

SIX DEGREES SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

AUTUMN 2023 COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Dear Community Members,

In September I attended the City of Praise Women's Health event. This event was attended by women in the African Christian community. It was an interesting event that focused on women's health, it began with health checks and presentations from the diabetes team, dietary advice bespoke to the community, how to check for breast cancer screening team, and CAHN discussed the menopause. Six Degrees provided educational material about mental health and how to access services for bereavement and talking therapies in Salford.

The last hour was dedicated to questions and answers from the community to the panel of speakers. The key learning points to share with you are:

- In the community I visited, mental health equated to madness therefore mental health services are avoided as they carry a huge stigma and could lead to difficulties finding a partner. The church is working to replace these myths with education and accessible pathways.
- The African community are far less likely to seek help for physical or mental health until it becomes too late as don't wish to burden services.
- There were concerns expressed about Six Degrees enquiring about family life. The community felt it to be intrusive and judgemental. I explained family life questions are to ensure safety, support, and safeguarding needs of everyone in the household. I iterated our role wasn't about judgements on family life, it was a duty of care toward safety.

Following this event, I have welcomed a further focus group within Six Degrees to explore improved pathways and learn about mental health and develop cultural awareness across the relationship.

Any further developments will be shared in future newsletters.

Best wishes

Kelly Hylton

Managing Director



OUR PATIENTS

BRIDGING THE NEURODIVERSITY GAP - A BEREAVEMENT COUNSELLING REFLECTION

By Rob Buttery

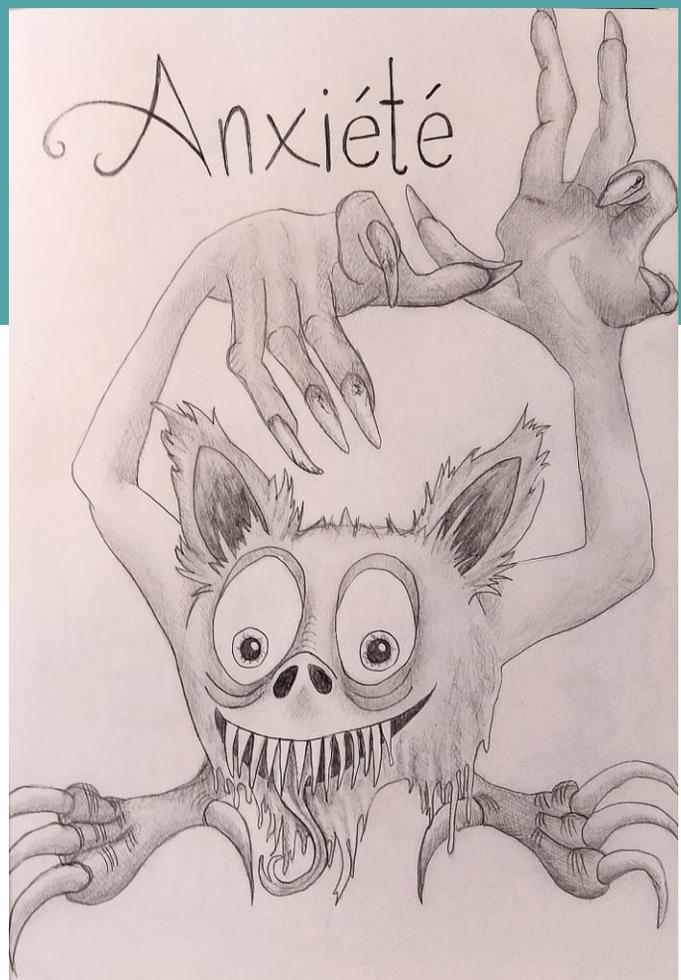
In May 2023 Salford Bereavement Therapy Service offered six sessions of counselling to a new client who is Neurodiverse. The client explained that they are autistic and ADHD. As a person-centred counsellor, my first thought was to invite the client to share in not only what they would like to talk about but how they would like to work. The person-centred approach to counselling holds belief in client led autonomy and freedom to choose and to flex within the six sessions we have available. Through a non-judgemental and empathic beginning came to flourish a trusting

therapeutic relationship led by the client. The client expressed a passion for art, preferring to draw how they felt, which in turn allowed for exploration of self-awareness, as both the client and I came to learn in sessions about their different, often conflicting, parts of self which led to finding new meaning in the client's search for emotional control. On reflection, I too found a deeper meaning within person-centred counselling and was reminded by this experience that allowing the client to lead can take us to places I couldn't have.

