



Do You Mean What I Mean?

The different
ways people
involved in
arts-based
mental health
research
understand the
key terms
they use:

A Resource



Project CREATE
Young People | Art | Social Science



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

We hope that you find this a useful resource in provoking thoughts and dialogue within your projects.

What is this resource?

This resource is a glossary of key mental health and research-related vocabularies used by researchers and young people.

Why is this needed?

Young people, researchers and artists working on mental health research together, often use words and terms that mean different things to different people. This can cause confusion, exclusion and / or disengagement.

How can this resource help?

Our aim is not to provide a unified, or 'correct' way of understanding the various terms explored but to support researchers to:

1. Recognise that key terms have specific meanings to individuals and that these may not be unanimous across all groups.
2. Highlight the need to be sensitive and more aware of these differences and where confusion may arise.
3. Use vocabularies that are meaningful and inclusive to working collaboratively with young people.

Considerations

The prompts below can be used to consider how the different terms highlighted in this resource can allow you to reflect on your project.

- What are the key terms and words you will be using in your study in any communication or work with young people?
- How will you find out how young people understand or view those terms?
- Does this insight shed light on assumed, shared understandings?
- How will your project build a shared understanding with young people?
- How will you reflect on language, terms and meaning throughout your participatory work?

BACKGROUND

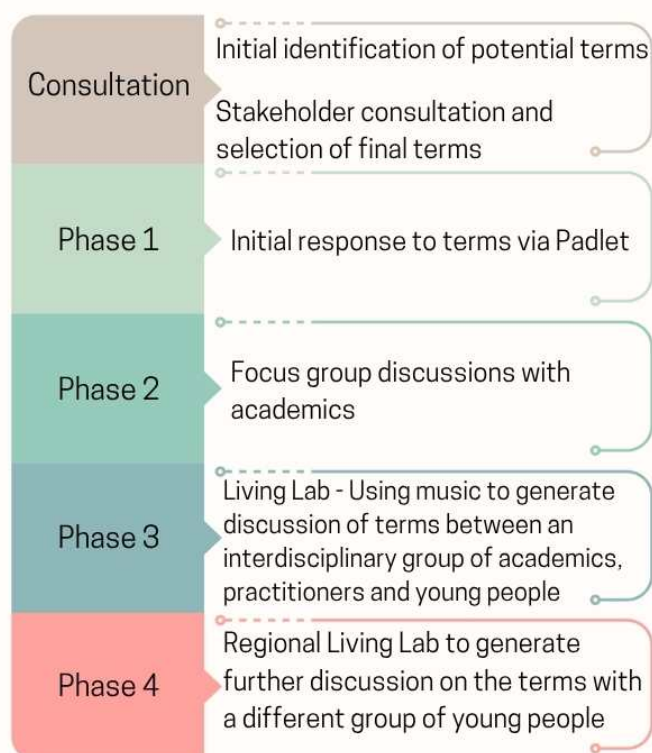
What is Project CREATE?

Project CREATE (2023-2025, www.create.leeds.ac.uk) aimed to support interdisciplinary groups of researchers, artists and young people to work together in adolescent mental health, arts-based research.

Science, art and young people each have unique knowledge. To work together effectively, there is a need for more inclusive approaches, by recognising and practising sensitivity towards diverse perspectives and lived experience.

What methods did we use?

This resource has been created from the findings of data collected through surveys, focus groups and 'Living Lab' workshops with researchers and young people (aged 10-24 years). These data were then analysed thematically and summaries of the findings are presented. This diagram summarises the stages of data collection.



How is this resource organised?

This resource is organised into two sections under the headings 'Research Related Terms' and 'Mental Health Related Terms'.

These groupings were identified from a thematic analysis undertaken by young people and researchers.

Section 1 - Research Related Terms, includes perceptions of key terms used in research settings. It includes both generic research terms such as Research, Data and Evidence

as well as key terms associated with navigating research dynamics such as Agency, Safe Space, Connection and Community.

Section 2 - Mental Health Related Terms, presents meanings assigned to the following terms: Mental Health, Coping, Wellbeing, Resilience, Empowerment, Loneliness and Stigma.

RESEARCH RELATED TERMS

SECTION 1

RESEARCH

DATA

AGENCY

SAFE SPACE

CONNECTION

COMMUNITY

EVIDENCE



RESEARCH

SUMMARY OF THEMES

Researchers and young people saw 'Research' as "a way of discovering new things and ideas" and a means of "looking to explore or find out more about something we don't yet know". However, there was a difference across researchers, with Arts and Humanities researchers viewing research as more "process" focused, whereas Medical and Social Scientists understood research to be more "outcome" focused.

Young people highlighted the extractivist potential of research, talking about how researchers use "their words", "their data" to position young people within a research project in a particular way that was not necessarily of the young person's choosing and, in doing so, limiting their agency and upholding a power asymmetry.

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE THINK ABOUT 'RESEARCH'

1. Searching for a definitive answer to something.
2. Finding and developing a new idea.
3. A highbrow term.
4. It's all about statistics.
5. No, it's more than just numbers.
6. It's just what you find on the Internet.
7. Research as ticking boxes on a form.
8. Research is intimidating.

WHAT RESEARCHERS THINK ABOUT 'RESEARCH'

1. A formal structured process.
2. Research is not the same as intervention.
3. Is research about finding an answer or finding a new approach?
4. How the context shapes what we mean by research.
5. Research is about understanding something.
6. Research means different things in different fields.
7. Phenomenology - Research about subject's lived experience is important in mental health research.



RESEARCH

WHAT DOES 'RESEARCH' MEAN TO YOUNG PEOPLE?

1. Searching for a definitive answer to something.

- a.** Research is about finding a reliable answer to an important question
- b.** It's about finding information to help yourself out.

2. Finding and developing a new idea.

- a.** It's about discovering new things.
- b.** It should be about making things better.

3. A highbrow term.

- a.** It's not a term that is commonly used.
- b.** It's a word that you might use in school.
- c.** It's not something that I naturally feel part of.
- d.** It helps to create a sense of 'us' and 'them'.

