use services, or carers and supporters, we all know that the quality of the relationships and the conversations we have are very important. Coaching tools and techniques can support people's recovery by helping them tackle the challenges and everyday stresses of life.

SLaM Recovery College currently offers opportunities with our colleagues from SLaM Partners, our organisations' team of improvement experts, experienced organisational consultants, and coaches.

This workshop is designed for anyone who has previously attended the 'Basic Coaching Skills' course. It will enable you to refresh skills that were covered during the programme and give you a further opportunity to put them into practice.

A maximum of 10 students will be offered a place on this course when it is delivered online. Students must have completed the SLaM Recovery College 'Basic Coaching Skills' course or the SLaM Partners 'REACH' Coaching programme for clinical staff to enrol in this workshop.

These sessions are only available to students who can demonstrate a connection to SLaM (as a service user, staff member, carer, volunteer, peer supporter or involvement register member).

Communication and Active Listening

This course explores what active listening is, looks at the benefits of active listening (including exploring its power to transform our conversations), and teaches how we can practice and hone our skills as empathetic listeners.

Communication Skills for Resilient Relationships

Communicating is more than just what we say. It is how we say things and what we understand from what is said to us.

Sometimes it can be difficult to know how to communicate with the people around us, especially when you need to discuss something tricky and there are emotions involved.

This workshop provides practical tools that help steer us away from miscommunications and build our confidence to talk, listen, hear, and be heard, in order for our relationships to flourish. We will explore active listening skills and the barriers which impact on the way we communicate with the aim of reducing misunderstanding & conflict within our relationships.

Please note: this workshop focuses primarily, though not exclusively, on relationships between couples.

Coping with Winter

Wintertime can be an especially difficult period for those who experience mental ill-health.

In this stand-alone webinar, we will share ideas on how we can look after ourselves and those we care for during the winter months.

DESMOND (Diabetes Education and Self-Management for Ongoing and Newly Diagnosed)

What does the programme involve?

You are invited to join a group of people with Type 2 diabetes to learn how you can improve and manage your Type 2 Diabetes symptoms. The group of up to 10 people will be taught by two trained DESMOND Educators. The course will be interactive and you will be asked about your diabetes story. The educators will support you to increase your knowledge and understanding of what having Type 2 diabetes means.

Who can attend?

Anyone with a diagnosis of Type 2 diabetes who is also a SLaM service user, a carer of someone who uses SLaM services, a SLaM staff member, or a SLaM volunteer or peer supporter or Involvement Register member.

What will you have to do?

You will need to be prepared to attend all the sessions. This is for your benefit so that you can be sure of having all the information that you need to manage your diabetes.

What will you get from attending?

As well as getting up-to-date information, you will learn practical skills to help to manage your Type 2 diabetes. You will discuss and explore topics such as:

- What diabetes is and how it can affect people
- The impact food choices can have on people's diabetes and health
- How exercise & medication can help people to manage their diabetes

You may find you get more from attending if you come prepared to share your experiences, thoughts, and opinions. No question is too silly, and no one will make you contribute if you find the idea of joining in too difficult, but there will still be lots to learn.

If you are a carer for someone who uses SLaM services that has Type 2 Diabetes and you would like to accompany them to this course, please ensure you both enrol on the course. The person you care for must be able to discuss their own experiences of diabetes.

Once you have registered your interest for this course, you will be contacted by a DESMOND trainer to discuss the course content prior to being enrolled.

Emotional First-Aid Kit

During the day, week, month, or sometimes minute or hour, we can experience a whole range of different emotions. This may be because of the pressures of daily life, our mental health, or distressing experiences. Sometimes our emotions can change quickly, and sometimes it is challenging to know what we are feeling at all. This session gets curious about whether you can recognise and name your emotions as you are experiencing them? And wonders if there's a benefit in being able to do just that?

This workshop nurtures and inspires us to create an 'emotional language' and to explore the things that can soothe some of the more painful emotions we might prefer to feel less often.