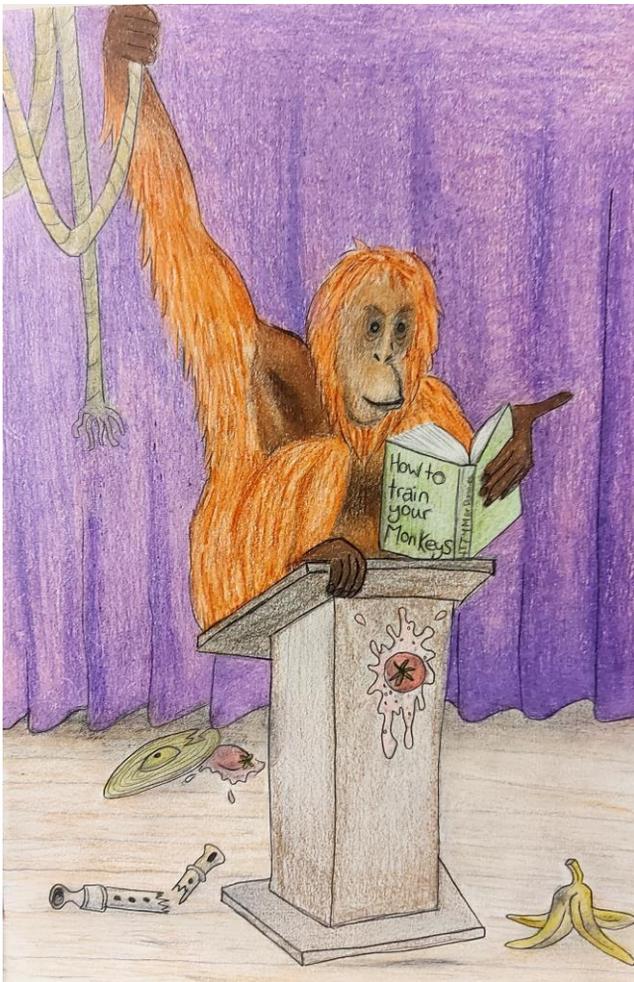
DRAWINGS BROUGHT TO SESSIONS INCLUDED*:

Le Saboteur (represents self-sabotage, drawing him allowed the client to acknowledge he's there but you don't have to engage with him).

Anxiété (represents a part of self who's always listening in to the client's conversations with people, ready to grab at the client with her anxious claws).

