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### **Welcome!**

Experience suggests the multiple spheres in which we engage with health and social care can provide a rich seam of knowledge. However, the shaping and formation of such experiences into research and 'knowledge' often excludes the subjective micro realities of practice in favour of 'objectivity' and rigid notions of what valid data looks like in the production of 'evidence based/informed practice'.

Whilst for some this is the accepted norm, for others this seems nonsensical given that the labour associated with health and social care comprises so many micro human interactions. However, these micro practices are intertwined with a broader macro context that is often lost when individuals share their experiences. Separation of the two only serves to decontextualise people's experiences, leaving their subjective experiences in a 'data' void labelled as 'invalid'.

This journal seeks to enable authors to present their subjective experiences contextualised within contemporary socio-political, ideological and economic perspectives to enable different voices to shape the future of health and social care.

The focus of this journal is on content and meaning rather than the demonstration of an adherence to strict academic protocols and processes. We are interested in 'what' practitioners, students and service users are saying rather than 'how' it is relayed. In this way, we are trying to do something that is counter to the dominant norm of academia, to provide an alternative, accessible and inclusive pathway for those at the forefront of health and social care in re-shaping the wider policy-making and practice landscape.

To this end the editors have taken a 'hands off' approach to authors submissions, being mindful not to compromise their realness and richness lest we undermine the authors voice.

In terms of academic notions of validity and reliability, we suggest readers decide for themselves whether the contributors words speak to them, and are of value in enhancing the readers learning and professional development.

### **In this issue:**

Our first paper provides an authentic narrative of a day in the life of James, a mental health nurse on a busy acute assessment ward. The author reflects on the organisational and political context of practice, identifying and exposing the impacts of these upon risk and decision making in practice, stating '*My narrative, my evidence, tells a story of a system under strain and staff under immense pressure*'.

Chloe is a Psychiatric Liaison Nurse who explores the ideological drivers that influence current practice and social policy development within psychiatric services in our second paper. This paper features a vignette of a practice situation concerning the removal of a baby from a mother, Jane, shortly after birth. A traumatic experience for the mother and decision makers, imbued with a host of ethical and professional dilemmas. The author concludes *'Navigating my way through this reflexive analysis has enabled interrogation of the underlying assumptions disguised as professional expertise and experience held by myself and within the service. An analytical consideration of the way in which my own attitudes, values, assumptions and biases, and those of the organisation in which I work, may have influenced the interaction within, and outcome of, this complex situation has been essential in terms of the epistemological rigour of this qualitative research paper. Consideration of 'problem identities' as a social construct has enabled contemplation of the use of power dynamics within social policy, and in turn how this can impact on nursing practice and decision-making'*.

Our third paper reflects on events after receiving a phone call at home from a doctor at 7pm in the evening following a CT scan. This was the author's experience. Not only was he about to face the fear of cancer but also an expectation he would step up to 'fight' this disease, and be 'brave'. Mark questions where such a discourse comes from and its potential impact on patients where success, or failure, in overcoming cancer is somehow up to them. The author asks 'What am I, if I am not brave and battling? Is it the case that notions of 'brave' and 'battling' have only binary opposites such as the 'coward' who 'gives up', or is there another way of regarding the situation, of resisting resilience whilst fighting cancer?'

The fourth paper provided an unexpected reflective learning opportunity for the editors of this journal. Leah is a student social worker who has a 'diagnosis' of dyslexia. The author presents a challenge to the status quo within our education system, especially within higher education, where the presentation of a particular set of normative writing skills may be considered requisite in demonstrating academic ability. Leah does not hold back in her challenge stating;

*'Until recently, I had never thought about dyslexia being a social construction, something assigned to me and a self-prescribed label, once receiving my dyslexic report. I viewed dyslexia as a biological-neurological deficit. I can feel lexic power operating in society, training dyslexics to engage with lexic norms and self-surveillance, over writing skills. The lexic norms of literacy are powerful and act as a panopticism within society, in which dyslexics, non-lexics and I, perform and maintain this discourse by voluntarily engaging with education, employment and knowledge'*

Finally, our fifth paper concludes this edition with another challenge to academia, and the reader. Duncan's piece was written as a form of experimental response and further exploration (with some new elements) of an essay he wrote many years ago, 'Soiled Knowledge'. This paper takes an alternative approach, one that considers *'how do we 'feel' writing, with study, with research, in our embodied being? What is allowed, what is censored?'*

This paper may enrich the reader or repel the reader ... make of it what you will ...

## Contents:

*A day in the life of a NHS nurse in 21st Century Britain: An auto-ethnography* (James Osben)

Barriers to humanity: an autoethnographical exploration of nursing within Liaison Psychiatry (Chloe Parkin)

The Language of Cancer: exploring resilience, responsibility role and rebellion through personal reflection. (Dr M. Redmond)

*My less-able literacy place, my seat at the "red table, "The Dunces" table: An auto-ethnography on Dyslexia* (Leah Pritchard)

Soiled Knowledge: Reminiscence and Rejection (with shuffled music) (Duncan Moss)