



Compassionate Mental Health



# Compassionate Mental Health

From Isolation to Connection

**24 June 2019 - Kingsley Hall, London, UK**

A one day, experiential event designed to inform, inspire and empower people  
**living and working** with mental distress

[compassionatementalhealth.co.uk](http://compassionatementalhealth.co.uk)

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'From Isolation to Connection' is part of a series of gatherings designed to inform, inspire and empower people living and working with mental distress

### Who's it for?

The event is for anyone curious about a compassionate approach to mental health. We bring together people and families with personal experience, front-line staff, commissioners, managers, clinicians, GPs, policymakers and Third Sector staff, to explore a range of alternative approaches.

### What's it about?

Compassionate Mental Health is part of a growing worldwide movement calling for a more integrative approach to mental health - one that relies less on diagnosis and prescription drugs, and more on empowering the person and engaging their social networks. At the heart of the project is a belief that it is possible to begin to heal oneself and others through the power of community, connection, self care and solidarity.

We're bringing people together for a day of conversation and workshops. The theme of this Summer's gathering is 'From Isolation to Connection - power of peer & network approaches'.

Our key message remains that a mental health crisis can become a meaningful turning point and catalyst for change. We believe a culture of compassion and collaboration must replace our existing model of over medicalisation, coercion and restraint.

Along with many other critical voices - we are calling for a radical shift in the way we understand mental illness, changing the script, challenging stigma and raising expectations. This is a gathering and unconference, but there are key learning outcomes associated with service transformation, moving towards a more co-productive, psychosocial approach.

Each gathering has been held in a venue that is therapeutic in its own way. We're delighted to be back at Kingsley Hall - a place with a history of radical social activism and community engagement. Let's leave behind our professional and personal roles and labels, build community and connection, and move forward together to create positive change.





# Programme

Our programme offers an exciting mix of plenary sessions and workshops, with plenty of opportunities for participation, reflection and networking.

## Arrival / Optional Early Arrival

**HeartMath Meditation** with Skeena Rathor  
*in the Peace Garden*

9:00 - 9:20

9:40 - 10:00

9:30 - 10:00 **Register / Meet & Greet**

## Plenary Sessions

*Kingsley Hall*

10:00 -10:15 **Welcome and Setting the Scene**  
Sarah Stone and Mirabai Swingler

10:15- 10:35 **Compassion Pods & Deep Listening**  
Benna Waites

10:35 - 11:00 **Social Change & Human Rights**  
Chris Hansen

11:00 - 11:30 **Pause & Refresh**

## Experiential Workshops

11:30-1:10 **Choice of Experiential Workshops**

A **Introduction to Intentional Peer Support**  
Chris Hansen

B **T-Maps**  
Sascha Altman duBrul

1:10 - 2:00 **Eat & Enjoy**

## Plenary Sessions

*Kingsley Hall*

2:00 - 2:30 **Transforming Self & Society**  
Sascha Altman DuBrul

## Experiential Workshop

2:30 - 4:30 **Whole Group Experiential Workshop**

**Introduction to Open Dialogue**  
Facilitated by Mark Stephen Hopfenbeck

4.30- 5:00 **Pause & Refresh**

## Plenary Sessions

*Kingsley Hall*

5:00 - 5:30 **Compassionate Revolution: From Activists to Activators**  
Skeena Rathor

5:30 - 6:00 **Closing Session**  
Facilitated by the core team

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# Speakers

We've gathered influential speakers and facilitators who are passionate about changing the script around mental health, challenging stigma and raising expectations



### Mark Hopfenbeck

Social anthropologist and inspirational Lead Trainer and co-investigator of the UK Open Dialogue pilot - a ground-breaking, approach developed in Finland working with the family/network



### Sascha Altman DuBrul

Radical activist and Bipolar cartographer, Sascha Altman duBrul is the cofounder of the Icarus Project in New York, and training director for the Institute for the Development of Human Arts



