

Wonders of the Woodland: A mixed methods evaluation of Green Care

in First Episode Psychosis:

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Introduction

- An essential role of nature-based activities for general wellbeing is increasingly recognised
- Those with greater mental health needs may benefit proportionally more from such nature-based interventions compared to the general population²
- So far, there is limited evidence of the use of green care for those with severe and enduring mental illness, including psychosis

Aims

To establish benefits and difficulties encountered during a 10-session green care programme for patients with first episode of psychosis (FEP)

Methods

- Service evaluation with mixed methods design
- Participants:
 - Age 18-30 years
 - Diagnosis: FEP
 - Referred from Early Intervention Service (EIS)
- Attended a Woodland Group in Autumn 2019
 - Run by Circle of Life Rediscovery (CLR)
 - Commissioned by SPFT
 - Supported by EIS staff (ratio 3:1)
 - 10 half-day sessions
- Session structure:

Welcome & agenda setting

Ice-breaking activity

Core nature based activity

'Sense meditation'

- **Quantitative data analysis**
 - Questionnaire on the Process of Recovery (QPR)
 - Semi-structured experience questionnaire
- **Qualitative data analysis**
 - Focus group within the final session
 - Thematic analysis by 3 co-authors



Figure 1: The woodland site and main shelter

Limitations

- Small sample size
- Some incomplete data
- Reliance on patient-reported outcomes

Conclusions

- We present the first evaluation of green care interventions for young people experiencing FEP
- Results correlate with the positive informal feedback from participants and supporting staff
- These findings show promise for green care activities within EIS and represents a sustainable intervention in mental health care

Results

- Session attendance: range 3-15
- 100% of responders would recommend group to others
- QPR scores: small increase from mean 3.4 (week 1) to 3.8 (week 10)
 - 4/8 reliable improvement
 - 1/8 deterioration
 - 3/8 no change

Thematic analysis identified 3 key themes:

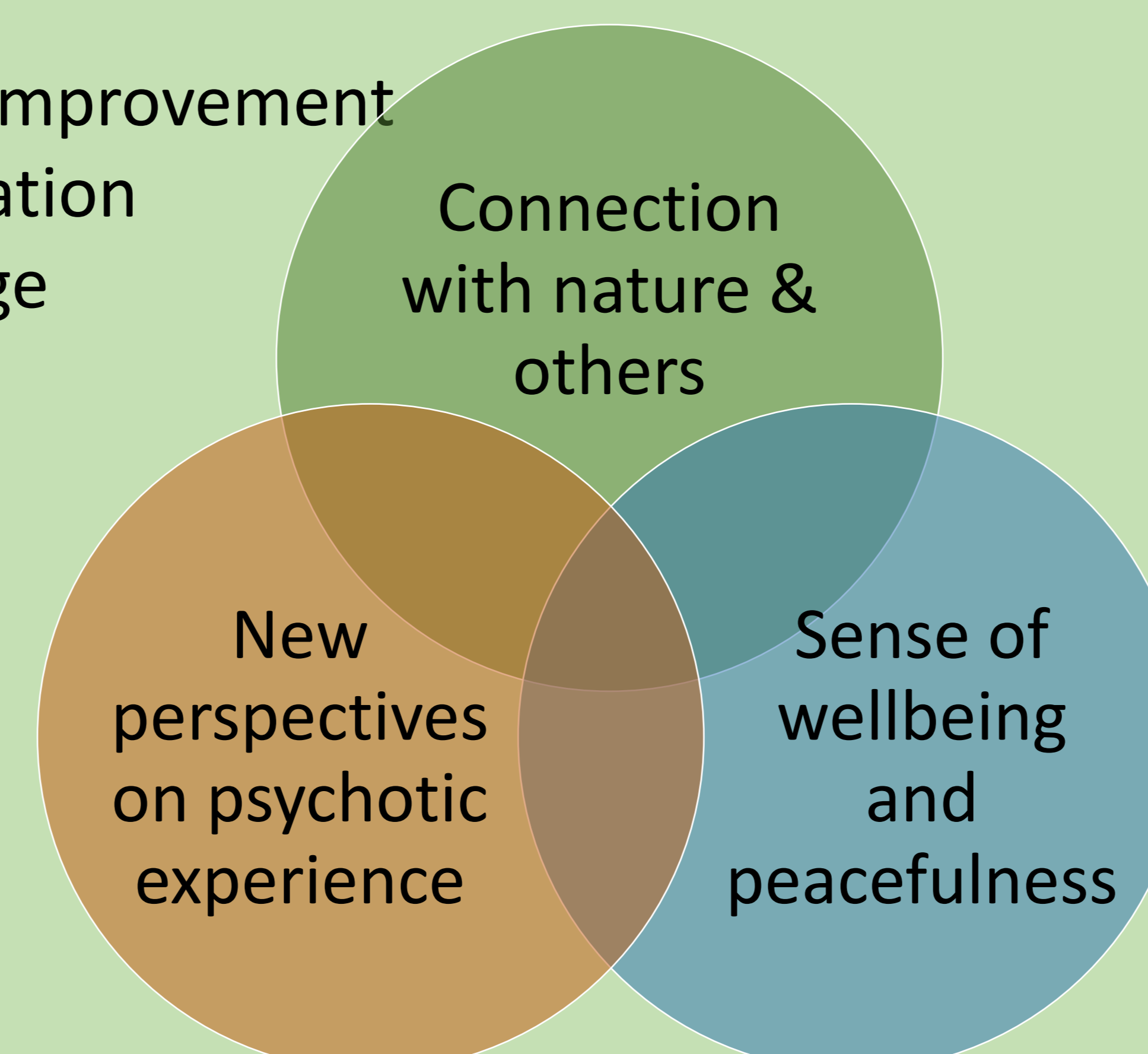


Figure 2: Postcard selection task

References

- [1] Ohly et al. Attention Restoration Theory: A systematic review of the attention restoration potential of exposure to natural environments. *J Toxicol Env Health* 2016 19:7(B), 305-343
- [2] Bragg et al. A review of nature-based interventions for mental health care. *NECR* 2016.