4. It's all about statistics.

- a.** It's about turning the world into numbers.
- b.** It's about filling in questionnaires.
- c.** It's not clear how art can be research.
- d.** It's about numbers, but it's not generally clear what the numbers really mean.

5. No, it's more than just numbers.

- a.** The more research you get involved in the more complex it becomes.
- b.** Overtime I've begun to understand the 'stories' behind the numbers.

6. It's just what you find on the Internet.

- a.** Writing an essay at school is just about paper and pens. Research is more about looking things up online.

7. Research as ticking boxes on a form.

- a.** There's always lots of form filling in research.
- b.** What can that really tell you about a person?
- c.** How can you judge how you feel against a scale?
- d.** Research is important but can we get beyond box ticking?

8. Research is intimidating.

- a.** Being involved in research can feel scary.
- b.** Not understanding research at the start of a project can particularly cause anxiety.
- c.** The pace of research can be hard to cope with.
- d.** The more structure you have the easier it is to get into.

RESEARCH

WHAT DOES 'RESEARCH' MEAN TO RESEARCHERS?

1. A formal structured process.

- a.** It follows specific, agreed rules
- b.** Designed to create new knowledge or an approach to knowledge
- c.** Designed to answer a specific question

3. Is research about finding an answer or finding a new approach?

- a.** Research is mainly about developing a new treatment
- b.** Research is about testing ideas or theories often in new contexts

5. Research is about understanding something.

- a.** Research needs to help us understand the world better.
- b.** Research needs to be exploratory, opening up new ways of thinking.

7. Phenomenology - Research about subject's lived experience is important in mental health research.

- a.** Understanding how people experience the world is key.
- b.** Lived experience needs to be at the heart of interdisciplinary research.
- c.** This can make people feel that they are being research on.

2. Research is not the same as intervention.

a. In mental-health research there is a clear distinction between research and interventions

b. Research is not the same as evaluation

4. How the context shapes what we mean by research.

a. Research is defined by the University's quality assurance processes.

b. You can't go too far outside what is expected of you by your department.

6. Research means different things in different fields.

a. In science research has a rigidity to it, which is easy to assign value to.

b. Research needs data that you can transcribe and process.

c. In the arts the concept of research is more up for grabs, which can be difficult for people in other disciplines.

DATA

SUMMARY OF THEMES

Young people saw 'Data' as something which is part of the research process and usually quantitative involving numbers and statistics.

Researchers within Arts and Humanities highlighted the transformative potential of arts based data to unearth insights which may not be generated through more traditional scientific methods. However, this openness and fluidity of data was in contrast to the purpose of research for some researchers in the (Social) Sciences who viewed data as providing information on the accuracy of a certain statement, "*the less speculative the better*".



WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE THINK ABOUT 'DATA'

1. Data is just part of Research.

2. Data is valid information.

5. The way people collect it is often pretty flawed.

6. Data is what is analysed.

3. Data is statistics.

4. Data is a 'professional' term.

WHAT RESEARCHERS THINK ABOUT 'DATA'

1. Understanding what data can be, is a key challenge in interdisciplinary research.

2. Data has to be usable to be of value.

3. Triangulation is crucial.



DATA

WHAT DOES 'DATA' MEAN TO YOUNG PEOPLE?

1. Data is just part of Research.

a. Data is what you 'find out' when you're doing research.

b. Data is a by-product of Research

c. Data comes out of Evidence. Evidence is the problem, Data is the answer.

2. Data is valid information.

a. Data is the information that counts, as defined by other researchers.

b. It is what you call 'information' if you're doing a research project.

3. Data is statistics.

a. In proper research 'Data' really means 'numbers and statistics' that you can find online.

b. Proper research, that really has weight is quantitative, the sort of research you can put in a chart.

4. Data is a 'professional' term.

a. This isn't a young person's term. It's a researcher's term. It feels quite alien.

b. The only time you might use it is at school, but even there it's not common.

c. It's a very scientific term.

5. The way people collect it is often pretty flawed.

a. Whenever people want to find something out about you they get you to fill in a questionnaire. The questions never really get to the point.

b. You can't reduce me to a set of numbers.

c. You can't reduce me to a set of numbers.

6. Data is what is analysed.

a. However flawed, it's powerful. It's what ends up being analysed.

b. It's more about online than offline information.



DATA

WHAT DOES 'DATA' MEAN TO RESEARCHERS?

1. Understanding what data can be, is a key challenge in interdisciplinary research.

a. In social sciences we tend to analyse transcripts from interviews or focus-groups as 'data'. In Arts and Humanities there are lots more forms of 'text' that can be read.

b. What counts as data can be dynamic and contextual. It tends to be 'produced' rather than to simple 'be' and this changes how it is interpreted.



2. Data has to be usable to be of value.

a. Data has to be able to be tested against the project's hypothesis. It has to help us answer our question.

b. What we define as data is data. It's up to us to define how it fits the project. It's not a preordained given.

c. Data needs to something concrete. The more speculative it is the less use it is in research.

3. Triangulation is crucial.

a. The particular value of arts-based data is as a way of triangulating with more 'traditional' 'concrete' forms of data.

b. Different data allows you to look at a problem in different ways. It can be disruptive, challenging the 'story' that emerges from different types of data (Qualitative versus Quantitative data). The 'truth' might exist in the tensions between different data sets.

AGENCY

SUMMARY OF THEMES

'Agency' was a term recognised across research disciplines as an important part of the research process and valuable for leveraging meaningful participation.

However, for young people, the term 'Agency' was not commonly used. Some young people were unsure how this term was related to research in mental health.

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE THINK ABOUT 'AGENCY'

1. It's all about control.

2. I wouldn't use this word in this way.



WHAT RESEARCHERS THINK ABOUT 'AGENCY'

5. It ties in strongly with mental health.

4. Having capacity to act.

1. Awareness of being able to act.

3. Who has the power?

2. It has different cultural connotations.

AGENCY

WHAT DOES 'AGENCY' MEAN TO YOUNG PEOPLE?



