

Jan 2023

Swansea Mind.
66 St Helen's Rd,
Swansea,
SA1 4BE.

01792 642999

Placement Portfolio

ASHLEE RYAN-ROSE

Welcome to
Swansea Mind

We're here for you!

Urgent Help

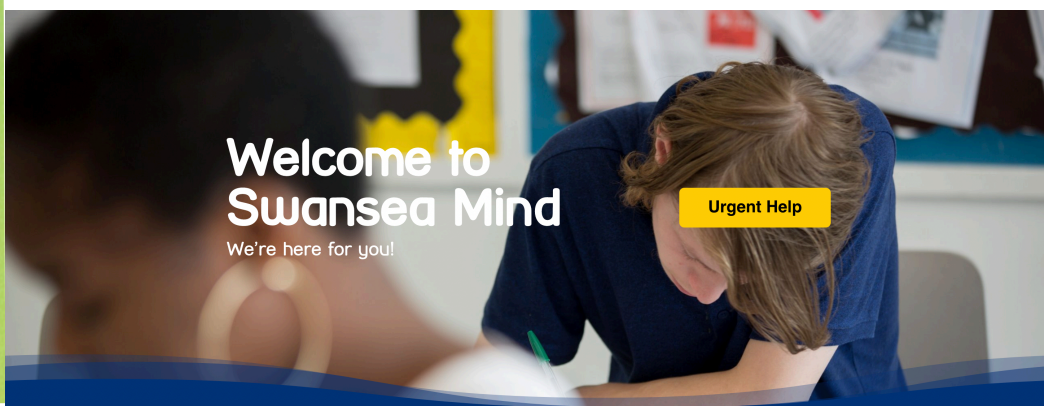


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Reflective Commentary

Personal experiences and a need to contribute positively to the local community has led me to study Psychology and Counselling at UWTSD. My future career goal has shifted over the duration of this course, however it has lent more towards a therapeutic based role as a counsellor. The counselling module has been invaluable and had brought about an abundance of knowledge over the last year; with this year having an emphasis on applying theory to practise. When it was announced that all students were to begin looking for potential organisations to volunteer at, I knew instantly that a more hands-on role would not only benefit me with my personal growth, but would provide a plethora of invaluable skills that will transfer perfectly to my future career. Using the Gibbs (1988) Reflective Model as a guide, I will provide a reflective commentary that details my experience at Swansea Mind, as a volunteer that is putting theory to practise.

It would be impossible for me to sum up my experience as a whole, in one word. The opportunity that I have been provided with is nothing short of phenomenal. When I had first enrolled onto the degree, one of the things I was most apprehensive about was the prospect of having to do volunteer work. It only speaks as a testament to what the course has done for me as a whole, that I entered the second year ready to take on the new experience; ensuring that I take up any opportunities that comes my way. If I were to reflect on the enrolling experience, the application itself was the most daunting thing. I felt as though I would be more of a hindrance to the cause due to my lack of real-life experience; especially considering the brilliant reputation that Mind has. Following up on an event where the volunteer coordinator had attended the university, I decided that I had nothing to lose, but everything to gain.

When I first began taking part in my roles within the office, I placed an enormous amount of pressure upon myself to not only be a listening ear to those in need, but actively assist them in their recovery. As my first few tasks were out of the way, I slowly began to realise that my role within the charity is quite simple; to listen and empathise. My role required me to have weekly communication with four clients, each with completely different life experiences. Each week I would call them for approximately 20 minutes each, and be there as extended support while they utilise some of the other services provided by Swansea Mind. It did not take me long to realise that the Core Conditions (Rogers, 1957) were one of the most valuable tools in ensuring the clients truly trust in my ability to listen and empathise. Alongside the Core Conditions, it became more apparent as time went on, that I was actually utilising one component of Egan's (1990) SOLER: Relax. Because of the client not being able to see me, additional efforts were made to demonstrate to the client a relaxed sense of self. I did this by ensuring the tone and pitch of my voice were always appropriate and engaging. Additionally, I utilised non verbal nods as confirmation and to assist the flow of conversation. At times, it was overwhelming having to digest some of the conversations and then simply move to the next. This initially emphasised feelings of sadness, however, I quickly realised the importance of self-care and taking moments in-between making some of the more difficult calls to clients. According to Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison (2014) self care is critical to maintaining a career within the psychotherapeutic field. They insist that counsellors as well as other helpful professions experience burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary stress due to the high demands of their work.