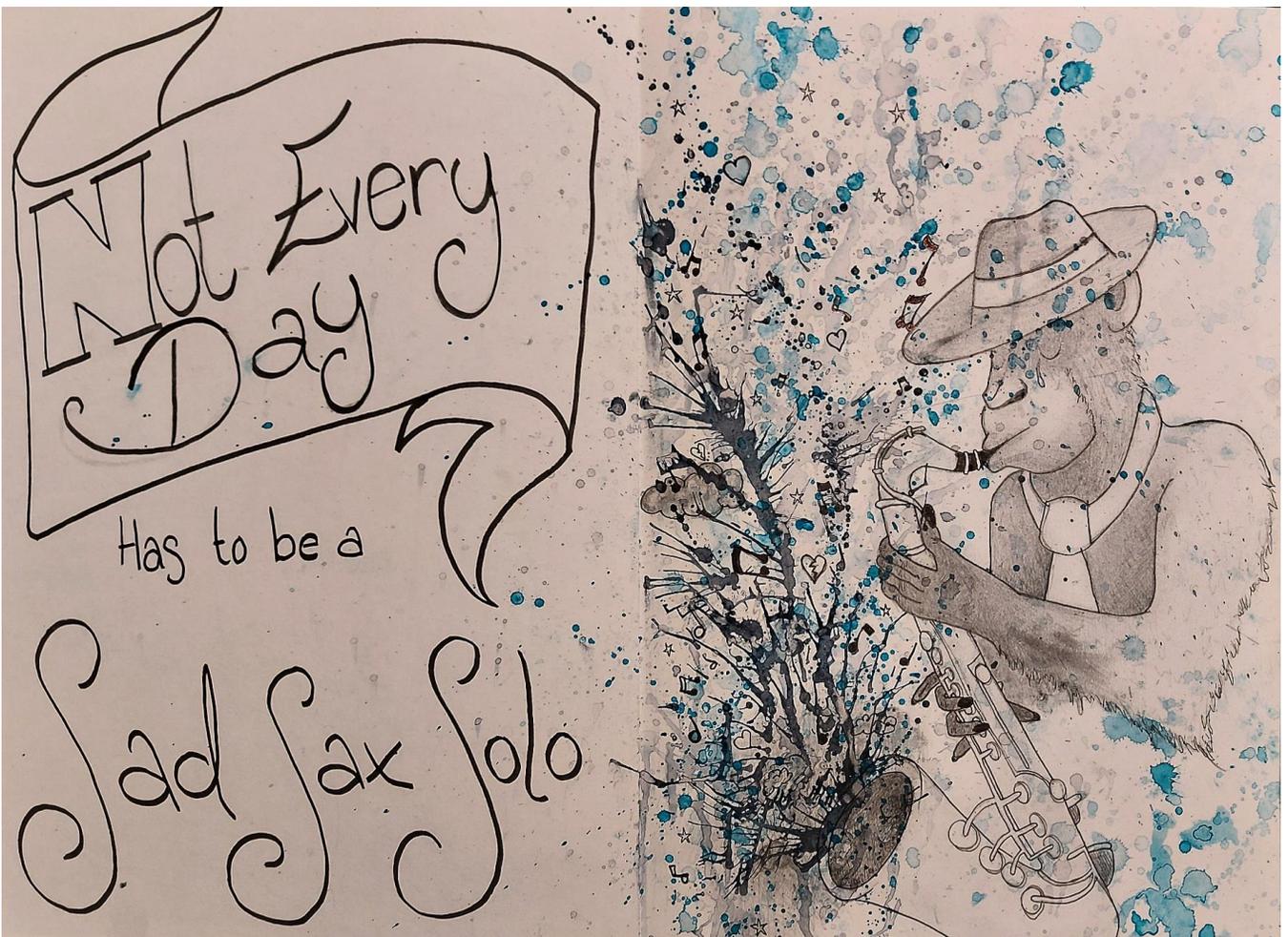


*Permission was gained from the client prior to sharing these drawings.



Orangutan (the client feels this character represents an internal mother figure. Trying hard every day to nurture and conduct all the other emotional characters. For the Orangutan, daily life is hard and challenging but she is consistent, quiet but powerful, always available).

Sad Sax Solo (represents a grieving part of self, who if you give him space and time to play his sad sax solo, the client and he come to understand that it's Ok to play sad music from time to time as part of the dual process of grief suggests - 'to feel the feelings'.



*Permission was gained from the client prior to sharing these drawings.

THE END BROUGHT A NEW BEGINNING

The end of therapy brought an opportunity for the client to share their experience with SBTS in a Care Opinion feedback reflection, the client was also referred onto the Six Degrees/Start Art Therapy for Women's Health Group Programme to continue the creative therapeutic exploration of self.

'I found my sessions with my therapist incredibly useful. I am Autistic & ADHD and have often found counselling to be difficult in the past, but I found my conversations with my therapist to be both helpful and enjoyable.

They're a person-centered therapist, and that really shows in their work. They were eager to learn more about how being autistic affects me, and make allowances for that where they could, which was great!

My therapist obviously paid attention to what I wanted or needed to get from each session, and I never felt like I walked out without talking about something that I had wanted to mention. They were always attentive, and I appreciated the time they took to see things from my perspective, which is really appreciated if you're neurodiverse like me!

My therapist really listens and makes sure that you feel heard. I would have loved to work together for longer.'

NEUROSPICY NOTES FOR SIX DEGREES FOR THE FUTURE:

The client left Six Degrees with a parting gift of feedback and ideas which they called their Neurospicy, thoughts, ideas, and advice for any practitioner to consider while working with neurodiverse people in the future:

- We are all different! Don't assume similar neurotypes have similar personalities, we are all just as varied at neurotypical folks.
- Remember eye contact might be difficult for neurodiverse people. Some of us simply can't face eye contact and listen at the same time.
- Be aware of the environment your sessions take place in. Unnatural lighting, electronics buzzing and ambient noise from outside the room can be very distracting at times.
- Give neurodiverse people permission to fidget/stim. A lot of us find it helpful to allow us to process what we're feeling and may worry about bringing something important to sessions because of the number of times we've been told to 'stop fidgeting in school etc'.
- Ask less open-ended questions as they can be too vague for us with too many possible answers and can be overwhelming. For example, 'How have you been'? Is harder to answer than 'How are you today'? Don't be afraid to be more direct and straight forward with your questions as they are easier to answer.
- Give us processing time. If someone goes very quiet, they may be simply processing what to say or sorting through their thoughts. Don't fill in the silent space with more questions.
- Spend a few minutes at the end of a session grounding and checking the person is ready to step back out into the real world.
- Don't decorate your office reception areas with too many flashing lights at Christmas, this can lead to sensory problems with the lights for some people.
- Above all else, if in doubt ask!

PATIENT AND SERVICE USER FEEDBACK

TALKING THERAPIES PATIENT FEEDBACK:

The Talking Therapies service continues to receive positive feedback, below are some examples:

GREATER MANCHESTER BEREAVEMENT SERVICE (GMBS) FEEDBACK

GMBS supports anyone bereaved or impacted by a loss living in Greater Manchester; the service also offers support to professionals seeking advice – this includes Six Degrees staff.

Below is a Care Opinion that highlights a piece of work GMBS did to support professionals:

"I called Greater Manchester bereavement service regarding a young person I work with. The Practitioner I spoke to was very helpful and has provided a lot of information that has been useful for the young person and his family."