1. It's all about control.

a. Agency is about being able to control how things change.

b. Agency is about having control over your life.

2. I wouldn't use this word in this way.

a. An agency is an office.

b. It's not a word you'd even use in school in this way.

c. I wasn't sure how it related to research.

d. It's even more alien than a word like 'Data'.

AGENCY

WHAT DOES 'AGENCY' MEAN TO RESEARCHERS?

1. Awareness of being able to act.

a. It's about understanding that a situation can be reframed to change the way I see it, even if I can't do much to change it on my own.

b. It's about understanding that you have choices.

c. Knowing that you can take control of a situation is crucial to good mental health.

2. It has different cultural connotations.

a. Agency can be valued differently in different cultural contexts.

b. Agency might be focused on the individual, what about their responsibilities to acting on behalf of the families or communities?

c. How does individual agency relate to the bigger picture? How can agency help build better relationships with others?

3. Who has the power?

a. Is agency the same as 'Empowerment'?

b. Is emancipation a better word than empowerment, as this world implies holding collective power.

c. Sharing the phenomenological field.

4. Having capacity to act.

a. It's about having the resources and the freedom to act.

b. It's about having the strength of feeling to act. Perhaps you don't act because you don't care enough. Perhaps it's because you feel overwhelmed.

5. It ties in strongly with mental health.

a. It's about having the resources and the freedom to act.

b. It's about having the strength of feeling to act. Perhaps you don't act because you don't care enough. Perhaps it's because you feel overwhelmed.

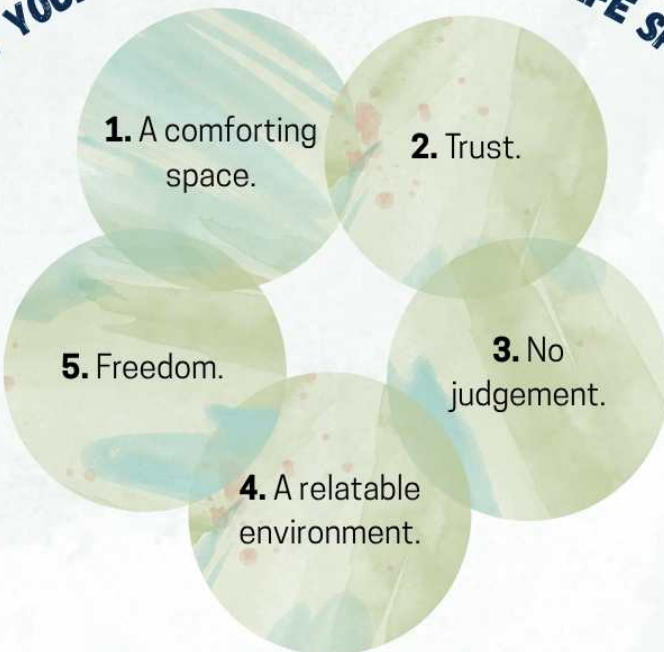


SAFE SPACE

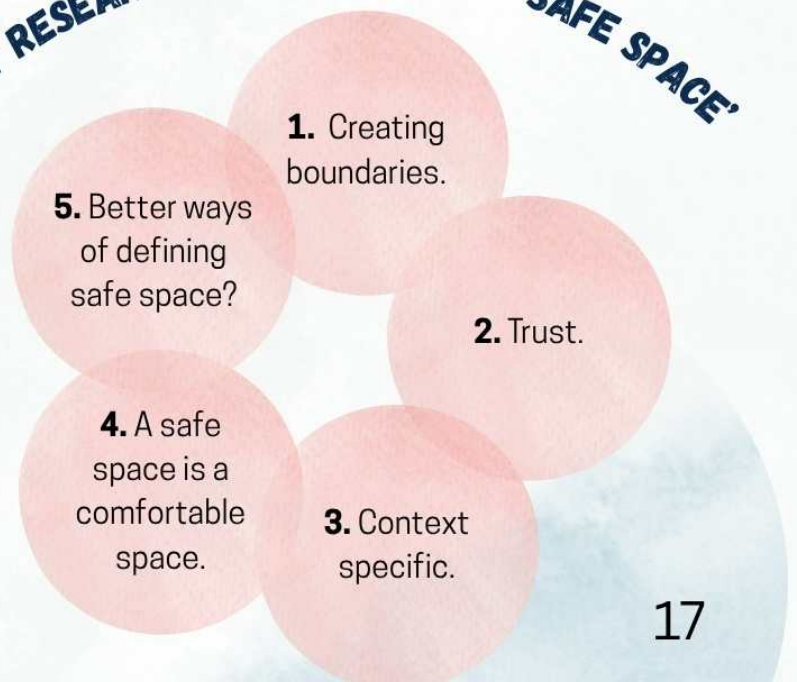
SUMMARY OF THEMES

For both researchers and young people, trust was viewed as a fundamental factor in creating a 'Safe Space'. There was a consensus across researchers that providing a safe space was part of their duty to create trustworthy research processes. Alongside this, there was a debate about how art can often be about 'rupturing safe spaces' though risk taking and pushing boundaries. Young people understood 'Safe Space' to be deeply personal. It was about feeling at ease and creating interpersonal connection.

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE THINK ABOUT 'SAFE SPACE'



WHAT RESEARCHERS THINK ABOUT 'SAFE SPACE'



SAFE SPACE

WHAT DOES 'SAFE SPACE' MEAN TO YOUNG PEOPLE?

1. A comforting space.

- a.** It's a space away from stress.
- b.** It's a space that allows you to reflect without risk.
- c.** You need to be comfortable with the people around you.
- d.** It needs to be a happy, warm space that you want to spend time in.
- e.** It provides a basis for good mental health.

2. Trust.

- a.** Trust is central to feeling safe.
- b.** Confidentiality is central to trust.
- c.** It's a place where you feel protected.
- d.** It's a calm place, where you feel valued.
- e.** It's a place where you feel connected to people you can trust.

4. A relatable environment.

- a.** It's a space that is relatable to me.
- b.** It's a space that reflect me and people like me in terms of culture and community.