As I spent more time within the role, my tasks expanded. At first I was apprehensive. I believe this to be quite a natural progression though. Each time I fear something new, I continuously prove myself to be capable. I have been present in one of the Peer Support Groups and hope to continue facilitating them alongside fellow volunteers and senior consultants. During this hour, I could see that the following therapeutic practices, SOLER (Egan, 1990) and Motivational Interviewing (Miller, 1983), would be more than suitable to provide a safe space that advocates for openness. In the future, I look forward to continuing to gain experience in that environment and truly mastering all the therapeutic practices mentioned throughout this reflection (Core Conditions, SOLER & Motivational Interviewing).

Alongside the therapeutic skills that have been put into practice, this volunteer experience has been invaluable in perfecting some of the transferable skills and personal attributes that are seen as favourable in any working environment. Working within such a reputable charity has taught me about commercial awareness and the importance of local fundraising. My skills, both written and oral, have been practised and perfected as a result of being meticulous; with the intention of maintain a professional image through all means of communication. Time and self-management have been critical within this role. Service users have an expectation of a certain level of service. My ability to self-manage has really given me the boost of confidence I needed to continue through the new academic year.

Overall, the experience was positive. If I had to acknowledge something that did not go well, it would have to be my self-doubt; my inability to give myself a judgment free start. This experience has truly made me excited about what my future career holds for me. To ensure that this type of self-destructive behaviour doesn't prevail in the future, I will ensure sufficient time to process and reflect.

References

- Egan, G. (1990). *The skilled helper: A systematic approach to effective helping*. Thomson Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.
- Gibbs, G. (1988). Learning by doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods. *Further Education Unit*,
- Miller, W. R. (1983). Motivational interviewing with problem drinkers. *Behavioural Psychotherapy*, 11, 147-172. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0141347300006583>
- Rogers, C. R. (1957). The necessary and sufficient conditions of therapeutic personality change. *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, 21(2), 95.
- Skovholt, T. M., & Trotter-Mathison, M. (2014). *The resilient practitioner: Burnout prevention and self-care strategies for counselors, therapists, teachers, and health professionals*. Routledge

Portfolio of Evidence

Swansea Mind is a free-to-use service for individuals that are suffering with mental health difficulties. Swansea Mind is a local charity, funded by the community, and run by a small number of consultants (employed) and a large number of volunteers.

Swansea Mind's vision truly highlights the importance of intervention in those with mental health difficulties. It is clear that Swansea Mind's vision is to eradicate the stigma surrounding mental illness.

(Swansea Mind, 2023).

Swansea Mind is a mental health organisation based in the city of Swansea in South Wales, UK. We are part of Local Mind Associations in England and Wales.

We believe no one should have to face a mental health problem alone. We're here for you.

We work for the better mental health of people in Swansea by providing a range of services. This site aims to provide more information about our organisation, our services, and how we work.

Our vision

We won't give up until everyone experiencing a mental health problem gets both support and respect.

Our mission

We provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem.

Our values

Open. We reach out to anyone who needs us.

Together. We're stronger in partnership.

Responsive. We listen, we act.

Independent. We speak out fearlessly.

Unstoppable. We never give up.

Swansea Mind's mission statement asserts a large reassurance to those looking to seek the services. The mission statement emphasises the importance of 'empowering' anyone suffering with mental health problems; while insisting a tireless devotion to each individuals' growth. Swansea Mind's values could be seen as a reassuring mantra to those who seek out help, usually those who have prior experience of the opposite.

1-to-1 Sessions

Swansea Mind are currently offering a 1-to-1 wellbeing service which provides emotional support to anyone interested in using the services. The wellbeing checks can be accessed in the form of regular phone calls, or through face-to-face chats in our centre.

These wellbeing sessions are not counselling but are more of an opportunity to speak to an approachable listener, and to self-explore different ways for you to care for your wellbeing. Opening up to a trusted individual can help you feel listened to and supported. Sometimes, just acknowledging your feelings by saying them out loud can also help.

