

Explaining how WARM/**RecoverED** works - a framework for supporting learning and engagement





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"When we learn together we **CREATE** together"

What is **RecoverED Consulting**?

- ▶ **RecoverED** is the formal link between WARM, its outreach work and organisations which work with WARM
- ▶ **RecoverED** also aims to form the sustainable arm to WARM – forming a longer term strategy for outreach
- ▶ **RecoverED** is exploring the range and possibility of a wide and expansive network – hence the likes of UALL
- ▶ **RecoverED** will also be responsible for delivering and expanding the **Co-CREATE** framework

Why **Co-CREATE**?

We knew WARM was both needed and was succeeding – like lots of other projects – but we wanted a framework which:

- could explain to providers *and* recipients why and *how* it worked
- could show why WARM fuses its understanding of recovery with education – mental illness alongside widening participation (WP) supporting a personally defined form of wellbeing
- could interpret both ‘provider’ and ‘recipient’ perspectives at an engagement level – because we recognised each often want the same – **participant informed**, outcomes - *but struggle to communicate how to translate and achieve this*
- could be informed by a carefully crafted form of participant generated **(action) research** – which ultimately frames our engagement strategy



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Action Research as Practical Knowledge for wellbeing

The wider purpose of action research is to contribute through practical knowledge to the increased wellbeing — economic, political, psychological, spiritual — of human persons and communities, and to a more equitable and sustainable relationship with the wider ecology of the planet of which we are an intrinsic part

This is a person centred, creative, explorative approach which sits at the heart of WARM and **Co-CREATE**

As Daniel Selener (1997) describes Participatory research

It "is a process through which members of an oppressed group or community identify a problem, collect and analyse information, and act upon the problem in order to generate solutions and to promote social and political transformation"

But we couldn't just leave the framework here – there is an additional and absolutely key problem which remained largely unanswered in that – **How?**

How do you persuade isolated individuals/groups to engage when their personal/social/cultural experiences often say this is "not for them"?

Selener, D (1997) *Participatory action research and social change: approaches and critique*
Cornell Participatory Action Research Network, Cornell University; 1st ed edition



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Co-CREATE recognises that what prevents engagement is multi-dimensional;

- Stigma – active vs passive engagement (internal vs external stigma)
- A seeming lack of personal choice (hopelessness rather than hope) to define outcome (it's my lot in life)
- 'Done to' models rather than strength's based – defined inability rather than exploring the ability to use existing resources
- Learning being 'given' rather than individuals being encouraged to take control of personal learning spaces
- Learning not valued – learning for externally driven outcomes rather than self-discovery – self-discovery which can then lead to valued outcomes
- Participant progression is often halted by systemic/organisational boundaries – can disconnect rather than connect to opportunity



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The Co-CREATE framework

- **C**hallenges stigma
- **R**espects individual choice
- **E**ngages on mutual grounds
- **A**ppropriates suitable learning spaces
- **T**ransforms learning
- **E**ncourages (participant defined) progression

Challenge Stigma

- Stigma exists in many ways – learning as well as MH
- Stigma offers a sense of ‘shame’, at being ‘stupid’, reinforced by **labels** such as being mentally ill
- The affects of stigma inhibit aspiration and confidence

We don't just go up to someone though and say -
“do you want to do learning”?



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Stealth – or otherwise ‘sneak mode’

Educators introduce expected outcomes too early - then wonder why groups do not engage

We use stealth – recognising what participants are already doing – or can do

And then apply outcomes retrospectively



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This means we must **Respect** individual choice and action for learning

- ▶ We suggest that the content for personal learning already exists in the individual – personal experiences, their own understanding, the drive for discovery
- ▶ As educators – we are tasked to find ways to unlock this learning – to increase choice and *critical thinking*
- ▶ **CREATE** uses **research and exploration** – to achieve this where the key for personal discovery is an application of skills that moves from passive to active

This way we can **Engage** on **Mutual Grounds – we**

- Reduce hierarchy – we're a partnership
- Research is research – I use the Argos catalogue as an example
- = we are all researchers, we can all engage on mutual grounds we can all co-create in learning – thus – it really is a widening partnership and network