3. No judgement.

- a.** It's a space where you can be yourself.
- b.** It's a space where you don't feel judged.

5. Freedom.

- a.** It's a permissive place where you can do what you want.
- b.** Any emotional response is ok. You can laugh or you can cry.



SAFE SPACE

WHAT DOES 'SAFE SPACE' MEAN TO RESEARCHERS?

1. Creating boundaries.

- a.** Need to be compliant with external safeguarding bodies.
- b.** Need to understand who is responsible for safety.
- c.** The concept of 'safety' has multiple meanings.

2. Trust.

- a.** It's more about trust than safety.
- b.** Participants need to feel that they can trust the context, that they are 'held' enough to be challenged.
- c.** It's about creating a private space in a public context.

3. Context specific.

- a.** No one-size-fits-all approach.
- b.** Good art is disruptive. How can disruption be generated in a 'safe space'?
- c.** What if a participant wants to talk about an issue, but researchers haven't planned for this? The space needs to meet the needs of all stakeholders.

4. A safe space is a comfortable space.

- a.** It needs to be both physically and emotionally comfortable
- b.** It needs to be a space where you are heard and your story is accommodated.
- c.** It needs to be a space away from fear, but where you can still be appropriately challenged.

5. Better ways of defining safe space?

- a.** a. A space for 'optimal allowance of activity'.
- b.** Is a safe space a 'liminal space'?
- c.** Is it better to talk about 'care' rather than 'safety'?



CONNECTION

SUMMARY OF THEMES

Researchers understood 'Connection' as necessary for successful research, and saw the term as being associated with rapport between researchers and participants. Young people, on the other hand, viewed this term as linked to everyday relationships involving strong bonds and emotional connection. Young people did not consider 'Connection' to be important to research, given their more personal understanding of the term.

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE THINK ABOUT 'CONNECTION'

1. It's bound by trust.
2. It's something that develops over time.
3. It's about mutuality.
4. Bound by commonality.
5. It's a feeling of closeness.



WHAT RESEARCHERS THINK ABOUT 'CONNECTION'

1. The word has different meanings in different contexts.
2. It's a psychosocial function.
3. You need a medium for connection.
4. It's a valuable asset that needs to be preserved.



CONNECTION

WHAT DOES 'CONNECTION' MEAN TO YOUNG PEOPLE?

1. It's bound by trust.

a. Connection comes from trust and honesty.

b. It's an example of how you create a safe space.

c. It's about belonging.

d. It's being able to be yourself.

e. It's about respect and loyalty.

2. It's something that develops over time.

a. It's about building strong bonds with someone.

b. It's about accepting what you have with someone and moving forward.

c. It changes depending on how old you are and where you are in your life. At different times you might need to have different types of connection with your community or your culture.

3. It's about mutuality.

a. It's about reciprocal care.

b. It's about two-way understanding.

a. It's about having a shared understanding/affinity with someone.



4. Bound by commonality.

b. Having shared tastes. This can develop overtime. You might start out liking different things because of how you grew up, but you can learn about and like each other's cultures and begin to share them.

5. It's a feeling of closeness.

a. It's about feeling comfortable with someone

b. It's about experiencing a sense of closeness within your community.

c. Sharing experiences is a good way of creating connections.



CONNECTION

WHAT DOES 'CONNECTION' MEAN TO RESEARCHERS?

1. The word has different meanings in different contexts.

- a.** How do we define what a 'real' connection is in a world of social media?
- b.** Is being 'networked' the same as being connected?
- c.** The need to 'feel' connected is important whatever the context of communication.

2. It's a psychosocial function.

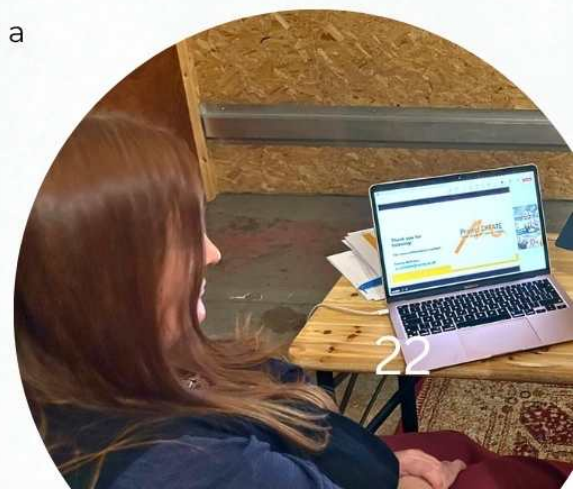
- a.** It's about having something in person with someone
- b.** It's about having shared goals.

3. You need a medium for connection.

- a.** You can gain a sense of connection through a shared leisure activity.
- b.** Participatory arts can foster a sense of connection.

4. It's a valuable asset that needs to be preserved.

- a.** You really feel it when it breaks down.
- b.** You need to put effort into/nurture it.
- c.** It's about linking up and building a relationship with someone.
- d.** It happens when someone is invested in you and you are invested in them.



COMMUNITY

SUMMARY OF THEMES

Researchers and young people saw connection to be strongly associated with 'Community'. Both groups were wary of the term 'Community' as sometimes unhelpful and can lead to less focus on individual identities. Indeed, some researchers suggested that this term can be linked to a "kind of othering", or marginalisation of certain groups of people.



WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE THINK ABOUT 'COMMUNITY'

1. It's defined by a sense of closeness.

2. Commonality is important.

5. A positive space.

3. It's not always a good thing.

4. Communities can accommodate multiple versions of yourself.

WHAT RESEARCHERS THINK ABOUT 'COMMUNITY'

1. Bound by meaningful connection.

2. A catch all that can hide a lack of connection.

3. A form of 'othering'.



COMMUNITY

WHAT DOES 'COMMUNITY' MEAN TO YOUNG PEOPLE?

1. It's defined by a sense of closeness.

a. It is about a group of individuals uniting together as one.

b. It is associated with connection.

c. It's about having close ties with people and not just with your family.

2. Commonality is important.

a. Community is about having a shared purpose.

b. It might be about doing something together.

c. A community has to interact with each other.