If you're interested in receiving regular wellbeing checks either face-to-face or via the phone then please email admin@swanseamind.org.uk or telephone 01792 456999

(Swansea Mind, 2023).

A popular service at Swansea Mind, is 1-to-1 sessions. At present, the sessions are taking place via weekly phone calls; always with the same assigned volunteer. These are also known as 'Befriending Calls'. The calls usually have a duration of 20-30 minutes each. During this time, the client is given the opportunity to have a listening ear. There are no expectations of the client, and the conversation tone is set by the client.



(Swansea Mind, 2023).

Peer Support Groups have been successful at Swansea Mind since conception a little under a year ago.

Groups starting March 21st 2022

Monday 1 pm – Depression group (Meeting at Parish Centre St James Church)
Tuesday 1pm – Anger Management Course (Meeting at Parish Centre St James Church)
Wednesday 1 pm – Walking Group (Meeting at the Brangwyn Hall)
Thursday 1 pm – Walking Group (Meeting at the Brangwyn Hall)
Friday 1 pm – Anxiety Group (Meeting at Parish Centre St James Church)

Please, tell us if you want to take part in any of the groups. We are happy to book a space for you.

If you have any questions, please give us a ring on (01792) 642999 or email admin@swanseamind.org.uk for further information on our groups.

For each afternoon of the week, peer support groups are held with different a different category of mental health problem at its forefront. Each of the groups is run by a mixture of consultants and volunteers from the office. The groups are highly accessible and are free of charge to attend (except the 'Anger Management Course'). Although it does state that you can be booked in, as long as you're signed up as a service user in Mind, you can attend on the day with no prior notification.

(Swansea Mind, 2023).

Home

Our Services ▾

Training

Support Us ▾

Contact us

Referrals

Counselling

You may be looking for resolution around a particular issue, feeling stuck or dissatisfied with life, or in need of a safe space where you can unburden your thoughts and feelings.

Making the first step is often the most difficult, and yet for many clients, making contact with a counsellor, in confidence, marks a threshold. A moment where we begin to build towards a positive future. If you are interested in finding out more please contact us.

We have experience counselling a diverse range of clients experiencing depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, loss, grief, anger issues, confidence issues, relationship difficulties, issues at work, addiction, eating issues, abuse, trauma and autism.

We offer short term and long term and open-ended counselling, providing one to one support tailored to your individual needs.

- Weekly sessions cost £10 if you are on benefits.

- If you are working and not on benefits, the cost is £20 with a trainee counsellor or £40 with a fully qualified counsellor per weekly session. Trainee counsellors have a fitness to practice certificate from recognised counselling courses and are fully supervised by more experienced counsellors.

We follow the Codes of Ethics and Professional Procedures of the BACP, and work in the strictest confidence.

The most sought-after service, and usually the service that brings most clients to Swansea Mind, is counselling. The counsellors at Swansea Mind consist of fully qualified and volunteer counsellors; in pursuit of their recognised hours to gain their qualifications. There is a charge for this service, but it is means-tested. At present, the waiting list for counselling is around 6-8 months.

Active Monitoring consists of a 6-week self-help program, that is free to service users. A large number of users of this are individuals on the 6-8 month counselling waiting list, or those who have completed the counselling but require additional support. Active Monitoring has undertones of 'Motivational Interviewing' (Miller, 1983). Clients are assisted in overcoming difficult emotions and finding the motivation required to change their behaviour.

Active Monitoring

(Swansea Mind, 2023).

Active Monitoring is a 6 week guided self-help programme that aims to help people better understand and manage their emotions. It's a low-level form of support where over 6 weeks you'd work through a series of materials and exercises, with a short call from a practitioner each week to support you through the process.

This scheme is a practical, hands-on and goal orientated approach to support, where the aim of the sessions is to formulate a personalised toolkit of resources that are tailored to support your own individual wellbeing.

This kind of support is recommended to individuals don't feel like they need a high level of emotional support but would like to try some practical, evidence based strategies and tasks to help them understand and manage their emotions better.

