



Responses –

How do you respond to service users who do not want to follow your processes and procedures or accept your outcomes and decisions?

** Which dynamic and practicable approaches can you adopt and use?

Carolyn Cleveland
C&C Empathy Training



‘Our emotions, they say, guide us into facing predicaments and tasks too important to leave to intellect alone’

Daniel Goleman Emotional intelligence

An emotional measure and evaluation tool

- **Back ground of Counselling and psychology** - Specialised in loss and fear. Founder C&C Empathy Training
- Emotions and psychological impact of being listened toor not, is something I have studied for many years.
- **Something I have felt the full force of as ... I and the NHS Complaints System go back a long way!**

This presentation

How do you **respond** to service users who **do not want to follow your processes** and procedures or **accept your outcomes** and decisions? Which dynamic and practicable **approaches can you adopt and use?**

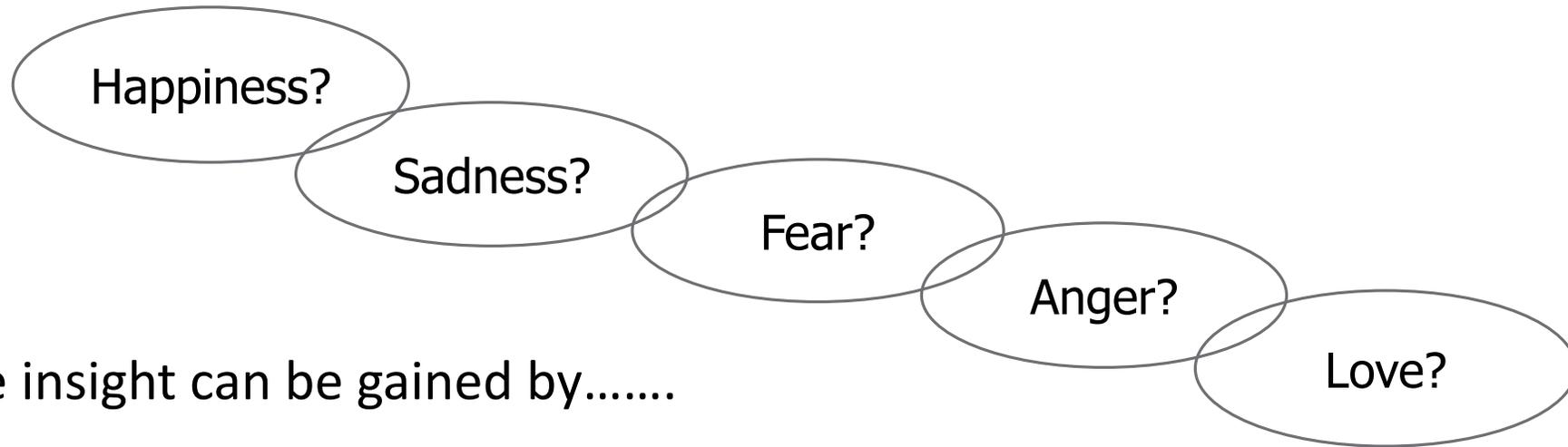
- **NOT** to talk about **perfect responses** or your personal responsibility for ‘fixing’ things
- **NOT** to give you a tool kit of ‘**magic words**’ **OR** to **always** get it right
- **NOT** to tell you to ignore policy and procedure
- **NOT** to tell you to rely on **policy and procedure** to manage every scenario either
- It **IS** about being **human** and understanding **emotional motivations, reactions and responses**
- It’s about **understanding** the whole picture and **how** unconscious thinking affects our perceptions
- It’s about starting to **understand** the role **empathy** can play and **how communication is felt**
- It **IS** about seeing a complaint in its entirety and empowering you to reach an **OPTIMUM (not always perfect) OUTCOME**

How do you **respond** to service users who do not want to follow your processes and procedures

To start

**Don't just respond....
FIRST...UNDERSTAND**

Actions are embedded in emotion. But what emotion?



Valuable insight can be gained by.....