3. It's not always a good thing.

a. You can feel disconnected from your community if they no longer get you.

b. Community can also be stifling, stopping you from developing/growing.

4. Communities can accommodate multiple versions of yourself.

a. If you're well connected within your community it can support your development.

b. Sometimes you can try out new experiences within the security of your community.

c. Good communities can accommodate different types of people/identities.

5. A positive space.

a. It's a place to generate new connections.

b. It's a welcoming place.

c. It doesn't have to be all you are. It can just allow you to express part of yourself.

d. You can be part of multiple communities.



COMMUNITY

WHAT DOES 'COMMUNITY' MEAN TO RESEARCHERS?

1. Bound by meaningful connection.

- a.** A group can define a 'collective identity' that has more power than an individual.
- b.** It can foster a sense of connection. It can be something that you relate to.
- c.** It can bring with it an expectation of support.



2. A catch all that can hide a lack of connection.

- a.** Community making feelings of individual loneliness
- b.** Making everyone the same.

3. A form of 'othering'.

- a.** A way of treating a group as homogenous but different to me.
- b.** A community can be a frightening idea. A cult defined by a set of prescriptive rules.
- c.** A community can simply be a category. A box that can be ticked.

EVIDENCE

SUMMARY OF THEMES

Researchers and young people saw 'Evidence' as a means of providing validity and proof in research. However, researchers spoke more about how 'Evidence' is defined by different subdisciplines. It is the specific discipline which defines what evidence is deemed reliable and valid. Additionally, researchers raised the point about this term often being determined by external bodies, such as journals and funding bodies.

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE THINK ABOUT 'EVIDENCE'

1. Evidence makes research valid.
2. Evidence is a 'professional', 'scientific' word.



WHAT RESEARCHERS THINK ABOUT 'EVIDENCE'

1. Associated with data.
2. Evidence is a particular type of knowledge.
3. What counts as evidence has to be externally validated.



EVIDENCE

WHAT DOES 'EVIDENCE' MEAN TO YOUNG PEOPLE?

1. Evidence makes research valid.

a. It's a scientific, or valid, piece of information used to back up a claim.

b. It means the same as 'proof'.

c. It gives you confidence that a discovery is real.

d. It's a factual statement. It's not 'fake news'.

2. Evidence is a 'professional', 'scientific' word.

a. Evidence is like 'data' and 'research'.

b. It's a professional word used by scientists.

WHAT DOES 'EVIDENCE' MEAN TO RESEARCHERS?

1. Associated with data.

a. The analysis of data produces evidence. Research turns data into evidence via interpretation.

b. Evidence emerges through the cross-comparison of different data sets.

c. Evidence is created through reflective practice that finds patterns in the data.

2. Evidence is a particular type of knowledge.

a. Evidence is knowledge that is being used in a particular context, determined by the research.

b. Evidence can be Nomothetic, i.e. relating to a general principle that applies to everyone), or Idiographic, relating to specific parts of a community. Or it might refer to cultural, or subjective phenomena.

c. What counts as 'validity' or 'reliability' differs greatly across disciplines and can be widely disputed.

3. What counts as evidence has to be externally validated.

a. The wider academic infrastructure (from university courses and journals, to learned societies to the REF) ultimately defines how much a particular form of evidence counts.

b. Evidence is always contingent and so is up for grabs.

MENTAL HEALTH RELATED TERMS

SECTION 2

MENTAL HEALTH

COPING

WELLBEING

RESILIENCE

EMPOWERMENT

LONELINESS

STIGMA



MENTAL HEALTH

SUMMARY OF THEMES

Young people often viewed 'Mental Health' as term that is equivalent to 'Wellbeing'. Researchers were more focused on their different disciplinary perspectives and their professional knowledge, which distinguished 'Mental health' from 'Wellbeing'. Some researchers saw 'Mental Health' as more disorder-focused than 'Wellbeing'.



WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE THINK ABOUT 'MENTAL HEALTH'

1. It's about wellbeing and wellness.

2. It's a state of mind.

3. It's all about emotions.

WHAT RESEARCHERS THINK ABOUT 'MENTAL HEALTH'

1. It's part of a continuum.

2. It's not something that is visible.

3. Discussion of Mental Health is generally disorder focussed.

4. It implies a dichotomy.



MENTAL HEALTH

WHAT DOES 'MENTAL HEALTH' MEAN TO YOUNG PEOPLE?

1. It's about wellbeing and wellness.

- a.** It's about studying how well you feel mentally.
- b.** It's about emotional, psychological and social well-being.
- c.** It's about how well you deal with life.

2. It's a state of mind.

- a.** You always have mental health and its always changing.
- b.** Your mental state is affected by your day-to-day experiences and how we you can or can't cope with them.
- c.** Most people don't understand much about mental health.
- d.** It's not just about feelings. It's also to do with biology.
- e.** It can be pretty subjective. It can be affected by what you go through, but some people can just cope better than others.

3. It's all about emotions.

- a.** It's not something that you can see. It about your 'inner life'.
- b.** You can't see it, but it's real. It impacts your personality and behaviour.
- c.** Emotions fluctuate. This can be good or bad.

MENTAL HEALTH

WHAT DOES 'MENTAL HEALTH' MEAN TO RESEARCHERS?

1. It's part of a continuum.

- a.** Mental health does not have to refer to mental ill-health. It's an ever-present state.
- b.** Mental Health is not static. We can view it as a scale that fluctuates over time.

2. It's not something that is visible.

- a.** It's something that is connected to experience and emotions.
- b.** It can't be diagnosed by looking at someone.

3. Discussion of Mental Health is generally disorder focussed.

- a.** It's often seen in clinical terms.
- b.** In the broader contemporary discussion of mental health it's important not to lose sight of the suffering caused by serious mental disorders.
- c.** It's generally associated with clinical practice, whereas 'wellbeing' is better suited for the work that the arts are frequently involved in.
- d.** Mental health is a term that emerged from psychiatry.
- e.** Mental health has a set of meanings that different from, and underplayed in, its current usage which terms to be synonymous with 'wellbeing'.
- f.** Mental health is generally seen as a 'condition'.