Together, you'll agree a programme of support covering any of the following topics:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Stress
- Feeling alone
- Managing anger
- Grief and loss

If you would like to book yourself in for an appointment please fill in the sign up form below or contact our office on (01792) 642999. If you would like further information please download our Active monitoring leaflet [here](#).

Swansea mind Active monitoring service was fantastic. It helped me through a difficult period in my life and cant thank them enough.

I have felt better after every phone chat we have had. I have also found the worksheets have helped me to deal with the anxiety I have been suffering because of my stressful situation. I have made some positive changes as best I can in my difficult circumstances as a result of the phone chats and the worksheets.

Reflection Logs

Section A



Befriending Calls

On each day attending Swansea Mind, I complete 4 befriending calls between the hours of 10am - 12pm. Each of the client's 1-to-1 befriending calls brought up a plethora of themes due to the nature of the individual client's circumstances. There is no way to anticipate what types of conversations you will be having that day. However, there are ways to prepare for these calls. Carl Rogers' Core Conditions (1957) were used as a foundation for the conversation with the client. Throughout the duration of the placement, congruent relationships have been developed with the clients, therefore 'Motivational Interviewing'(Miller, 1993) techniques can be utilised.

Section B



Administration Work

Although administrative work doesn't require face-to-face interaction, or an empathetic nature. Within this particular role and industry, it is imperative to have a positive user experience. On reflection, each day was entirely different. Emails and calls could range from general enquiries, fundraising opportunities, to clients or third parties acting on behalf of client's urgent needs. At each point of contact, all components of Carl Rogers' Core Conditions (1957) were used to emphasise the importance of the client's requests.

Section C



Peer Support Groups

Peer support groups are a revolutionary form of therapeutic help offered by Swansea Mind. Services users are entitled to attend Peer Support Groups: depression, anxiety and walk and talk groups; free of charge. There is a paid, accredited anger management course available also. On reflection, the group setting is the perfect environment to practise and perfect any of the therapeutic approaches mastered throughout the degree. Of all the services that I have taken part in, I have the least experience in facilitating or assisting the Peer Support Groups. This form of support would allow me to show and perfect Egan's SOLER (1990).

Training

As part of the face-to-face training, supporting documentation was handed out to each volunteer. This document detailed the appropriate policies, procedures and safeguarding information.

Additionally, a list of important contacts was included in the title page.



Swansea Mind Safeguarding Policy for Adults Including Practice Guidance & Procedures

Important contacts:

Named Safeguarding Lead:

Emma James, CEO, 07912110498

Named Safeguarding Lead on Trustee Board:

Julian William, Vice Chair, 07772076345

A concise document was handed out during the face-to-face training; with the intent of being used before any client interaction.

Appendix B: Some useful Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- Act on any concerns, suspicions or doubts
- try to ensure the immediate safety of the individual
- remain calm and listen very carefully
- summarise what you have heard back to the person for clarification
- assure the person that the matter will be taken seriously
- explain the process for reporting the allegation
- seek consent to report the concern or share information
- Report the allegation to your manager in line with these and local multi-agency procedures
- contact children's services in the local authority if a child is, or may be, at risk
- arrange support for the alleged victim of abuse or neglect

Don't:

- show shock or disbelief
- rush the person
- be judgemental
- probe or question - just record the facts and seek clarification where necessary
- contaminate or disturb any evidence
- Jump to conclusions
- promise confidentiality - explain how and why the information might need to be shared with those who need to know
- interview witnesses - but do record any information volunteered by them
- approach the alleged abuse



Section B: Certification



The volunteer training took place on 16/12/2022 for 3.5 hours duration. Grazia, head manager and practitioner, conducted the training. The training focused on: How to implement initial assessments, running of the peer support groups, advice for befriending calls, Swansea Mind services, GDPR, Safeguarding and data recording on the computer system. On completion of the course, each volunteer was awarded a certificate of completion, signed by Grazia.

Appendices

Appendix A

AR

Ashlee Ryan - Rose
Volunteer Opportunities.
To: Saara Rasanen

20 June 2022 at 13:46

Hi Saara,

I hope you're well. I am one of the students that attended the placement chat at UWTSD, Bay Campus. It was so great to hear about all the amazing contributions you and the team make to the lives of people within the community.