Students will be invited together to support the creation of a group 'Emotional First Aid Box'. This is a box you can prep in advance to be ready to reach for when your emotions need comfort, peace, and soothing.

Emotional Intelligence: the Path to Emotional Serenity

The more you understand emotional quotient, the more you can recognise and understand your emotions. The more you can recognise and understand your emotions, the more you can learn to love them. Emotions are a key to recognising our needs, which can then be managed to enrich our lives.

The program is packed full of exercises to enable all participants to learn, interactively, the components of emotional intelligence and how this relates to the mental health of service users and health professionals alike. This course aims to help you develop an understanding of what emotional intelligence is, how it operates in everyday life, and why it's important to develop & encourage it. The course will give you more confidence in interpersonal relations, and more self-awareness.

Facilitation Skills

This workshop was designed to support people wanting to improve their confidence in facilitating and presenting information in group settings. The workshop will include:

- The role of icebreakers and group agreements
- Making a plan and preparing to facilitate a session
- Managing challenging situations
- Evaluating learning

This course is suitable for:

- Service users and carers who may be interested in joining SLaM's Service User Involvement in Training and Education team (SUITE)
- People acting as service user consultants
- Staff members who facilitate teaching sessions in their work environments.

Facts & Guidance for Carers

This session will provide facts about the caring role and guidance on navigating support systems. We will discuss common challenges inviting thoughts and suggestions. This workshop is designed both for new carers and for carers who want to join to share experiences and hear facts and ideas. But will also prove useful for anyone who wants to know more about the caring role.

Fear of Abandonment: Causes, Symptoms and What Can Help Alleviate It

This course focuses on exploring the fear of abandonment. This fear can cause various harmful coping behaviours and can sabotage relationships.

The team will present insight, provide practical ways we can choose to respond to our fear, and show how we can feel hopeful for our future relationship journeys.

Finding My Strengths, Values and Skills for Returning to Work

This workshop is a practical, focused session for students who have been out of work for any length of time and who are considering returning to the workplace.

Co-produced with our colleagues at WorkWell, this course:

- guides the student through the benefits and considers potential challenges of getting back into the workplace
- assists reflection on identifying personal skills
- explores the steps needed to match skills to requirements for person specifications and job descriptions.

Finding the Off-Switch: Guided Self-Care

Guided self-care sessions to help you wind down in just fifteen minutes, hosted by Neil Cunningham, carer, yoga and breath instructor. Please join us if you've been busy caring for others, are having a challenging time, or are looking to ground, decompress and find the off switch at the end of a full-on day. Perhaps you need a soft reset, a full reboot or maybe you just want to be part of breathing together, creating a calmer present and a healthier future. Open to all. No equipment or special clothing is needed. Each session is unique, so join us anytime in the course. Easy to access at a click of a link, this experience is 'live' via Zoom only; bringing fresh energy as we participate in community. There's no requirement to learn, no need for a notebook, no need to move, talk or turn your camera on. The aim is to just be present, be comfortable and follow Neil's voice.

Five Obstacles to Wellbeing

During the Five Obstacles to Wellbeing course, we will learn how to identify and overcome five significant obstacles on our personal journey of recovery. We will discover what can bring these obstacles about, how we can remove them, and how we can prevent them. We will use a guided mindfulness practice along with practical day-to-day tips. This course is based on the pañca nīvaraṇāni (five hindrances) which are recognised in Buddhist traditions as mental factors that hinder progress in meditation and in our daily lives.

Harnessing Emotional Contagion for Recovery

This workshop builds upon emotional intelligence and supports recovery, self-management, and wellbeing by recognising the impact our emotions have on others, and the impact of others' emotions on self. It will explore ways of managing both by coping with the impact of difficult emotions and enhancing the impact of helpful emotions.

Hearing Voices

Hearing voices is not always a sign of mental ill-health, and the experience can differ greatly between people.