4. It implies a dichotomy.

- a.** It seems to imply that some is not healthy.
- b.** But it also means its opposite: the absence of mental illness.



COPING

SUMMARY OF THEMES

Researchers and young people both saw 'Coping' as a method of self-regulation which is often associated with suppression or camouflaging problems. Some researchers raised concerns in relation to this term and how it might stop people from addressing underlying issues by encouraging denial and/or avoidance.

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE THINK ABOUT 'COPING'

1. It suggests you're suppressing something.

2. It can be an expression of who you are.

3. It's an ability.

4. It's dependent on resources.



WHAT RESEARCHERS THINK ABOUT 'COPING'

1. Putting a lid on problems.

2. Camouflaging.

3. A strategy for self-regulation.



COPING

WHAT DOES 'COPING' MEAN TO YOUNG PEOPLE?

1. It suggests you're suppressing something.

- a.** Dealing with negative emotions by suppressing them isn't a good idea.
- b.** Coping can be the problem rather than the solution.

2. It can be an expression of who you are.

- a.** It can be how you express yourself during a time of hardship.
- b.** It's just about keeping going.

3. It's an ability.

- a.** It can be an expression of strength.
- b.** It's a controlled process.
- c.** But people can have 'good' and 'bad' coping mechanisms (taking a moment to breathe versus lashing out at someone because of how they have treated you).
- d.** It's about feeling able to cope with everything that life throws at you.

4. It's dependent on resources.

- a.** You need to have something to draw on to be able to cope.
- b.** You need to feel mentally and physically 'stable' to deal with life's challenges.

WHAT DOES 'COPING' MEAN TO RESEARCHERS?

1. Putting a lid on problems.

- a.** It seems like a positive word but can be problematic.
- b.** Is just about managing not to scream, for example, coping, and if it is, is this ok?

2. Camouflaging.

- a.** Coping does not suggest someone is thriving.
- b.** Does it suggest someone is hiding their problems.

3. A strategy for self-regulation.

- a.** Coping can suggest agency.
- b.** It might imply a strategy someone has developed to protect themselves by battling a problem away.
- c.** It often involves regular effort, helping people to adapt to a new situation and self regulate.
- d.** Self regulation strategies perhaps allows to see 'coping' as distinct from resilience.

WELLBEING

SUMMARY OF THEMES

Young people tended to focus on 'Wellbeing' as a positive mental state, as a mood, attitude and/or emotion. Young people also considered 'Wellbeing' to incorporate both physical and mental health. Researchers saw 'Wellbeing' as a broad and abstract concept. Some researchers associated the term with positive psychology and indicative of "having a good life".

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE THINK ABOUT 'WELLBEING'

1. Maintaining a positive attitude.

2. It's an affective state.

3. It's about physical and mental comfort.



WHAT RESEARCHERS THINK ABOUT 'WELLBEING'

1. A nebulous concept.

2. It feels like something you can do something about.

3. It's about having a good life.

4. It's a non-clinical mental state.



WELLBEING

WHAT DOES 'WELLBEING' MEAN TO YOUNG PEOPLE?

1. Maintaining a positive attitude.

- a.** It relates to your attitude to life.
- b.** It's associated with positive self-evaluation, about feeling good about yourself and your decisions.
- c.** It's about turning away from negativity and looking forward with optimism.

2. It's an affective state.

- a.** It relates to your mood and emotions.
- b.** It's about getting over something. It's about moving on from pain.

3. It's about physical and mental comfort.

- a.** Emotions are important but you also need to feel ok physically.
- b.** Arts, like music, can really help your wellbeing.



WELLBEING

WHAT DOES 'WELLBEING' MEAN TO RESEARCHERS?

1. A nebulous concept.

a. A broad, rather abstract term that needs to be defined.

b. It means different things to different people.

c. It encompasses all aspects of mental health and all the contexts that impact mental health.

2. It feels like something you can do something about.

a. it's the ability to maintain wellness in face of daily events.

b. Good mental health leads to wellbeing.

c. it's about having good mental health despite experiencing difficult life experiences.

d. wellbeing is associated with 'positive psychology' rather than psychiatry. It's focused on how we 'flourish' rather than how we avoid/cure disease.

a. Unlike mental health, which exists inside your head and is just 'there', wellbeing feels 'actionable'.

b. Wellbeing is about people keeping fit, mentally and physically.

c. Wellbeing is something that practitioners often feel more comfortable supporting in participatory arts than mental health, which sounds more clinical.

d. It's a regulated form of wellness.

e. it's about people feeling good about themselves and functioning effectively

f. it's about feeling valued and valuing yourself.

3. It's about having a good life.

a. It's a 'softer'/less professional term for mental health.

b. Popularly, it's a generic term for feeling ok.

c. It's associated with an assets-based, rather than a deficit-based model of what we need to be happy.

4. It's a non-clinical mental state.



RESILIENCE

SUMMARY OF THEMES

Generally, young people viewed the term 'Resilience' more positively than researchers. Young people associated this term with not giving up, bouncing back and an ability to cope. Whereas, researchers could not reach an agreed understanding of this term. Some researchers saw value in this term as a way of thriving, whereas others viewed this term as putting emphasis on the individual, rather than their environment, such as adverse conditions.



WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE THINK ABOUT 'RESILIENCE'

1. It allows you to retaliate.
2. It's about your ability to cope.
3. It's about moving on.
4. It's associated with strength.

WHAT RESEARCHERS THINK ABOUT 'RESILIENCE'

1. It's a way of thriving.
2. Where does responsibility lie?
3. Taking away hope.



RESILIENCE

WHAT DOES 'RESILIENCE' MEAN TO YOUNG PEOPLE?

1. It allows you to retaliate.

a. It allows you to bounce back from negative situations.

b. It helps you to not give up, to keep fighting.

