

## The Tree of Life

### Workshops on the Adult Acute and PICU Wards across SLaM.

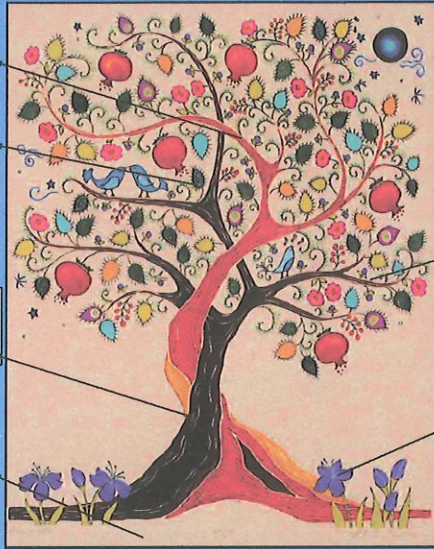
A Staff and Service Users Collaboration

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#### Introduction

- The Tree of Life is a recovery approach, based on narrative therapy that focuses on culture, heritage, spirituality, strengths and hope. It originated in Zimbabwe to help traumatised communities find a safe place before talking about their problems – ‘the riverbank position’. A tree is used as a metaphor for an individual's life and each part represents different positive elements. Staff and service users each draw and share their trees to build a forest of trees on the ward wall and every workshop ends with a celebration of certificates.



Branches: our hopes and dreams.

Leaves: people who are important and influential in our lives

Trunk: our skills and strengths

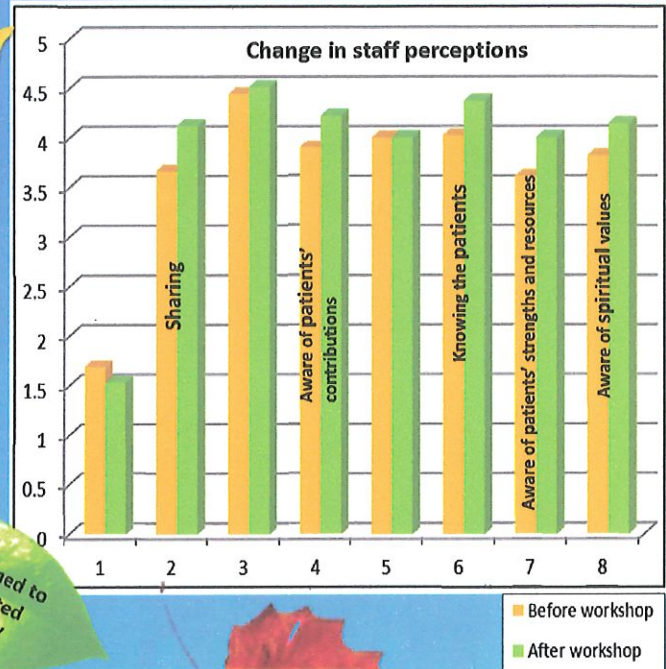
Roots: where we come from both physically and in terms of the values that influence us

'having a service user facilitator shows you, you can come out the other side...'

Fruits and Flowers: the gifts we give and receive, not necessarily material

Ground: where we are currently, both physically and mentally

#### Results



'I felt listened to and supported by the staff...'

'the ward was buzzing, it was like we remembered we were all people...we were laughing together'

'it's like getting on a plane and flying to other countries hearing about where we all come from, our roots..'

1 = strongly disagree  
2 = disagree  
3 = unsure  
4 = agree  
5 = strongly agree

#### Aims

- As a therapeutic approach which values culture and spirituality as strengths and resources in the process of recovery; to help improve engagement with BME groups
- To promote the recovery approach to mental health on the wards – reinforced by working with service users to co-facilitate the workshops.
- To build more positive and collaborative relationships between staff and service users by getting to know the person behind the job or the diagnosis.



'it reminded me of my granny in Mauritius who inspired me to be a nurse'

- Funding was obtained from The Maudsley Charity to run and evaluate Tree of Life workshops across SLaM adult inpatient wards over 2 years. Workshops have been provided to 16 wards and are running consistently on 12 wards.
- A team has been created from 10 facilitators from the local community, all with experience of using mental health services to deliver tree of life workshops on the adult inpatient wards.
- Nearly 450 service users and over 230 members of staff have attended the workshops.
- 75% of our workshop participants represent Black British, Caribbean, African and other BME groups
- 100% of Self report measures given to service users post workshop are positively rated, achieving 89% of the maximum score possible.
- Staff self report measures administered pre and post workshops show statistically significant positive change on 5 of the 8 questions relating to attitudes to recovery and relationships with service users.
- Themes of 'equality, empowerment, rapport and trust building' were identified in staff focus groups to evaluate their experiences of the tree of life workshops.
- Tree of Life workshops can be effective in addressing issues raised by the latest CQC visits, and PEDIC reports and has officially been recognised as SLaM's unique response to the Francis Report recommendations for improving empathy and compassion on the wards.
- We have been submitted to The Race Equality Foundation as an example of Good Practise.