Our uniqueness as individuals is often reflected in the voices people experience. These voices can have distinct content, identities, meaning and impact on the person experiencing them.

The voices and experience can be distressing for the person who hears voices and for those offering care and support. Often those offering support (both as a carer and a worker) may feel unsure what to do to help someone who is hearing voices.

The aim of the Hearing Voices workshop is to consider the effects of voices upon people, ways to cope with the experience and ways in which people experience voices can be supported.

This workshop is for anyone who wants to learn about the experience of hearing voices. Students will learn about the major stresses which may affect people who hear voice voices and will be able to identify and respond constructively to the distress which can be caused by hearing voices

We will support options including self-management and self-help techniques

Increasing Social Confidence

This course aims to improve the students' ability to cope more effectively with social situations.

The course will offer an opportunity for people to identify and explore situations in their life which they find socially challenging and discuss ways to overcome them.

Students will have opportunities to:

- understand what confidence is, and how this affects us in social situations.
- identify barriers to joining in social situations and explore how they can be reduced.
- learn about techniques to increase confidence in social situations.
- explore how we can develop social skills safely

Introduction to Recovery

Many people find being diagnosed with mental health difficulties devastating. Too often people feel that their life is over and that they will never be able to fulfil their dreams and ambitions or lead a satisfying and valued life. But it does not have to be this way. Whatever age a person is, whether they have only recently been diagnosed, or whether they have had a diagnosis for some time, recovery is possible, no matter how serious the person's difficulties. It is possible for people to rebuild a meaningful, valued and satisfying life.

This workshop explores the impact of mental health difficulties on people's lives, what helps people to grow within and beyond what has happened, and how they can rebuild their lives.

Maintaining Wellbeing: Staying Positive

The aim of this course is to help you to reflect on the positive outlook and workout how you can bolster your own positivity. The impulse to dwell on the negatives is hard-wired into us, a hangover from humankind's early days, when we had to be constantly on the alert. We know that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on people's mental health and acknowledge how hard it is for us to maintain our wellbeing during this time. But that doesn't mean that being negative is an absolute. The situation we currently all find ourselves in is just the right time to begin focusing ourselves more towards the positive.

Making Changes: Where to Start & How to Maintain

The aim of this course is to enable participants to explore, embrace and prepare for the challenges involved when embarking on change. We explore tools used indecision making, planning, and maintaining change. The course will offer participants an opportunity to practice with the tools in a learning environment with the goal to use these in everyday life.

Managing Your Mood

This workshop provides an introduction to behavioural activation for low mood.

We will provide an evolutionary and developmental understanding of how our minds work and interplay the drive system, the threat system and compassionate system in the old brain.

We will describe the principle of activation and following one values in life despite feeling low.

The course was designed in collaboration with staff from the Centre for Anxiety Disorders and Trauma (CADAT)

Mental Health Act: The Basics

In response to feedback from students, SLaM Recovery College co-produced a workshop about the Mental Health Act (1983, amended 2007) working alongside SLaM's Mental Health Law Team, Approved Mental Health Practitioner's and Independent Mental Health Advocates.

The workshop aims to support students to:

- Explore the purpose and principles of the Mental Health Act (1983)

- Understand how and why someone may be detained for assessment and treatment using the Mental Health Act (1983) and what this experience is like for service users and carers
- Gain a better understanding of the rights of people being 'sectioned' and the responsibilities of the health professionals, family members and advocates who might be involved in this process.
- Learn about the role of mental health tribunals and how sections are lifted/ended
- Understand steps that can be taken to plan for ill health and potentially prevent being admitted under the Mental Health Act.

Mental Health Awareness

As with our physical health, many people suffer with mental health problems.

This course aims to discuss mental ill health and what can help people to recover.