2. It's about your ability to cope.

a. If you're resilient you can maintain your wellbeing despite adversity.

b. It allows you to react positively to a negative situation.

c. It's similar to coping, but it's about going further and doing better than just coping.

d. It's a rewarding feeling. Looking back and seeing that you've been resilient is a good feeling.

3. It's about moving on.

a. Being resilient means being able to adapt to change.

b. It's about overcoming and moving on from a painful memory.

c. It's about the ability to let go of the past.

4. It's associated with strength.

a. If you're resilient you're becoming stronger.

b. It's about growing as a person and overcoming moments of hopelessness.

c. It's about being able to look back and feeling happy that you've got through a problem.



RESILIENCE

WHAT DOES 'RESILIENCE' MEAN TO RESEARCHERS?

1. It's a way of thriving.

- a.** Resilience is a way of protecting yourself, or resisting unreasonable demands or situations.
- b.** Resilience suggests a capacity to survive.
- c.** Resilience emphasises self-care.
- d.** It means you're managing to cope, which might be the starting point for thriving.
- e.** What doesn't kill you makes you stronger.
- f.** Being resilient means being able to 'push back' and adapt.

2. Where does responsibility lie?

- a.** A way for the 'authorities' to abdicate responsibility. If a community is 'resilient' it doesn't need help.
- b.** Is resilience part of the problem or the solution in mental health research?
- c.** In clinical contexts, it's a term that allows us to examine why situation may impact different people differently.
- d.** Makes the individual responsible for their response to a situation.
- e.** The term can be politicised.

3. Taking away hope.

- a.** It's about making people cope with their lot.
- b.** It removes any hope of change.
- c.** Is it better to investigate how hopeful rather than how resilient they are?

EMPOWERMENT

SUMMARY OF THEMES

Young people tended to view the term 'Empowerment' as something that arises within an individual. For researchers, understanding of this term was influenced by disciplinary perspectives and was more associated with something external which could be given and/or done to others.

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE THINK ABOUT 'EMPOWERMENT'

1. It's about driving for positive change.
2. Feeling represented.
3. It's about having control.
4. Feeling strong.
5. Positive self-evaluation.
6. Feeling secure.



WHAT RESEARCHERS THINK ABOUT 'EMPOWERMENT'

1. It's about having real power.
2. It is shaped by external bodies.
3. A rationale for getting involved.
4. Connected to agency and trust.



EMPOWERMENT

WHAT DOES 'EMPOWERMENT' MEAN TO YOUNG PEOPLE?

1. It's about driving for positive change.

a. Empowerment involves pushing yourself to do the best you can.

b. Having a strong desire to change things.

2. Feeling represented.

a. To be empowered you need to feel heard.

b. You need to feel represented and seen.

3. It's about having control.

a. You need to feel control over your own life.

b. It can be negative. You might feel empowered because you've got one over on someone.

c. It's about having the ability to overcome any challenge that might come your way.

4. Feeling strong.

a. If you feel seen you feel strong.

b. It can develop over time. You need some time to feel empowered.

6. Feeling secure.

a. It's about being sure of yourself.

b. It's about feeling safe.

5. Positive self-evaluation.

a. It's about being able to overcome your fears.

b. It's about feeling content with yourself.

c. It's about having a sense of achievement in a job well done.

d. Being empowered is about feeling self-confident.



EMPOWERMENT

WHAT DOES 'EMPOWERMENT' MEAN TO RESEARCHERS?

1. It's about having real power.

- a.** Empowering people might mean that they don't do what you want them to.
- b.** It's not just about bringing everyone together in a project to make them feel like they are empowered because they are part of a community but then not listening to them.
- c.** In practice empowerment process can end up neutering power.
- d.** Genuine coproduction and co-delivery has the potential to genuinely shift power dynamics and support empowerment.



2. It is shaped by external bodies.

- a.** Different external bodies define empowerment in different ways and we are subject to their 'power'.
- b.** It's very hard to measure in a way that can be externally validated and so of limited use within a research context.

3. A rationale for getting involved.

- a.** Participants might decide to join a project to feel empowered and to effect change.
- b.** It can help to develop transferable skills (e.g. leadership skills).

4. Connected to agency and trust.

- a.** Empowerment and agency are two sides of the same coin.
- b.** Empowerment is the starting point for agency. You need to be empowered to effect change.
- c.** It's important not to over promise. If a participant seeks to exercise the power they ostensibly have in a project, but they are not heard, they can quickly feel disempowered and all trust can be destroyed.

LONELINESS

SUMMARY OF THEMES

Young people and researchers referred to 'Loneliness' as a lack of companionship or belonging. Most young people viewed 'Loneliness' as a common experience which can be multifaceted and complex. Researchers viewed this term as a 'normative experience' and linked to a phase in development.

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE THINK ABOUT 'LONELINESS'

1. A lack of belonging.
2. Lack of companionship.
3. It's difficult to pin down.
4. It's a very common experience.
5. It just makes you feel low.
6. A wide variety of emotions involved.
7. Just part of life?



WHAT RESEARCHERS THINK ABOUT 'LONELINESS'

1. Not fitting in.
2. It's a natural part of life.
3. Disconnection.
4. It's presented as a big problem.



LONELINESS

WHAT DOES 'LONELINESS' MEAN TO YOUNG PEOPLE?

1. A lack of belonging.

- a.** Feeling left out of a group.
- b.** Feeling like an outsider even if you're inside a group.

a. It's not about being alone. It's about feeling isolated.

b. It's when you have no one you can open up to.

c. It's when you feel 'empty' and when you don't know what you can do about it.

d. The feeling of having no one you can rely on other than yourself.

3. It's difficult to pin down.

a. It's a difficult feeling to communicate, even if you had someone you could tell.

b. It's difficult for people to understand, particularly if they've organised everything right (you got a 'safe space' to be etc).

2. Lack of companionship.

a. Everyone feels lonely. You don't have to be alone with the feeling.

b. You can create a community of loneliness, using the shared experience of the emotion to create connections with others.

c. Understanding the shared experience of loneliness can be empowering.

5. It just makes you feel low.

a. It's just another part of being depressed.

b. It can make feeling depressed even worse.