- Understanding emotions behind someone's story and complaint
- Thinking about how we remember and code experiences
- How we understand subconscious motivations and their influence on outcomes

So....let's emotionally understand a complaint....MY complaint....MY story

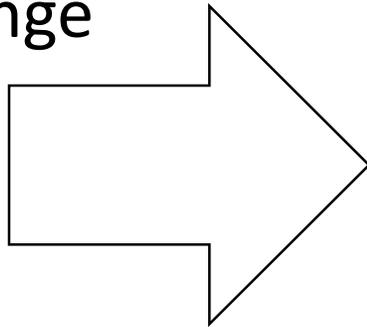
I couldn't accept this

Needed to talk

I had knowledge of the death of a 15 year old swirling around my mind

Trying to understand and challenge

=



Fear

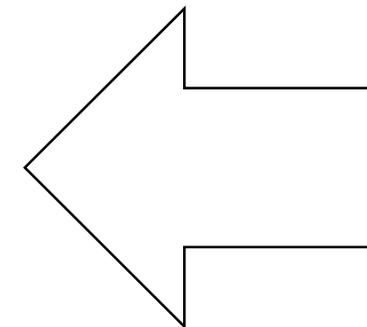
A fact that influenced my experience AND how I perceived and accepted responses

This had the potential to take my sanity

Defensiveness & procedure driven communication

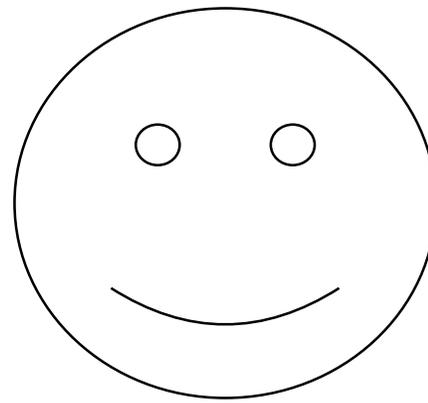
Data Protection Act

Absence of empathy



=

Fear ?



Why do all of you need to know all of this??.....

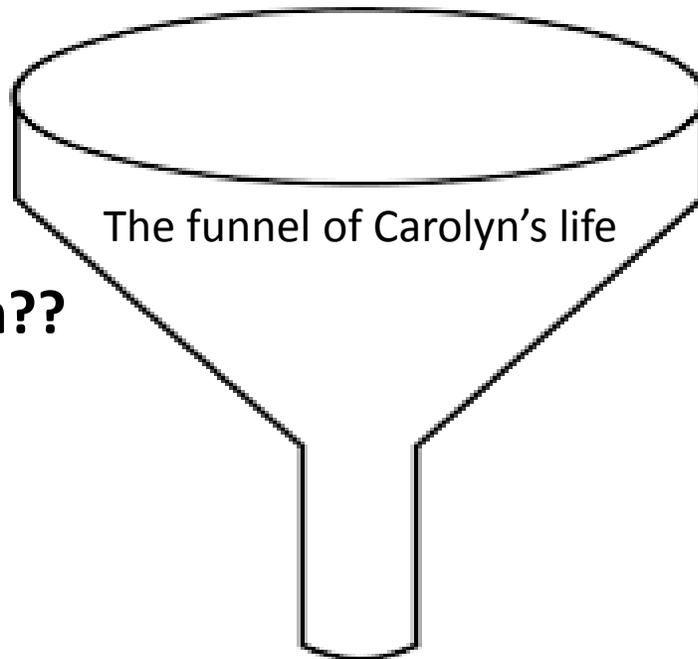
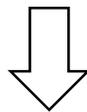
Seeing
the **whole picture**
And
understanding the
complaint in its
entirety as you
respond



What is going in

So what might be going on for a service user who does not want to follow your processes?

The funnel of life



Hospital....Just Sophie's death??

Council or tradesperson....
Just a broken boiler??

SchoolJust educational
Difficulties??

The result

**SO....What emotions
are
you really
responding to?**

REMEMBER....when you respond you may be dealing with a multitude of emotions and events

So having looked at **what** you might be **responding** to....Let's examine why might people **not want** to follow your **processes** and **procedures**????.....

- They **care more** about what is happening to them.
It could be the only thing they feel they have **some control** over.

