

## Wanting to Feel Normal: An Exploration of Mentally Disordered Offender's Perspectives Following Psychoeducation

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The recovery approach has been increasingly influential amongst mental health nurses in the UK (Trenoweth, Tingle and Clark 2016). The approach stresses the importance of developing a collaborative partnership with service users based on understanding the person's subjective experience. The Repertory Grid Technique (Kelly 1955/1991) is a structured interview technique which allows the nurse to understand the individual's personal frame of reference and capture how service users make sense of their world and the world around them. This also allows the nurse and service user to understand and evaluate particular health care interventions in supporting the individual on their personal recovery journey.

This study explored the personal impact of a psychoeducational programme for a group of mentally disordered offenders. A purposive sample of 20 participants were selected from two secure units in a high secure hospital. Structured interviews were completed using the Repertory Grid Technique. Significant differences were apparent in three areas: have confidence to engage in groups, ( $z = -2.203$ ,  $N = 18$ ,  $p < .05$ ); understand my own illness and how it affects me, ( $z = -2.203$ ,  $N = 18$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and wanting to feel normal, ( $z = -1.997$ ,  $N = 18$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Feeling normal was also associated with feeling valued, having hope, feeling confident, understanding your illness and realising others have the same problems. This study has highlighted that, following a psychoeducational programme, service users placed importance on understanding themselves and their personal world, and of feeling normal as part of their own recovery journey.

This study has implications for mental health nursing practice and suggests a mechanism by which mutual understandings can be developed between the nurse and service user, revealing meaningful information for discussion and reflection and understanding the personal pathways for recovery for those who have complex needs.

### Biography:

Helen Walker is a senior lecturer in the University of West of Scotland, UK. Steve Trenoweth qualified as a mental health nurse in 1991 and has worked in a variety of services before entering higher education in 2003. He is currently senior academic at Bournemouth University.