4. It's a very common experience.

a. If you can accept loneliness it can become something more positive (being alone).

b. Lots of people like having time on their own. This can be comforting, but that's not the same as being lonely.

a. Feeling lonely can stir up a wide range of emotions.

b. It can make you feel chaotic, out of control.

7. Just part of life?

c. It's sometime hard to pin down the difference between being alone and being lonely.

6. A wide variety of emotions involved.

LONELINESS

WHAT DOES 'LONELINESS' MEAN TO RESEARCHERS?

1. Not fitting in.

- a. It's about not being seen, or understood.
- b. It's about being seen as different.
- c. Being an outsider.

2. It's a natural part of life.

- a. It's part of the normal part of development, as people try to find their place in society.
- b. It's inherent to life. You're never going to eradicate it..

3. Disconnection.

- a. You can feel particularly lonely if you don't connect with a community you're supposed to 'naturally' connect to.
- b. Loneliness generally suggests a lack of connection to others.
- c. Isolation feels like a more advanced sense of this lack of connection.

4. It's presented as a big problem.

- a. There are national policies to address loneliness.
- b. It can have 'lethal consequences'.
- c. Part of the 'modern' condition.
- d. Social media seen as part of the problem, even though social media is all about making connections.



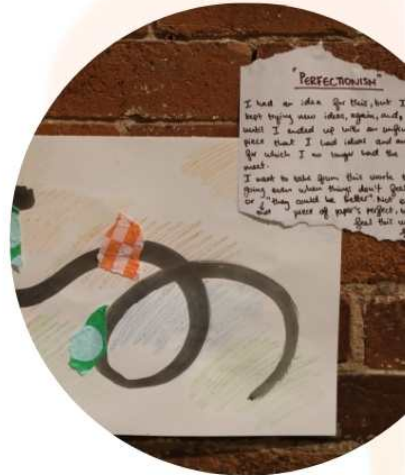
STIGMA

SUMMARY OF THEMES

Young people associated 'Stigma' with fear and negative stereotypes. However, some young people were unfamiliar with the term. Researchers viewed 'Stigma' as when someone is viewed negatively by society for expressing divergent actions or thoughts and being treated in a certain way by others due to a certain characteristic.

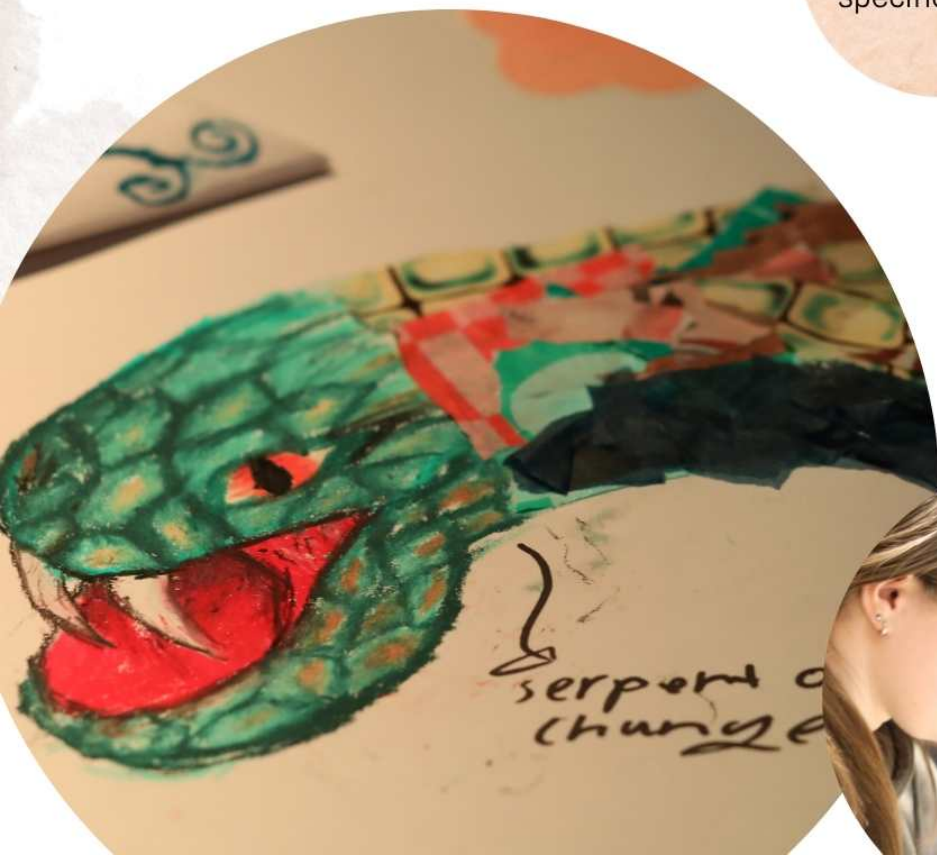
WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE THINK ABOUT 'STIGMA'

1. It's about negative stereotyping.
2. It's a term we don't understand.



WHAT RESEARCHERS THINK ABOUT 'STIGMA'

1. It's about focusing on specific traits.
2. It's about being intolerant to divergence.



STIGMA

WHAT DOES 'STIGMA' MEAN TO YOUNG PEOPLE?

1. It's about negative stereotyping.

- a.** It's about seeing people as (negative) stereotypes as opposed to people.
- b.** It's also often connected to the idea of 'taboo'
- c.** It's about creating fear and prejudice.



2. It's a term we don't understand.

- a.** It's another professional term that scientists use
- b.** It's not a word we would use.

WHAT DOES 'STIGMA' MEAN TO RESEARCHERS?

1. It's about focusing on specific traits.

- a.** It's a failure to see the whole person.
- b.** It's about demarcating someone as something based on a specific trait.
- c.** Creating a series of implications based on this process of demarcation.
- d.** Being treated in a certain way for something that is beyond your control.

2. It's about being intolerant to divergence.

- a.** It's a negative reaction to someone being different to other people.
- b.** It can bring with it practices of shaming.
- c.** Stigma is about power.



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YOUR NOTES





YOUR NOTES



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