

Blog for co pro week

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“Now is not the time to be reductive” – be more Playmobil!

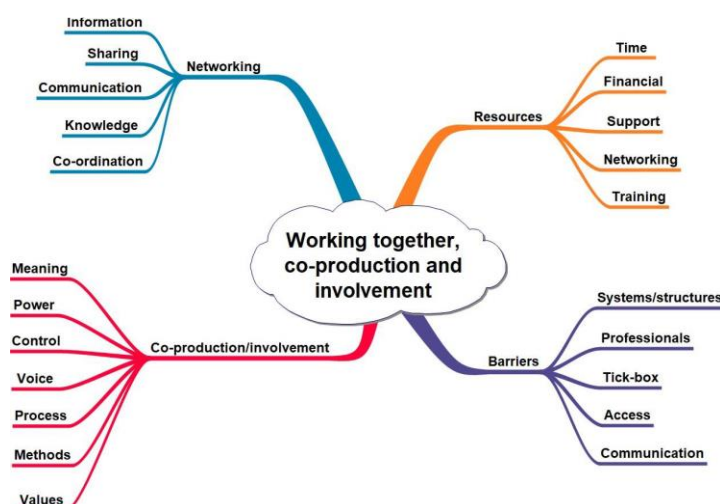
The theme for this year’s co production week is very much on trend, a changing world, and even before the covid19 pandemic there was an uprising of change and unrest. The irony has not been lost , in fact the start of this year as a small user led organization based in Sheffield (ii) Survivors of Depression In Transition , we had planned a whole programme of ‘exploring communities and co-production’ workshops with a local festival to coincide with the SCIE week!

We managed to deliver one session before the ‘lockdown’ and then sadly postponed until 2021. Yes we had given the virtual world of delivery some thought , but concluded that we would not have the connectivity , human responses or collective reciprocity that we desired and needed to demonstrate the core principles of genuine co production.

Why were we developing this in the first place? Well , while we have some local pockets of good practice, the whole system doesn’t and we, while small, wanted to help support everyone in understanding what this co production was all about and how to go out and make it happen. The basis of this mission has been in part, due to the work we carried out with Challenge Sheffield, from a small pot of funding from Sheffield Healthwatch speak up grants.

We created a space where people could feel comfortable and safe to use those tools such as toy figures, Playdoh and pipe cleaners. Giving peoples expressive and visual imaginations to flourish and so producing rich feedback and comments for the report.

The three themes were - Experience of services; Working together, co-production and involvement and Community raised similar issues.



(i)

The following recommendations were made from the Sheffield Mental Health Challenge Day:

- Continue to develop better connections and collaborative working
- Enhance and strengthen communication and information systems
- Increase understanding and awareness of involvement and co-production
- Develop and support a range of involvement and co-production initiatives
- Support smaller and user-led organisations to increase diversity.



These challenges continue and ironically, we need this even more, and we should not let genuine co production be dropped or forgotten as we focus on the national crisis and are apparently 'led' by elected politicians and scientists. Black lives matter & LGBTIQ+ are more vocal than ever, and we must create a parallel for co-production.

"NO", we the people demand to be heard and seen as partners with an equal platform to create a better world which gives people , families & communities strength and influence in the places we live and work in!

References

- i) Survivors of Depression in Transition** is a user led mental health organisation for women
<https://sodit.org/>
- ii) "Sheffield Mental Health Challenge Day"** a report 2018 Eleni Chambers
<https://www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk/reports-and-documents/speakup-small-grants/>