By the end of the course participants will be able to:

- Explore mental health and illness and the factors that influence it.
- Discuss a range of mental health disorders. E.g., anxiety and depression
- Consider what helps and what hinders recovery from a mental health condition.
- Explore the impact of verbal and non-verbal communication skills and how we can use these skills to support one another.

Mentalizing: Using Compassionate Curiosity in Everyday Life

Do you have misunderstandings with friends, colleagues, family, or the general public? The aim of this workshop is to introduce the concept of 'mentalizing', and how practising mentalizing can be applied to every day emotional or relationship problems that you might face:

- Discover what mentalization is and how it develops
- Explore how to spot when your own or other people's mentalizing has reduced
- Learn how to stay mentalizing in our everyday life and relationships
- Develop skills using mentalization in supported group exercises.

Motivation

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

This course explores what holds us back from utilising our motivation, what environment best harnesses our motivation, and looks at the reality of motivation in terms of its role in our daily lives. Students will learn tips that help launch us into action and the theory that helps us to close the gap between what you know you want to do and taking action to make it happen.

News, Social Media & Mental Health

In this workshop we are going to explore the news and social media in relation to our mental health and wellbeing.

The course covers four main areas:

- Mainstream and Social Media as News Sources
- Mainstream and Social Media as a Stressors
- Mainstream and Social Media as a Coping Strategy and Wellbeing Support
- Moving forward with Mainstream Media and Social Media

The course will include looking into the history of news, what “news” is and what is “fake news”, cyberbullying (among adults) and the general impact of the news and social media on mental health.

In addition, we will look at how we can use mainstream and social media to support our wellbeing, and how we can move forward with our use of mainstream and social media in the context of mental health.

Open Dialogue: The New Philosophical and Ethical Approach to Mental Health Services

Open Dialogue is a model of mental health care provision pioneered in Northern Finland by Jaakko Seikkula (Clinical Psychologist and Systemic Psychotherapist) in the mid-1980's. This approach was introduced at a time when rates of schizophrenia in Finland were high, and outcomes for psychosis were very poor. It built upon a 'needs adapted' approach, developed by colleagues responding to the poor outcomes at the time, in which crises were responded to immediately and treatment was adapted to the individual client and family needs.

Use of the Open Dialogue approach has significantly reduced incidence of hospitalisation for first episode psychosis (leading to a closure of a number of hospital wards), and reduced relapse rates, and use of neuroleptic medication. Recovery rates (including return to full employment or study) have increased dramatically. Due to the positive outcomes associated with an Open Dialogue approach, it has since been taken up in a number of countries around the world, including much of the rest of Scandinavia, Germany and some US states. In areas of Finland which have not adopted this approach, outcomes remain very poor.

Because of the important results in Finland, several NHS Trusts have started to explore how implementation of this approach could be possible in the UK and many professionals are committed to setting up Open Dialogue Services over the next few years.

Come along to hear what it is, where it is happening, how it is different to our current MH services and how we can raise awareness to promote its acceptance in our NHS to benefit us all.

Optimising Your Sleep

Do you have difficulty getting to sleep at night? Do you wake up early in the morning? Do you spend most of the night tossing and turning? Or do you find yourself sleeping too many hours or sleeping too much during the day? In this course we will:

- Mainstream and Social Media as News Sources
- Self-assess our own sleep
- Recognise the impact of the pandemic on our sleep
- Explore the benefits of sleep
- Explore how much sleep we really need
- Explore the pros and cons of daytime naps
- Address excessive sleep
- Recognise the impact of not getting enough sleep
- Explore methods for improving our sleep

Reading for Recovery: The SLaM Recovery College Book Club

The aims of the Recovery College Book Club (meeting up once every two months) are:

- to explore the benefits of reading on our mental health and wellbeing
- to introduce a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books with mental health and mental health recovery themes
- to provide a supportive and social environment in which to discuss the books' themes and messages, and to share our understanding of them

During each session we will discuss one fiction and one non-fiction book, both of which should be easily available at local libraries.