Now we can **A**ppropriate Learning Spaces

- The learning space needs to be appropriated – it is not fixed – it can be anywhere
- Research allows for this too – with the space for learning becoming different for each group
- Each group is encouraged to appropriate and define their space as a learning place – this empowers – this develops personal control



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This can truly lead to **Transformative Learning** which can

- Focus on outcomes individuals can already achieve (strengths redefines self practically and philosophically)
- Identify intrinsic (personal) outcomes as the first priority – helps change personal perspective on the world.
- Identify opportunity (employability) outcomes – at the right time – not too early because this can be a barrier
- Support person centred changes in behaviour and beliefs – individual changes in their world view



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Now we can **Encourage** participant informed progression

- **Real Choices** support *person centred* progression
- This can be understood and developed once the participant has a better understanding of their capability – an **applied** interpretation of aspiration and confidence – here we use retrospective accreditation
- This increases individual opportunity to see the scope ahead of them – then we can add targets and goals – not before – because now goals are perceptually realistic

The Archives is just one example of how we **Co-CREATE**

- ▶ WARM's experience of the Archive has been truly exciting – but there's more opportunity out there
- ▶ For this to truly work though we need a network of organisations who sign up to a true sense of unified, experimental form of flexible thinking and who are willing to make the adaptations required – from both a recipient and provider perspective
- ▶ Then we can **all** grow because we will see learning in a slightly different way – applying learning outcomes in retrospect, for instance – is one adaptation – and it works.
- ▶ Individuals as well as groups always record significant, transformational learning and each situation is different – thus, each situation needs to be **Co-CREATED**



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Co-CREATE at work



Summary

- ▶ Barriers are internal as well as external – self-stigma – so we need new ideas for engagement – **Co-CREATE**
- ▶ WARM, through **Co-CREATE** concerns itself with developing these 'internally influenced' outcomes – it's the 'on the ground' element of what we do
- ▶ WARM really wipes the slate clean each time WARM engages with a new group and applies the elements of **Co-CREATE** this way we do not set limits or increase expectations where they're not needed
- ▶ **Co-CREATE** as APEL works because it translates participant experience into creative activity first and then acknowledges the outcomes later – this helps liberate the creative 'juices'

But, if this is to work on a wider scale – we need unified progression routes – a formal network

Essentially, this is not radical or new project type thinking

- Our framework is for reciprocal learning and progression – meaning both ‘practitioner’ and ‘recipient’ are part of the learning cycle
- It is not a done to model – thus **Co-CREATE** /WARM/**RecoverED** brokers this relationship building a network which can tackle the barriers to change as well as to opportunity.
- We don’t need new services – much of what is required is already in place – what we believe is needed is a change in thinking to confront the barriers and the challenges which will present in bringing all this together



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Our Vision for our network?

- ▶ We want to be a part of a cohesive network which sees WP as a single approach – a unified approach – where WP can be used across sectors – after all, we are all widening participation in one way or other.
- ▶ A network which is not HE or MH – but a mix of all organisations using action research as a catalyst tool for engagement
- ▶ Work with – not in opposition to – organisations and their roles for outreach work, using evidence to inform new and exciting thinking on engagement which leads to increased opportunities for flourishing



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The UALL network and membership

- ▶ This is our mission with the UALL network
- ▶ The network aims to bring all this together – into one cohesive set of ideas for WP across all cohorts
- ▶ That universities then become *the recipients* of a progression route – as well as employers, service providers – and not the ones defining this route
- ▶ That WP becomes defined and designed by the communities using it – towards transformative learning – which does not rely on goal-centred approaches alone

What do we want?

We want to:

- work with groups, organisations or anyone else interested – to develop relations, build action research opportunities which allows everyone involved to **Co-CREATE** progression opportunities into organisations
- develop a national community network of activity which holds a repository of research (at all levels) evidencing best practice and the elements required for change
- encourage all organisations to see engagement as a single and related problem which can be best understood by unified approaches.

UALL are committed to this vision

- ▶ We have many supporters – UALL is a very good friend and fully supports the plans we have
- ▶ We have never been funded – much of what we achieve is through our commitment to change and partnership work
- ▶ With this in view – we believe that with more people and organisations supporting an evidenced based, single approach to engagement – we can move mountains

**Thanks for
listening – now
let's get talking**