

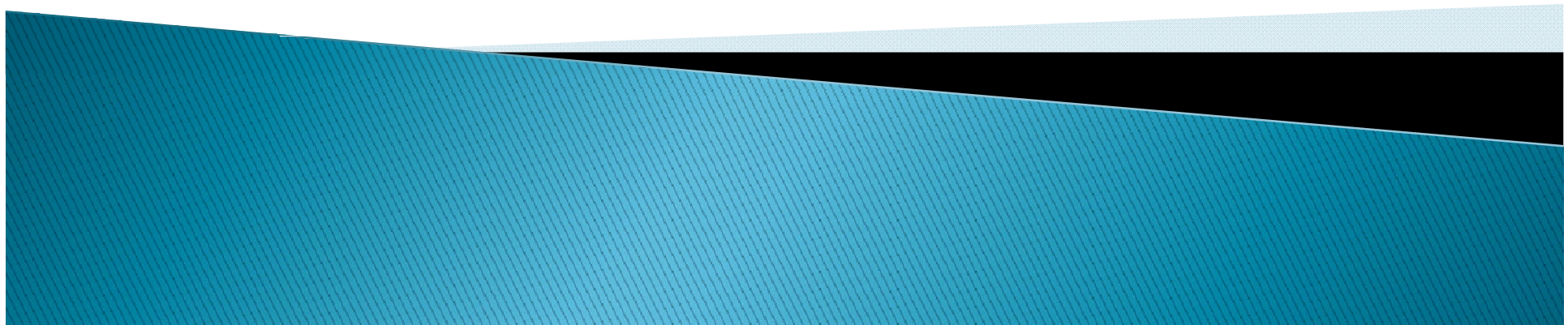


Lifelong Learning Empowerment and Social Inclusion – AN EMILIA Perspective

Peter Jones

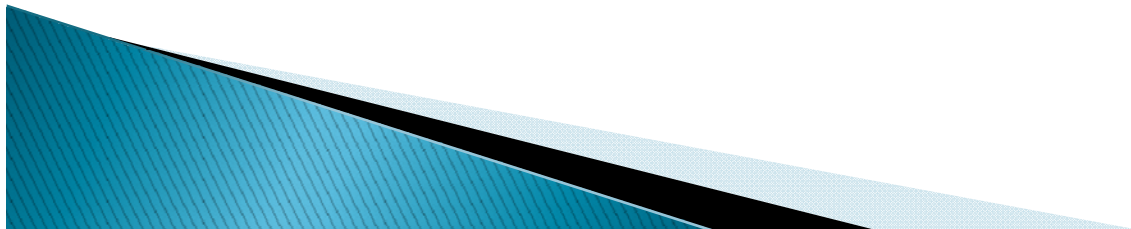
Director IBUG

10th February 2010, Paris



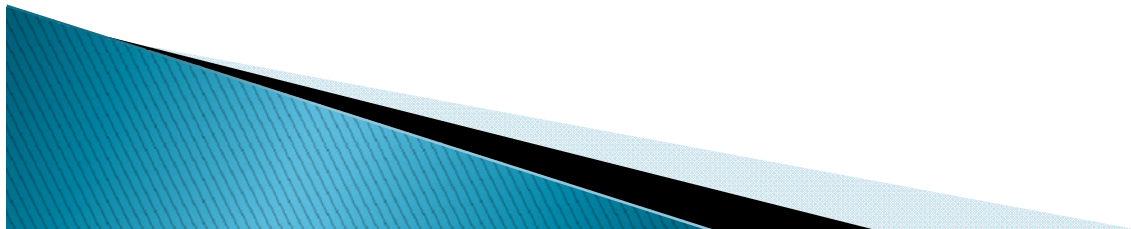
The EMILIA Advisory Group

- ▶ User Advisory group at Middlesex – 5 user groups brought together – 7 representatives (drawn from North London: Camden, Islington, Haringey, Barnet and Enfield) + senior reps from Middlesex University
- ▶ Agenda always open and everyone could set it
- ▶ Differences emerged but were resolved
- ▶ Nothing happened unless it was agreed with this group – executive authority