However, there is no pressure on anyone to read either or both books before taking part in a session. You are more than welcome to come to the meeting, whether or not you have read them.

While trying our best not to give away any "spoilers" for the fiction choice, we will provide a helpful summary of it, so that you can decide yourself whether or not this might be a book for you to read in the future.

During each session we will, as a group, agree the next meeting's book choices, so it would be great if you came along with a few recommendations. But, again, no pressure!

Recovering from and Eating Disorder

This workshop focuses on the recovery journey when someone is experiencing an eating disorder.

We will explore how to deal with triggers, transition and setbacks as well as practicing self care and creating a self soothe box plus importantly, how to stay well.

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 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.

Recovery Choga and Yoga

These yoga sessions are delivered once-weekly each via the Microsoft Teams Meeting format - if you wish to turn your camera on and ask the facilitator, Tess, for some direction, please feel free. If you wish to keep your camera off and just take part, that's fine too!

Recovery Choga

Recovery Choga is a gentle, chair-based yoga session aimed at people who might experience pain and/or mobility problems that might make it difficult for them to join the usual Yoga session. These sessions will be delivered in the Microsoft Teams format, but please feel free to have your camera either on *or* off; and please also feel free to ask Tess any questions either verbally, using your mic, or via the chat function.

Tess has worked for many years as an Occupational Therapist in specialist NHS Mental Health Services alongside her Yoga and Mindfulness Teaching. She has also trained in Yoga Therapy for several complex Mental Health Conditions for with the renowned Minded Institute of London.

Recovery Yoga

Recovery Yoga weaves yoga, yoga therapy and mindfulness together to offer an accessible yoga practice which supports and promotes healing and recovery. Recovery Yoga is designed for all levels, whether you are yoga curious, a complete beginner, or a more seasoned yogi looking to deepen and develop your yoga practice.

Tess attributes her many years of studying and practising yoga as critical to her own recovery from mental and physical health challenges and is delighted to be sharing the ancient practice of yoga with you.

Research Club

Research Club is an opportunity to hear about research that has taken place across the SLaM community. You can also find out ways that you can get involved.

The August Research Club: STOP Study (Successful Treatment of Paranoia)

The purpose of the STOP study is to investigate the effects of a mobile phone app to help people manage feelings of paranoia in a way that is less distressing and disruptive to their lives. STOP involves reading text that invites paranoid thoughts, but then teaches people to respond in an alternative, less paranoid, and less distressing way. A previous study using a similar treatment delivered on a desktop computer has shown promising results, and participants told us that taking part was a positive experience. The STOP study will transform the desktop therapy into a more engaging and accessible mobile phone App for a wider range of people.

In this clinical trial we are recruiting people who experience distressing paranoia in England. We will compare STOP with a control group where people just read text. Everyone will carry on receiving their usual treatment throughout the trial. We will measure any changes in paranoia after every treatment session and follow up with people for 3 months to see if any benefits are lasting. You can read more about the study on the study website: stoptrial.co.uk.

The September Research Club: POWER study (Post Coercive Practice Review Intervention)

POWER study is looking at ways of reducing harm for service users who have experienced coercive practices, such as physical restraint (physically holding a person), in mental health wards.

Coercive practices, such as restraint, are common mental healthcare practices. These practices can be harmful to the physical and mental wellbeing of the person who is subject to them. To prevent harm healthcare guidelines recommend holding discussions between patients and staff after an incident of coercive practice. However, there is little evidence to suggest how these discussions should be delivered and what would make them helpful for service users.

We plan to address this research gap by working with service users, staff and family/carers to:

- understand their views on how to make these discussions helpful
- develop guidance on how to hold these discussions
- test whether it is possible to deliver and study this intervention in mental health wards

This research has the potential to help us understand how to make these discussions helpful and ultimately could significantly improve experience of mental healthcare and reduce risk of harm for service users.