- It may be...depending on the severity...be the **most important thing going on in their world at that time**

- Even when processes and procedures are carried out in an exemplar manner, if peoples' **emotions are left feeling unimportant.....they will feel unimportant!**

- They are human beings so... this **IS human** to them

Many conscious **and** unconscious thoughts prevent people from **accepting outcomes and decisions**

LET'S EXPLORE A COUPLE OF THEORIES

WHY might outcomes and decisions not be accepted?

In a large psychological study, it was shown that between **73%-92% of our actions are unconscious.....** on auto pilot, without the need to be preceded by thought

1 Theory.....**Cognitive dissonance**

Cognitive dissonance theory suggests that we have an **unconscious inner drive** to **hold all our attitudes and beliefs in harmony** and avoid disharmony (or dissonance). Festinger's (1957)

Therefore without emotional awareness, we may not see how we are holding something in a static place.

**Sometimes it is very hard to change our ideas of what is right and wrong
And..... this is happening unconsciously.... To everyone!!**



Another theory....**Cognitive biases**.....

These influence how we think and can lead to errors in decisions

This is **ALL** of us, in personal and professional life....and...there are lots!!!!!!

So here are just a few

Anchoring Bias people are **over reliant** on the **first piece** of information they hear

Bandwagon affect A person adopting a **belief increases** based on the number of people who hold the belief....**others therefore influence** us...including organisational culture and society

Selective perception Our experience influences **how we** perceive the world

Confirmation Bias we tend to listen only to information that **confirms our preconception.**



Ostrich Bias decision to **ignore** dangerous or negative information by ‘burying ones head’

Stereotyping Expecting a group
or person to have to have **certain qualities**
without having real information
about that person – ‘A complainer’ for eg

Blind spot Bias failing to recognise your own biases is a **bias in itself** !! 😊



So which dynamic and practicable approaches can you adopt and use?
...**CHALLENGE YOUR THINKING. HOW to think, not WHAT to think**

It's about delivering an OPTIMUM OUTCOME not always a perfect one....understanding what is a resolution to that person??

You CAN'T always deliver perfect solutions

BUT... You CAN always deliver empathy

- Lack of **EMPATHY** actually communicates “**I don't care about you, or your problem.**”
- Presence of **EMPATHY** ultimately comes from **understanding another person's experience, feeling it, communicating it and responding in the best way YOU can**

empathy noun

- the **power** of understanding and imaginatively entering into another person's feelings

Collins English Dictionary

My
favourite
definition

Professor Simon Baron Cohen and many other psychologists and neuroscientists
categorise empathy as being in two main parts