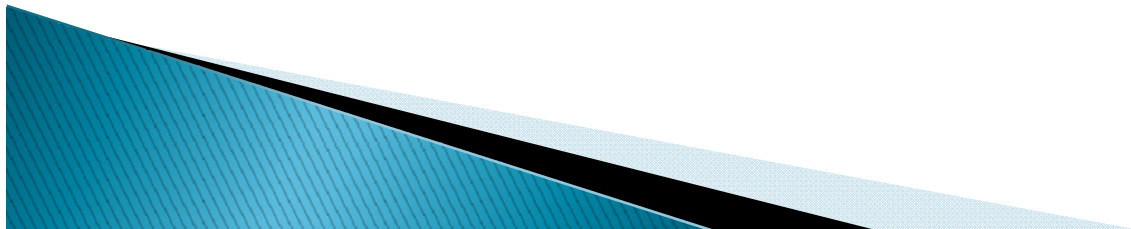
What happened next

- ▶ Designing and agreeing the course content and structure drawn from the EMILIA lifelong learning programmes
- ▶ Recruitment of students – outreach to groups – open day – 1:1 interview research baseline but private and confidential open space –
- ▶ Getting started on the training with 6 service user trainers working in pairs with 15 participants in the first cohort and 28 in the second cohort



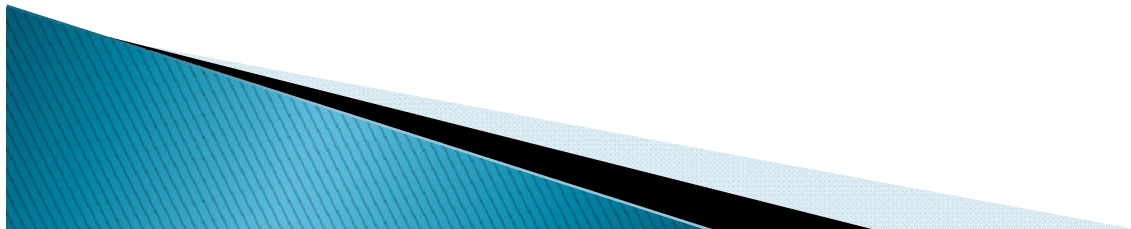
The Middlesex Lifelong Learning Programme

- ▶ OR: service user\student participation
- ▶ *The best laid plans....*
- ▶ EMILIA trainers adapted the programme for Middlesex....EMILIA students then adapted the programme for their own circumstances and life
- ▶ Day started at 11am...lunch at 1pm...finish at 3pm
- ▶ We chose Thursdays



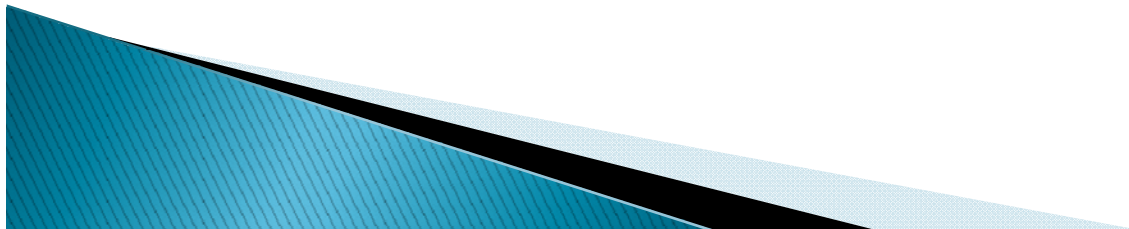
Course content

- ▶ 4 weeks on Strengths Approach
- ▶ *1 week pause*
- ▶ 4 weeks on recovery
- ▶ *1 week pause*
- ▶ 4 weeks on service user leadership skills
- ▶ No one felt under pressure to attend any or all the sessions



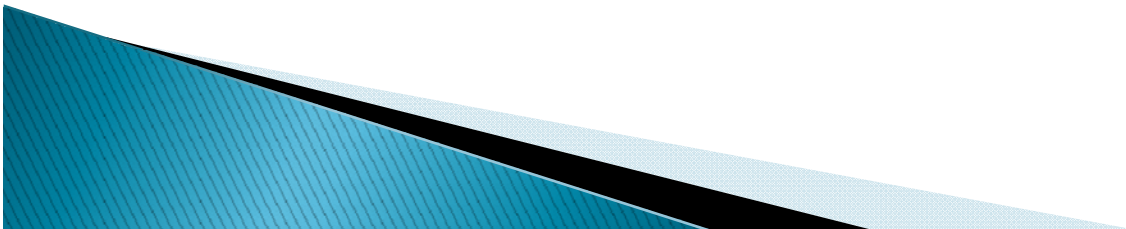
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- ▶ From day 1 there emerged a sense that this was going to be like no other training package or teaching programme
- ▶ “People needed to tell their stories in the right space and with the right people ...”
- ▶ “As time progressed, participants realised that **they** were the experts of their own life, their own story, their own recovery”
- ▶ “No one had ever given them the right to tell it in a space that was safe and validating”
- ▶ “ There was no us and them but just us”