The October Research Club: Exploring Multilingual Voice-hearers' Experiences

There is very little research on what it is like to hear voices others don't hear (sometimes called auditory-verbal hallucinations) for people who speak more than one language (multilinguals). The research that has been done in the past was mostly based on psychiatrists' reports on their patients, rather than hearing directly from voice-hearers themselves. This study involved interviewing ten multilingual voice-hearers by phone or video call about what languages they spoke, how they learned them, and their relationships with the voices they heard.

We found that a lot of people heard voices that they did not completely understand, but that this not-understanding could feel very different to different people and at different times. This does not fit very well with some well-known theories about what causes voice-hearing.

We also found that for some people, the things their voices said in different languages related directly to the situations where they learned those languages and the people, they spoke them with. For others, this was much more complicated: for example, a voice might remind the voice-hearer of a particular person but might not speak the language that person spoke in real life. Voices could also change the languages they spoke. This could all provoke a wide range of feelings and affect the voice-hearers' relationships with their voices in complicated ways.

It is important to keep studying this area to understand how to support multilingual voice-hearers, as their needs have mostly been neglected until now.

The November Research Club: Integrating Mental and Physical Health Systems

Integrating our Mental and Physical Healthcare Systems (IMPHS) was a project commissioned and funded by the Maudsley Charity and undertaken in the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust. The team sat within the Mind and Body Programme at King's Health Partners.

The project sought to:

- Understand the barriers that adults living with long-term mental illnesses may face when managing their physical healthcare
- Test and evaluate interventions that could better facilitate integrated mental and physical healthcare in routine practice for patients accessing services both now and in the future.

IMPHS ran from February 2019 to March 2023 and we developed a body of work that could be shared with healthcare staff, commissioners, organisations, patients and carers

to support high quality physical healthcare for adults with long-term mental health problems.

In this presentation we will give an overview of the IMPHS project and share our learning.

Resilience

Discover your inner strength and resilience by joining our Resilience course. We will explore the factors contributing to resilience such as positive thinking coping strategies and social support.

You will also learn the Power of Release: letting go of negative emotions and using vulnerability as a source of strength. Through self-compassion and reframing negative experiences you will be able to practice Post Traumatic Growth.

Finally, you will cultivate acceptance and mindfulness to navigate life's challenges. These tools will enable you to bounce back from setbacks and emerge even stronger.

Don't let life's obstacles hold you back any longer. Start building your inner strength today by joining our Recovery College course on Resilience.

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 course, 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

Taking Control of My Psychosis Medication

Many people prescribed medications for psychosis are not given information about risks and benefits and are not informed about their rights. This recovery college course aims to provide the skills needed to engage in discussions, to obtain information, and to develop confidence in asking questions to help make decisions on when to take, stop or change your medication.

This co-produced course is interactive; it will help you gain the skills and confidence to participate in shared decision making about antipsychotic medication, sources of information, and developing a personal action plan.

The Comedy School



Improvisation

There is no better place for laughing and learning at the same time than The Comedy School Improvisation Course, specifically designed for SLAM Recovery College.

Within a friendly and supportive online environment, we will build self-confidence, nourish creativity, and develop collaboration skills through the games and exercises used by comedy improvisers.

The Comedy School's expert tutors will guide you through the fundamentals of improvisation, introducing you to storytelling techniques, improvising dialogue, and inventing characters.

We'll even practice some physical comedy - all in a spontaneous way that is less about getting things right, and more about making things happen.

Sometimes silly, sometimes smart, always entertaining, the comedy we will experience together will provide a safe and rewarding opportunity to express ourselves and interact with others.

No previous experience of improvisation or performing is required.

Stand-Up Comedy

The Comedy School, supported by SLAM Recovery College, are offering an exciting opportunity for people who want to develop confidence and learn skills to work alongside others.

Sessions are run by sensitive professionals from the comedy circuit. The course culminates with an informal sharing, in which you perform a comedy routine to a warm and friendly audience.