Cognitive

The ability to imagine someone else's thoughts and feelings

The recognition part

Affective

Feeling it and then the drive to respond appropriately

The action part

There are degree's
of empathy BUT 98% of the
population are hardwired
for it

**And YES is can be
developed too**

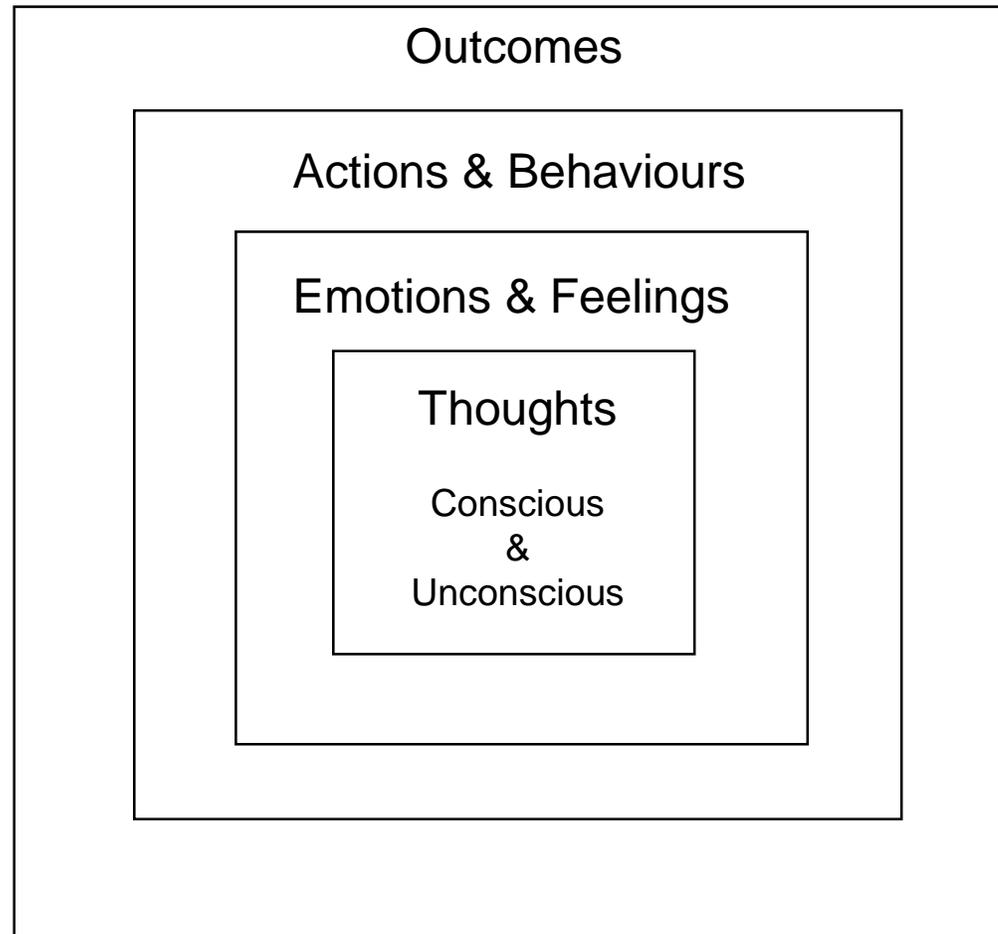
**And YES it can be
communicated affecting
your outcomes**



The Communication button and our outcomes

A medical statistic

“Over **80%** of malpractice claims are the result of **communication failures** and the **likelihood** of an **unhappy outcome** is **correlated to low physician empathy**”. (Hickson, 2002; Levinson, 2004)



We are communicating
all the time

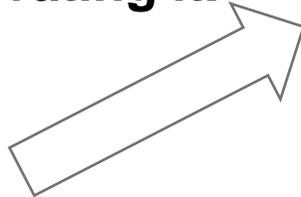
People are communicating
with us
all the time

Understanding ourselves
and others **is important**
in communication and.....
empathy and **self**
awareness of emotion
helps us communicate
better



There are many good reasons to commit to the practice of developing empathy. And here is a starting point for cultivating it.

1. Practice committed, non-reactive listening by tuning in to the deeper levels of their message.



This means listening carefully to what they are saying.



Practicing your cognitive empathy and imagine what they might be feeling and thinking?



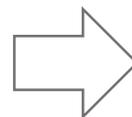
Then practicing affective empathy and asking how might they need you therefore to respond.?

2. Try and distance yourself from binary right and wrong thinking



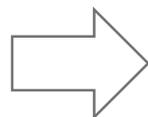
This means listening carefully to what they are saying.

3. Listen to feelings in yourself and others: fear, hurt, confusion, anger, sadness, grief etc



These are not wrong. We will ALL experience them and they are dynamic and changing.

4. Understand the distinction between unskilful behaviour, stress or grief.... and their character.



For example - Brain imaging studies on people grieving showed increased activity in areas associated with their mood, memory, perception and conceptualisation. Grief can be complex, delayed and not just about a death

5. Bring a sense of your interest by asking more questions, understand the deeper meanings of peoples experience.

6. Mirror them..... The body shapes itself in response to emotion.....WE REACT TO EMOTION IN OTHERS

Communication is an **emotionally felt process**
Think about the **experience you are giving** if
you want to **affect** the **outcomes**

*'I've learned that people will forget what **you said**, people
will forget what **you did**, but people will never forget
how **you made them feel.**'*

Maya Angelou



YES we react emotionally to communication

6. Mirror them..... The body shapes itself in response to emotion.....WE REACT TO EMOTION IN OTHERS