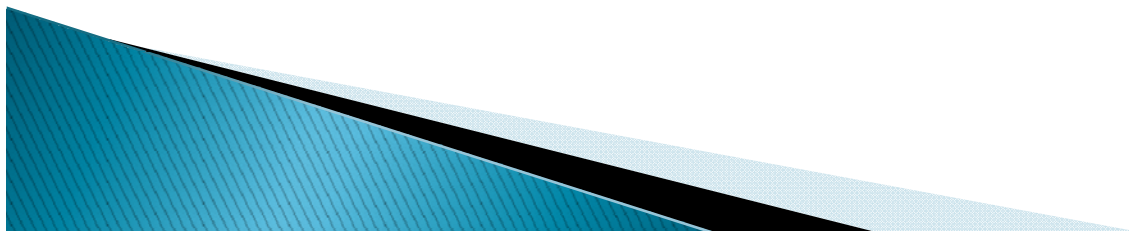
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- ▶ All contributed
- ▶ Who was in the room? – 15 student/service users, 2 service user trainers, 1 senior Middlesex staff member as observer/participant BUT not teacher



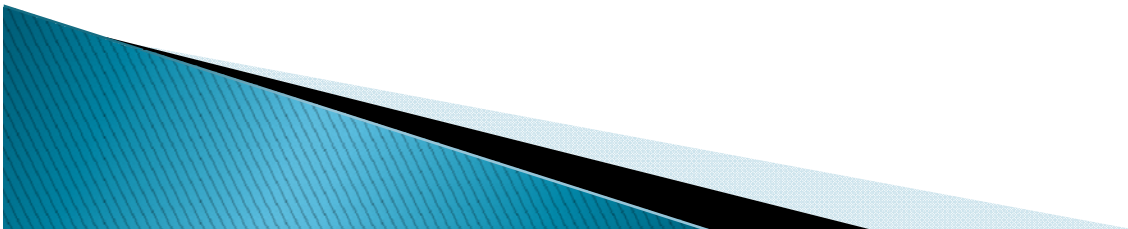
A new set of priorities.....

- ▶ Students defined their own story and history
- ▶ Their illness was placed in the larger context of their own life
- ▶ Taking out the power to upset and making it safe for oneself
- ▶ This was achieved by sharing the past and taking the stigma out of labels like ...schizophrenia, mania, depression, suicidal ideation etc
- ▶ This enabled people to say that they were still here, alive, functioning and human..and NOT just a label



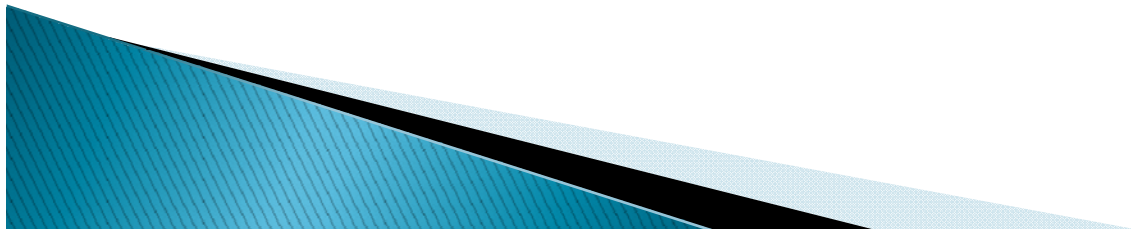
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- ▶ AND they had now found a focused determination to own their own recovery
- ▶ It was all about each person finding their individual voice, recovery, story, history and strengths
- ▶ Making sense of all of this
- ▶ And recognising that the skills and resilience inside themselves to be whatever they wanted to be (in the context of mental health disability)



Hence....

- ▶ The best laid plans of mice and men do not work out ...but just sometimes...something better can happen!



And finally...

- ▶ In Paris this week there are 5 service user trainers from Middlesex and 5 students.
- ▶ These students have blossomed since the EMILIA lifelong learning programme
- ▶ They have set up the EMILIA Society
- ▶ They are now contributing to Middlesex University selection of students, teaching and assessment
- ▶ And are becoming service user consultants

