

Women Experts by Experience



Welcome

Baroness Jean Corston



Women Experts by Experience

Jackie Russell
Director, Women's Breakout



Experts by Experience

Five phases

100 women speak

Deep diving

Open Space event

Lay Assessors

Showcase and celebrate success

Summer 2013

Summer 2013

12 December 2013

Nov/Jan

5 February 2014



Who failed who?

Consistent messages from research literature, from experienced service providers and service users:

- Unmet needs in relation to physical and mental health
- Unmet needs in relation to housing and income
- Unmet needs in relation to training and employment
- Unmet needs in relation to substance abuse
- Unmet needs in relation to sexual and violent victimisation



Although much research suggests that few children disclose sexual abuse, in this study over 80% had tried to tell someone about the abuse.



Semi structured questions

- What are the biggest problems you face at the moment?
- How long have you been experiencing these problems?
- Do you think if something had happened differently in the past your life would be better now?
- What help do you think you need in order to bring about positive changes in your life?
- Who can help you to make your life better?
- Is there anything you want to say to anyone about your life so far?
- What three things do you want decision makers to change – what would have made your experience of the system less harmful/better/more effective?
- Is there anything else you would like to say to decision makers?
- Would you like to be part of the decision making process?



WOMEN'S
BREAKOUT

100 Women Speak Problems and timelines

'It would be easier to say what problems don't you face'

money – debt - **school** – somewhere to live – family relationships – weight – mood swings – drugs and alcohol – a job – help with anger – confidence – self esteem – keeping away from the wrong people – depression – **children's social care involvement** – driving ban – **court** – health – domestic abuse – sanctioned benefits – cancer – temptation – out of control – benefits – not wanting to go back – ongoing issues from early imprisonment – **probation** – having a criminal record – **job centre** - reoffending – isolation – no self worth – not caring about myself – avoiding high risk situations – getting family trust back – no family support – nobody listens or they prejudge – getting in trouble with police – transsexuality – reduction in prescribed medication – **leaving probation support** not feeling safe – attending appointments – bullying – loneliness

How long?

3 weeks - couple of months – a very, very long time – 30 years - all my life



**WOMEN'S
BREAKOUT**

100 Women Speak

What could have made a difference?

- **Support: before offending, on first release, mental health**
- **Listened to: doctors; telling someone; being believed (abuse)**
- **Family: not being abused as a child, being brought up better, a better childhood, relationship with mother, father's involvement, relationship with child's father**
- **Dealing with problems better, less problems to deal with**
- **Relationship break up, leaving an abusive relationship, standing up to ex husband, not being bullied, the people I associated with, not being influenced by friends**
- **Never starting on drugs/alcohol**
- **Not having a record**
- **Staying in education**

100 Women Speak

What do you want to say?

- Support comes too late
- Give us options not prison
- Look at the person now – see the change
- I want a second chance
- Listen to children and support young people
- There is nowhere to go
- The media should protect the children
- Try to understand how the person came to commit a crime
- Sorry: to my children, for my actions, for my mistakes
- Thank you to service providers for helping me to think differently
- I have been failed

100 Women Speak Help

What help do you need?

- Carry on the support
- Mentors, non judgmental, positive thinking, not putting me down, credit me when I try, women only spaces, places like this, an understanding worker that doesn't give up
- None now – its too late for me

Who can help?

- Me
 - ‘Only I can help my life get better but having support and guidance really helps’
- Friends and family
- Support services – key workers – Women Centres
- A new Government



**WOMEN'S
BREAKOUT**

100 Women Speak Three things

Well six

- Support needs to be there quicker and earlier
- Communication between agencies
- Educate about prison
- Understanding (by police, courts, probation) how past experiences impact on the here and now
- Everything needs to be more clear
- An experienced advocate in court

Do you want to be part of the decision making?