Over seven weeks, the course will guide you through the process of becoming a stand-up comedian, from writing your first piece of material to your debut performance.

Topics covered include:

- Generating Material
- Developing Performance Skills
- Discovering Your Comic Attitude
- Examining Stage Persona
- Exploring Joke Structure

For both courses, if you wish to take part in the seven-week course, you will first have to enrol on a taster session. If, after attending the tasters, more people want to go on to take part in the full courses than there are places, we will choose the successful candidates using a random number generator.

These sessions are only available to students who can demonstrate a connection to SLaM (as a service user, staff member, carer, volunteer, peer supporter or involvement register member).

The Power of Generosity: Cultivate a Giving Mindset for a More Fulfilling Life

Are you ready to unlock the transformative power of generosity and take your life to the next level? If so, then "The Power of Generosity" is the course for you! This course is divided into two parts each building upon the other to help you cultivate a more giving and fulfilling life.

In Part 1 you will gain a deeper understanding of what generosity is and how it can benefit your mental health and overall well-being. Through a series of interactive lessons and thought-provoking discussions you will explore to what extent humans may be naturally selfish or not and the different factors involved in giving including intention recipient and gift. You will also learn about the benefits of generosity and the potential pitfalls to be aware of.

In Part 2 you will build upon the foundation laid in Part 1 and dive deeper into the topic of generosity. You will explore traditional African philosophy of Ubuntu and its emphasis on community and interconnectedness. You will also examine what is easy and not easy to give explore the potential pitfalls of generosity including co-dependency and harmful giving and learn about Naikan, a Japanese method of reflection. By the end of the course you will have the tools and mindset needed to cultivate a more giving and fulfilling life one that is grounded in compassion gratitude and service to others. Join us for "The Power of Generosity" and discover the transformative power of generosity for yourself!

Thriving in the Face of Stigma

Have you had first-hand experience of stigma? Or would you like to understand what stigma is, where it comes from, and what is within our control to stop it? Would you like to be informed so that you can support others who might be struggling to move through the effects of stigma?

Within mental health, experiencing stigma and its effects are sadly not uncommon. This course is about bringing people together to stand-side-by-side and find a way forward so that individually and collectively, we can all find a way to thrive in the face of stigma.

Understanding & Coping with Stress

This workshop will explore the experience of stress, the effect it can have on our wellbeing and ways to prevent it but also manage and cope at times where we feel it's impact.

Understanding & Managing 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 act, when we may be in danger or can even help us to perform better. This workshop 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.

Understanding & Managing 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 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.

Understanding & Managing Panic Attacks

Some people with anxiety disorders may experience panic attacks. People who experience panic attacks are often fearful that something terrible is going to happen to them.

This course will explore the experience and impact of panic attacks on people. We will discuss a range of coping methods that people might find useful in overcoming them. We will explore what treatments are available and how they might help.

This workshop was originally designed in collaboration with staff from the Centre for Anxiety Disorders and Trauma (CADAT) and people who have used their services.

Understanding & Managing Personality Disorder

Our individual 'personality' is made up of the characteristic patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviours that make us unique. 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 workshop will explore the diagnosis of 'personality disorder', what this means, how it impacts those experiencing the condition, treatment options and self-management techniques to support wellbeing.

Understanding & Managing the Impact of Isolation on Mental Health

Isolation and loneliness can be a shared experience for many people in periods of their life. In this workshop we will explore how isolation can impact on different mental health conditions. The overall aim of this workshop is to share ideas, advice and tools that we can use to self-manage during these challenging episodes.

- Learn about mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety, and how these can impact during a period of isolation
- Explore how loneliness can maintain episodes of depression and anxiety
- Share ideas on how we can practically and mentally manage times in which we feel isolated and lonely
- Discuss looking after yourself and how to seek help

Understanding & Overcoming Health Anxiety

Health anxiety is the name used when you spend so much time worrying that you are ill, or about getting ill, that it starts to take over your life; for many people, the Covid-19 pandemic increased these types of worries.