My name is Ashlee Ryan-Rose and I am currently enrolled on the Psychology and Counselling course at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. In September, I will be entering level 5 and as part of the counselling skills module we are advised to take part in 60 hours of voluntary work between the months of July and January 2023. The placement is not assessed. All that would be asked of the organisation is confirmation of attendance.

As a trans woman, 11 years into transition, I have benefited from the use of charities such as Mind and find they have changed my day-to-day life forever. Because of this, my career path is one of clarity to me; to assist those in need and give back to a system that once saved my life. If there is any opportunity to learn from everyone at the organisation and volunteer my time, I would appreciate any consideration.

Best Wishes,
Ashlee Ryan-Rose
07712241915

Appendix B

SR

Saara Rasanen
Re: Volunteer Opportunities.
To: Ashlee Ryan - Rose

21 June 2022 at 12:58

 Siri found new contact info Saara Rasanen saara@swanseamind.org.uk [add...](#)

Hi Ashlee,

Great to hear from you, thank you for getting in touch. Are you looking for a counselling placement or wellbeing volunteer placement? Please see information on both below. Would be great to have you join our team. Thanks for sharing your story and for your interest towards our charity.

We are offering placement opportunities for student counsellors on an ongoing basis. Our centre's counselling room was recently refurbished and we have a laptop for student counsellors to use in the premises. There's always someone here between Mon-Fri 9-5pm and our staff if willing to help with any issues. I would be the first point of contact as a volunteer coordinator. From student counsellors we require a Level 4 diploma in counselling with previous work experience or Level 5 or above. BACP membership, Fitness to Practice, private supervision and insurance are the other requirements for volunteering with us. DBS check can be applied through us if needed, existing ones are valid for a year from when admitted.

Wellbeing volunteers support our service users in different settings and help our small staff team with running the services and office work. We have weekly peer support groups and a walking group that volunteers attend. Befriending and wellbeing phone calls to service users are made by volunteers. Answering inquiries by email and phone are also tasks that we need help with.

Please find both applications attached. After I receive your application we book an initial chat/ interview. Next step from there will be applying for references, induction, and then setting up the start date. We try to be flexible around your schedule but do currently work from Mon-Fri between office hours. Hope this information is useful for you. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,
Saara Rasanen

Appendix C

SC

Stacey Coleman 
To: Ashlee Ryan-Rose (2103457)
Cc: Ruth Groff

Wed 14/09/2022 09:35

Hi Ashlee,

Thanks for sending this across. I'll contact them today to confirm and will get back to you to confirm then, also.

Very much looking forward to getting back to it!

Cofion cynnes, | Kind regards,

Stacey.

My normal working days are Monday to Thursday; if you email outside of this period there may be a delay in my response.

Stacey Coleman
BA(Hons), MSc, PGCE (PCET), FHEA, MBPsS

Appendix D

Name of Student:	Ashlee Ryan-Rose
Proposed Placement Setting and Address:	Swansea Mind. 66 St. Helens Road, Swansea, SA1 4BE
Proposed Dates of Placement:	TBC.
Name of Contact for Venue:	Saara Rasanen.
Please also state their position:	Volunteer coordinator
Email Address:	saara@swanseamind.org.uk
Telephone Number for Contact at Placement:	
Is a DBS required for you to attend this placement?	Yes. If Yes, have you applied for this? TBC
Explain how your role in this organisation/on this placement meets the criteria for the assessment for the module (e.g., what duties/tasks will you be undertaking that are relevant for the module assessment)	Wellbeing volunteers support service users in different settings: weekly peer support groups and a walking group that volunteers attend. Befriending and wellbeing phone calls to service users.

Appendix E

Placement Hours

11th October 3 hour

25th October 3.5 hour

8th November 3 hour

15th November 4 hours

29th November 4 hours |

6th December 3hours

9th December 3 hours (Training)

12th December 2 hours (Depression Support Group)

13th December 3 hours

- Xmas Break -

3rd Jan 2023 3 hours

References

- Egan, G. (1990). *The skilled helper: A systematic approach to effective helping*. Thomson Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.
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