- The majority say YES
- But many need to focus on themselves just now
- 'I think its important for women to be heard – real people who have been through real things'

Deep diving

Ten projects - focussed activity

Together Women Project

Changing Lives (Two projects)

Key Changes

Anawim

Startup Now

Inspire Brighton

Brighton Oasis

Minerva Advance Advocacy

New Dawn New Day

Yorkshire and Humberside

Newcastle

Sheffield

Birmingham

Oxford/London

Brighton

Brighton

London

Leicester





WOMEN'S
BREAKOUT



Startupnow for Women Project National

DISK

New Directions for Criminal Justice



**WOMEN'S
BREAKOUT**

anawim
women working together.

Anawim Birmingham

POWERPOINT

New Directions for Criminal Justice



The Client Journey - A User Led Project

Project Brief

- ❖ **To explore the individual experiences of women who use Anawim it was proposed that their lives in and out of the Centre be documented by a combination of photography and spoken word.**
- ❖ **Each woman was given a digital camera to document the story of her service use and the effect on her life as a whole.**
- ❖ **In addition women were interviewed and encouraged to suggest a soundtrack to accompany their photographs putting each picture into context.**
- ❖ **For the purposes of todays presentation we will be following H's story. The captions are her own.**





My Safe Haven

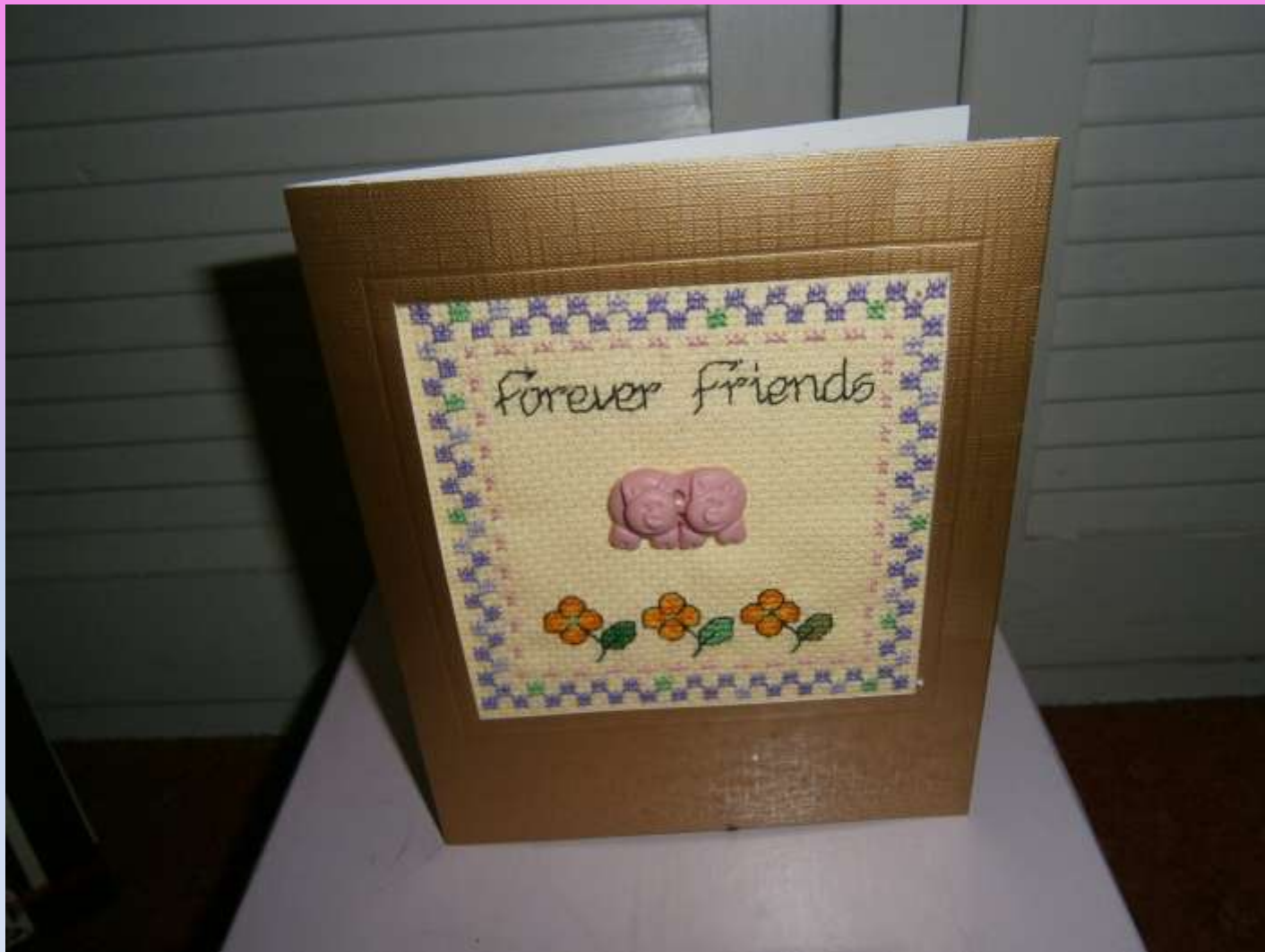




Enter for a fab service



Learning new skills and
gaining confidence



Friends are like flowers



Maybe I will look forward to
Christmas this year !



New Year, new me, new
designs



Freedom !



My hourly escape



Walkway to freedom



My secret lost in thought
hideaway



This year it will be happy for
me



Where there is love there is
hope





**WOMEN'S
BREAKOUT**



Inspire

Positive Alternatives
for Women

Brighton Women's Centre – Inspire Project Brighton

FILM

New Directions for Criminal Justice



**WOMEN'S
BREAKOUT**



Together Women Project Yorkshire and Humberside

POWERPOINT

New Directions for Criminal Justice





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EAST YORKSHIRE

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120-122 George Street
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Yorkshire and Humberside

A REGIONAL ORGANISATION FULFILLING LOCAL NEEDS.