This course will look at what Health Anxiety is, and how we can start to think about overcoming it.

Understanding Bipolar Disorder

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.

We will explore how bipolar is diagnosed, and what the symptoms and early warning signs are. We will also look at how bipolar is treated and explore self-help ideas and how to manage during uncertain times.

Understanding Eating Disorders

Eating disorders have both biological and psychological causes and can affect any of us regardless of age, gender or ethnicity.

But they are treatable. Recovery is possible, but because of the stigma or misperceptions, some people may not get the help they need. It is important for people to understand what eating disorders are and what they are not.

This workshop aims to remove the mystery surrounding this group of conditions and explore support options, giving participants better understanding about recovery from eating disorders.

Understanding Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is a surprisingly common anxiety disorder and there are lots of different types. At its worst it can be extremely debilitating.

The good news is there *is* help available. This introductory workshop covers essential information about OCD, how it is diagnosed and how it can affect different people. Together we will explore the signs and symptoms of OCD and what it might feel like to suffer from it.

Understanding Post-natal Depression

This session will look at the broad subject of mental health in and around pregnancy, childbirth and the post-natal months. Post-natal Depression (PND) is the most commonly diagnosed "perinatal" mental illness, but we will also look at post-natal anxiety, birth trauma and postpartum psychosis. As well as discussing signs, symptoms and risk factors, we will attempt to make sense of the different treatments and services available for new mums and their families. We will explore the topic of mental health recovery, as new parents, and how we can best protect our mental health while going through this significant life event.

Understanding Psychosis

This workshop will enable you to have a broader understanding of psychosis, including examples of lived experience and information on supporting someone else. In the session we will explain what psychosis is, explore the different experiences of psychosis, and share information about psychotic episodes and examples of lived experiences. We will also explore schizophrenia more specifically, looking at the meaning of positive and negative symptoms and different types of recovery. We will also look at supporting someone who is experiencing psychosis and how we can help ourselves as a supporter.

Understanding the Impact of Substance Use on Mental Health

People often experience problems with mental health and substance use (alcohol and drugs) at the same time. Each can cause difficulties and together they can have a big impact on the

person and their family and carers. Finding the right help and support can be difficult, however, this workshop will help students to explore options and provide information about where to find a service to suit their needs.

Walking with Body Confidence Coaching



Ldn Dares invite people to join us on a unique opportunity to walk in the park and have body confidence coaching. You will have the opportunity to work on your own 'body confidence wheel', supported by the coaches. On a sessional basis. We will be exploring empowering topics such as self-esteem, self-compassion, relaxation, fitness and exercise, healthy eating, confidence, and self-worth. You are invited to identify your body confidence goal, and work toward it each session with the accountability and motivation of your group peers. Its optional to share your body confidence with others, equally we intent to connect as a group, enjoy nature and get our steps in. Our encouraging coaches will use 'gentle' coaching questions to explore topics in a way that chips away at insecurities, that builds body confidence and dares to make changes whilst being comfortable in the skin we are in.

Group sizes are between 6 and 12 walkers. Toilets are available in the park, and we meet in the community hut next to the community garden.

This is funded by TFL and Groundwork London and delivered by Project Dare/ Ldn Dares in partnership with the SLAM Recovery College. As a funding requirement all participants will be asked to complete diversity and evaluation forms. These will be anonymous. Ldn Dares embraces inclusivity and all genders, shapes, sizes, and fitness level.

Working Together: Co-production in Action

Co-production is a way of working together which has gained momentum in many health and social care settings. Coproduction is now used extensively across mental health settings to recognise the value and importance of involving service users in planning, designing, decision making, and evaluating. This is the approach that the Recovery College uses to develop its course content and service.

This workshop will explore the role of collaborative working between people who have used mental health services and people who have experience by profession and the values and philosophies that underpin the approach.