"The service was very helpful to me. My support person listened and supported me with appropriate treatment options and their benefits. Thank you very much to the practitioner, you are a Star."

"Had a wonderful experience using six degrees. My supporter was amazing, and she helped with all my problems."

"I have found working through the exercises has been a useful reminder of what I need to focus on to become and remain more psychologically well and resilient. I have appreciated the responses from my silver cloud supporter and found them useful indicators of my progress and of areas I could usefully work on."

NATIONAL GRIEF AWARENESS WEEK 2ND – 8TH DECEMBER 2023

It's National Grief Awareness Week 2nd – 8th December. This year the theme is 'Better Together'; encouraging people, communities and professionals to connect with each other and raise awareness of support available, so no one feels alone.

The Greater Manchester Bereavement Service (GMBS) is offering a **drop in session** at **House of Books and Friends** on **Thursday 7th December, 10am – 2pm**.

House of Books and Friends is an independent bookshop and cafe with an important mission - to combat loneliness through bringing people together. All their profits are reinvested into this mission.

GMBS will be offering anyone the opportunity to learn more about the service or speak to a practitioner for support. The drop-in session is open to the public, service users & patients, and professionals.



National Grief Awareness Week 2023



GREATER
MANCHESTER
BEREAVEMENT
SERVICE

Drop in Session

Thursday 7th December, 10am - 2pm
Location: House of Books & Friends

This year National Grief Awareness Week is about 'Better Together'; bringing people, communities & professionals together to connect, so no one feels alone.

House of Books & Friends has a mission to combat loneliness and social isolation. In partnership with the Greater Manchester Bereavement Service this is an opportunity to learn more about bereavement support available, and speak to a friendly practitioner.

JOIN US

Open to the public, service users & professionals
Hot drinks available
81 King Street, Manchester M2 4AH

More information: 0161 983 0902 gmicb-sal.gm.bs@nhs.net

WORK IN THE COMMUNITY

LIVING WELL PARTNERSHIP CELEBRATION EVENT

On World Mental Health Day this year, Six Degrees attended a Living Well Partnership event at Buille Hill Park Hall. The aim of the day was to celebrate the partnerships which make up Salford Living Well and reflect on the journey so far. They were treated to lunch and a performance from the Diba Ladies Dance Group and were truly inspired by service users sharing their experiences of how the Living Well partnership had helped them begin their recovery journey. They spent some time visiting stalls and networking with services such as Revive, Wellbeing Matters, Mind, Safe in Salford, Talk About It Mate and many more, before reflecting on the partnership itself and how each service can continue working together to help the lives of Salford residents.



PEER FEST AT THE LOWRY

Six Degrees attended Peer Fest at the Lowry in September, an annual celebration of community-led groups doing peer support. This was a great opportunity to network to share information about Greater Manchester Bereavement Service.

COMMUNITY LEADERS DISCOVERY VISIT

Six Degrees Talking Therapies are currently involved in a Community Leaders Development Programme, led by the Public Health Inequalities Improvement Team. This programme aims to enhance the way in which particular communities can navigate and access a variety of services available to them. The programme has been broken down into four stages:

1. Orientation Day – community leaders meet with Public Health Inequalities team to prepare for discovery visits.
2. Discovery Visits – community leader sub-groups and service leads meet to understand services and mutually explore barriers and solutions.
3. Storytelling – community leaders meet to share stories and learning from discovery visits.
4. Community Experiments – a series of different experiments are co-designed and planned to be run in different communities.

In September Six Degrees hosted community leaders for a discovery visit. We had a lovely afternoon sharing experiences, understanding the needs of different communities, and discussing the different challenges each other are facing. Leaders were able to gain insight into Six Degrees, the different services we offer and understand the wider mental health system in Salford.

We look forward to sharing the next stages of the programme and how we are working with leaders across Salford to enhance the lives of different communities.

AWARENESS DAYS IN NOVEMBER



MOVEMBER

Movember is an annual event which involves growing a moustache during the month of November. This is raising awareness of men's health issues, such as prostate cancer, testicular cancer, and men's suicide.

<https://uk.movember.com/>

STRESS AWARENESS DAY

NATIONAL STRESS AWARENESS DAY - 2ND NOVEMBER

This day is an opportunity raise awareness and think about the effects of stress, physically and mentally, as well as how the feelings of stress can be managed.

INTERNATIONAL SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE LOSS DAY

INTERNATIONAL SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE LOSS DAY - 18TH NOVEMBER

Is a day of remembrance and support for those who have lost loved ones to suicide. It provides an opportunity for survivors to connect, share their experiences, and find comfort and healing in a community of understanding individuals.

We recruit from a wide range
of experiences



CURRENT VACANCIES

Our current vacancies can be
found on our website:

<https://six-degrees.org.uk/work-for-us/>