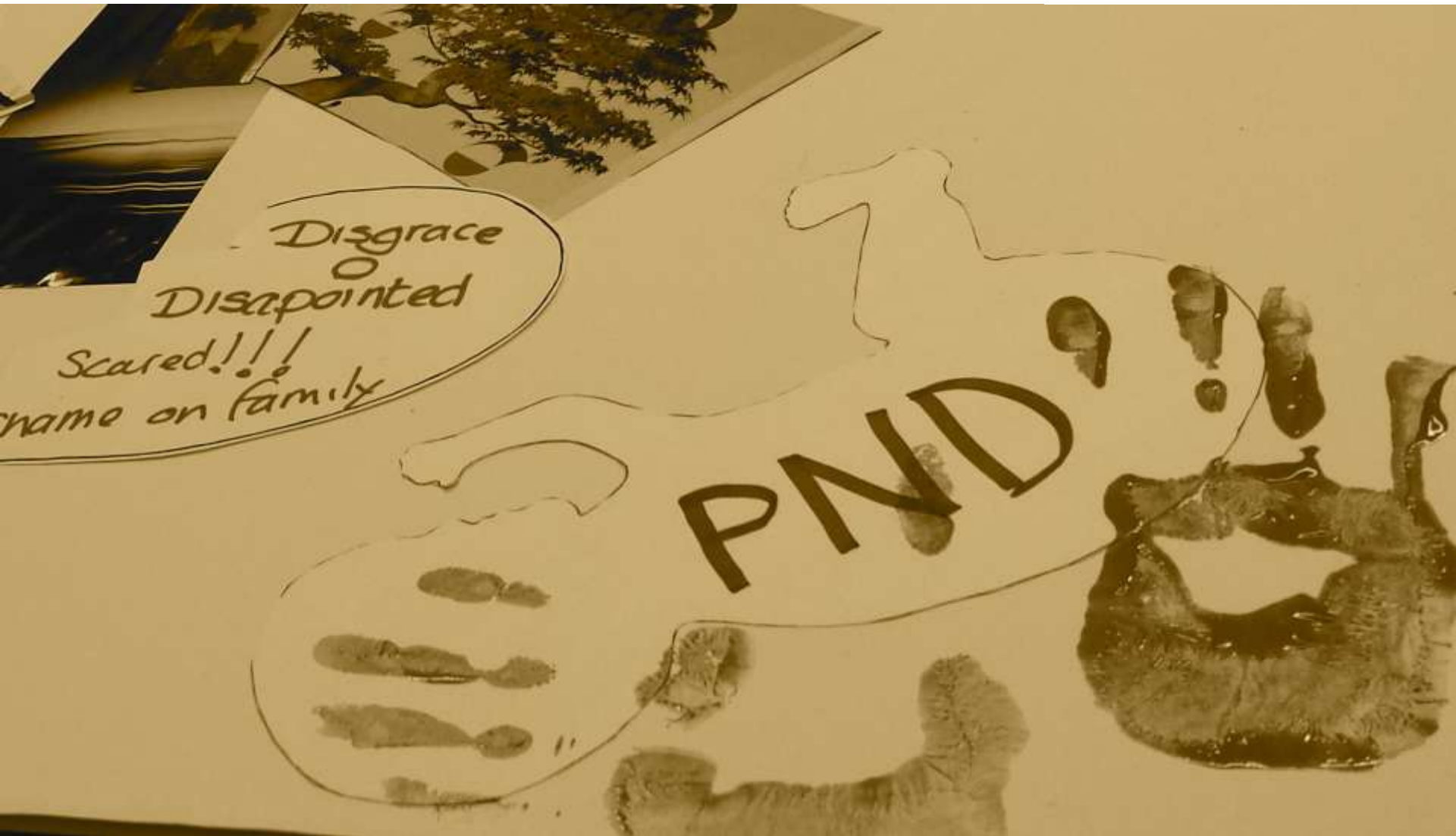






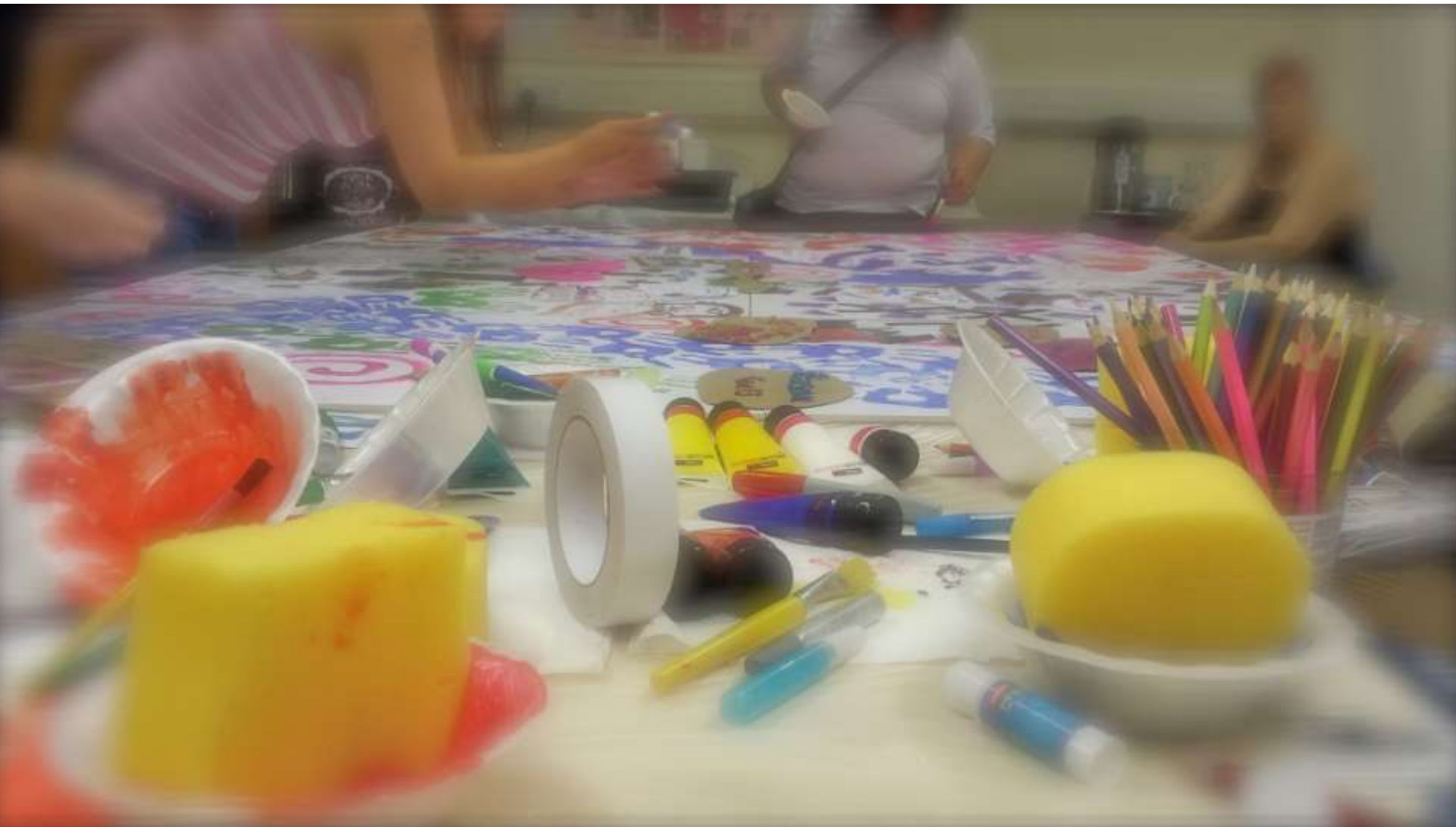












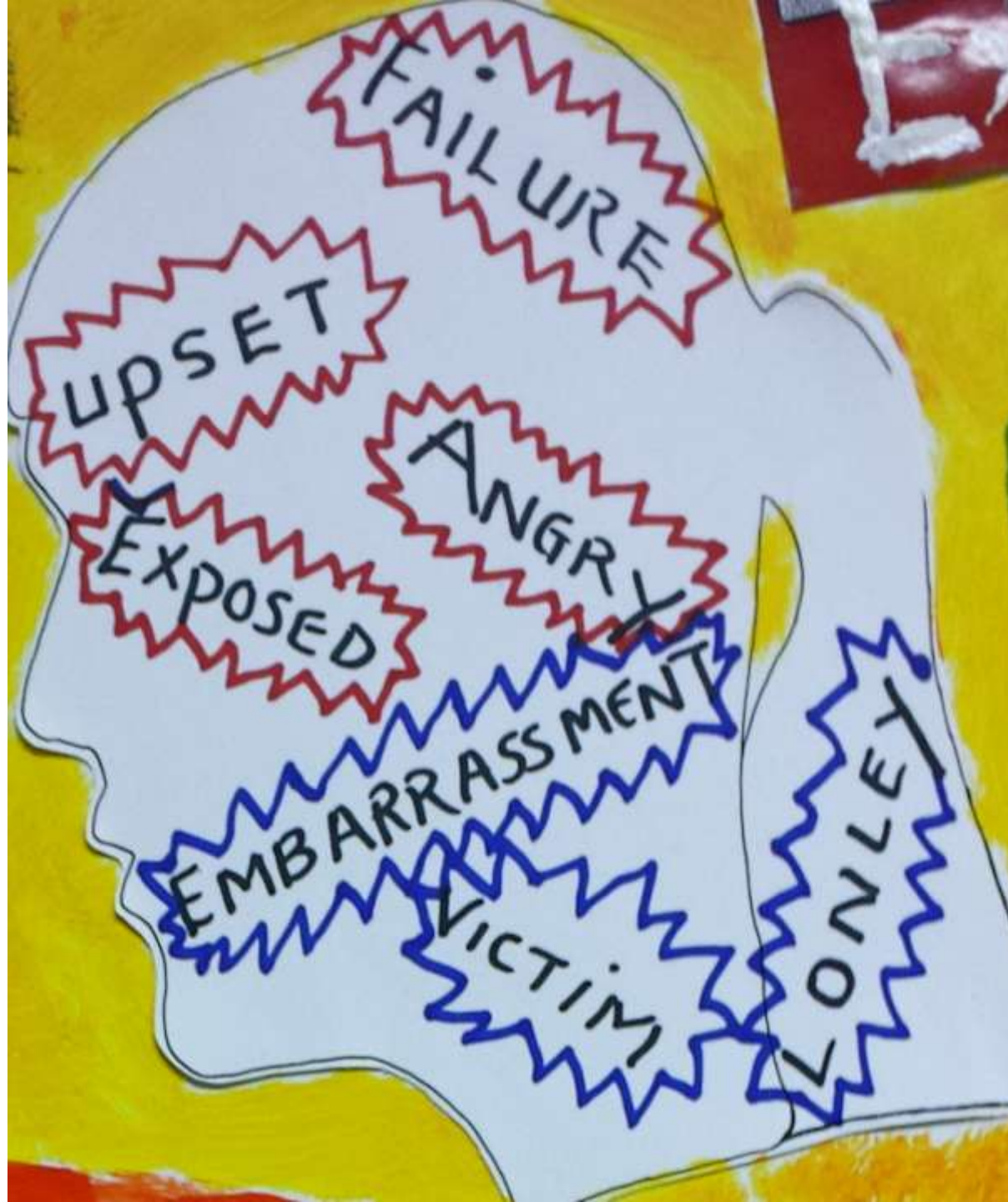
together women















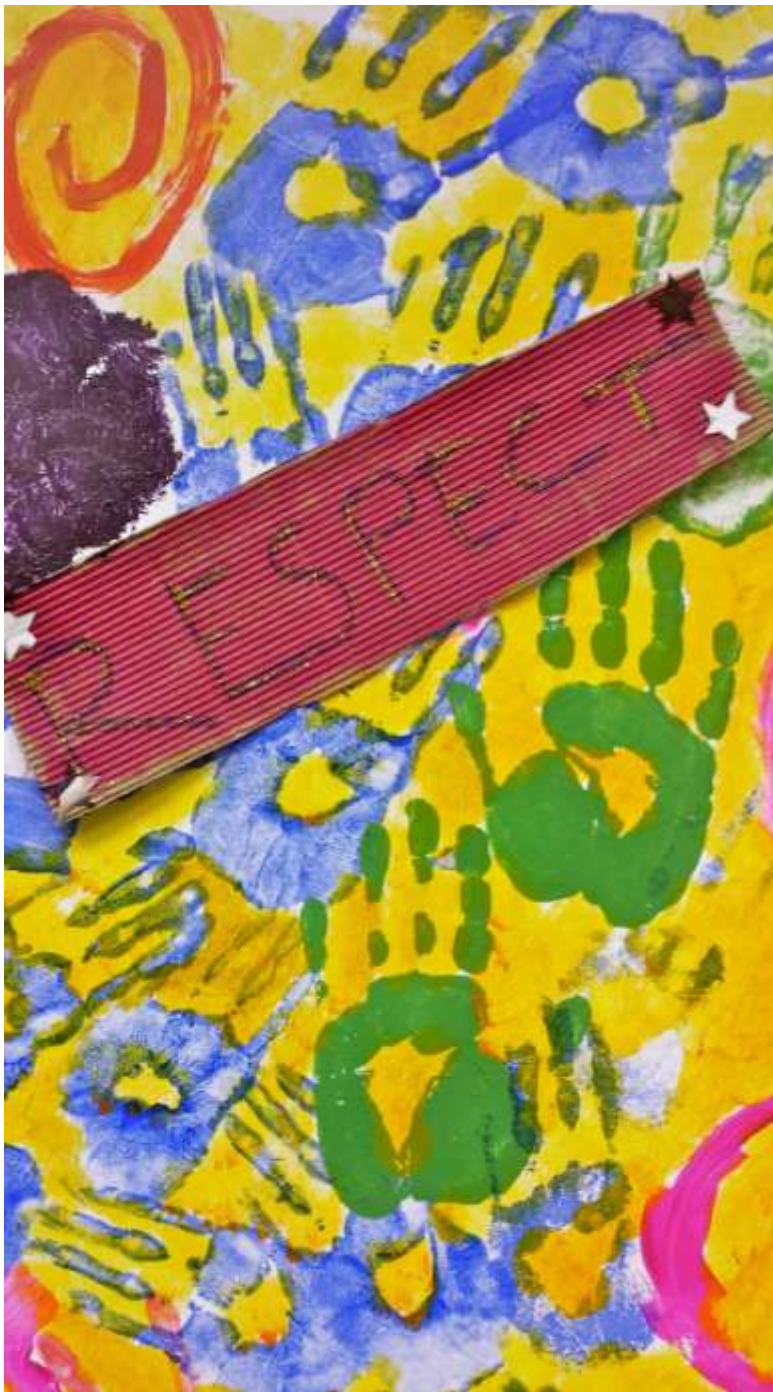




















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Lay Assessors Course

Helen Thompson – Fircroft College

Steph Isaacs – Lay Assessor



Women experts by experience

Lay Assessor Course

at Fircroft College

Fircroft graded
OUTSTANDING
BY OFSTED www.fircroft.ac.uk

Helen Thompson



Fircroft College
Of Adult Education



Project Aims

1. Give **women skills and confidence** to take part in peer review projects for Women's Breakout
2. To **develop a team of volunteers** able to contribute their views and energy to improving services – “co-production”



Project Values

1. Build on women's existing knowledge as **“experts by experience”**
2. Develop positive learning environment and team approach
3. Use active learning approach and practise skills which lay assessors will use
4. Benefit from a welcoming and inclusive residential environment at

Fircroft Adult Education College



What's a Lay Assessor?

- A service user – a woman who's been through the criminal justice system
- Interested in getting great services for women
- Volunteer as part of a team
- Help to assess or evaluate services



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What can lay assessors do?

- Talk informally with women using a project
- Interview staff or service users
- Run a group interview, as facilitator, note-taker or observer
- Develop feedback to projects alongside staff
- Be part of peer review or assessment



Why work with lay assessors?

- To really hear women's views
- **“I`ll talk to someone who's been through it”**
- To gain a better understanding of what women really think
- Involve women who understand the service
 - benefits of co-production



What did the course cover?

Women's experience of "A Good Service" – and when things aren't good.

Role of a lay assessor

Meeting women's diverse needs

Interview and group interview skills

Through; activities, debate, roleplay

All based at Fircroft Adult Education College....



Fircroft environment in Summer....



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At Fircroft....

Socialise and meet different people



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Relax and learn in a welcoming, safe environment...



Fircroft College
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Benefits.....

Experience of

- Sharing and valuing the experiences of other women with who've been through the criminal justice system
- Working with staff and managers
- Running interviews and group interviews.
- Success in an adult learning environment
- Meeting and forging links



Outcomes

- Women making links and a network across regions
- A team committed to supporting development of Women's Community Projects
- Women with increased confidence to engage with and influence providers
- Women inspiring each other!



Women Experts by Experience

Lunch break





**WOMEN'S
BREAKOUT**

Deep Diving

New Directions for Criminal Justice



**WOMEN'S
BREAKOUT**



Key Changes Sheffield

DISK

New Directions for Criminal Justice



WOMEN'S
BREAKOUT

CHANGING
LIVES

Changing Lives

National

FILM

New Directions for Criminal Justice



**WOMEN'S
BREAKOUT**



Brighton Oasis Project Brighton

New Directions for Criminal Justice

Collective Voices and Open Space Event

Paula Harriott



Closing remarks

Jackie Russell