### Chris Hansen

Director of Intentional Peer Support, training people in how to create transformative relationships as a powerful alternative to coercion and forced treatment



### Skeena Rathor

Skeena is the Vision Coordinator for the Extinction Rebellion International movement. XR uses non violent civil disobedience to achieve radical change



### Karen Taylor

Trained psychiatric nurse and Director of Working to Recovery, providing innovative mental health training internationally and pioneers of recovery communities



### Mirabai Swingler

Spiritual Care Lead at the North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT), founder of the Only Us Campaign, psychotherapist, Spiritual Crisis Network member and activist



### Sarah Stone

Executive Director for Samaritans in Wales and former Deputy Commissioner for Older People in Wales



### Benna Waites

Joint Head of Psychology, Counselling & Arts Therapies, for Aneurin Bevan Health Board, passionate about facilitating compassionate care in the NHS



### Brigid Bowen

Founder and curator of Compassionate Mental Health. Brigid is a freelance journalist and writer whose personal journey with psychosis and recovery is the driving force behind this event



## Speakers



### Tommy Holgate

Ex-tabloid journalist whose brush with death led to a renewed appreciation for life and a desire to inspire others to embrace health and write new stories



### Clare Hedin

Social healer who helps people get back into alignment with themselves, other people and the earth, through the power of sound

### Thank you to our sponsors

We are calling for healing mental health services in a range of settings that people feel safe to use when they are in crisis and in need of connection. Our sponsors share our ethos of compassionate approaches to individual and societal recovery.

### Organising and Wellbeing Team

Karen Taylor, Tommy Holgate, Clare Hedin and Benna Waites are our Wellbeing Team for the gathering. Brigid Bowen and Jenny Grewal are the Organising Team. All are on-site throughout the day for any support you need.

Any of these workshops and group discussions may include distressing content being presented or discussed. Please put your own wellbeing first - you are welcome to take time out if you need it. Please don't hesitate to make yourself known to the Wellbeing Team if you feel overwhelmed at any point, or need support.



### About Us

### Compassionate Mental Health

Compassionate Mental Health is a Community Interest Company (number 11938822) working with people across the UK and internationally, who have experienced difficulties with their mental health; their families and support networks; those who work within the field of mental health, and the wider public. We promote compassionate approaches to mental health, and aim to be part of radically changing the conversation around mental illness.

We run a series of gatherings that showcase a range of compassionate approaches to mental health and wellbeing. These provide accessible opportunities for people to have transformational learning experiences, and model an environment of safety and community for people to step back from their lives and recover a sense of purpose and wellness.

We also offer training, communication, publications, influencing and research activities to support people to rediscover meaning in their lives and recover a sense of hope for their future.

Directors: Brigid Bowen, Sir Stephen O'Brien and Dr Sangeet Bhullar (company number 11938822)



## Workshops

### T-Maps

Sascha Altman duBrul

*"What if emotional sensitivities were seen, not as mental illnesses to be cured, but as gifts to be managed in ways that help people thrive?"*  
~ Sascha Altman duBrul

We are living in political times that require a level of self-awareness and solidarity that takes conscious practice if we're going to survive. Transformative Mutual Aid Practices (T-MAPs) are a set of community-developed tools that provide space for building a personal "map" of wellness strategies, resilience practices and collective resources. It is a way to talk about our needs and desires, strengths and weaknesses, and work towards understanding ourselves and collaborating with others.

T-Maps can be used as a guide for navigating challenging times and communicating with the important people in our lives. Through a mix of collective brainstorming, creative story-telling, theater games, art/collage making, and breath/mindfulness practices, the group will be guided through a process to develop greater personal wellness and collective transformation.

### Introduction to Intentional Peer Support (IPS)

Chris Hansen

*"If I had only a single training to send staff, it would be IPS without hesitation. A must for anybody currently in this field or aspiring to be. To characterise it as a training is a disservice. It was a life-changing event."*

IPS is a powerful framework for thinking about and creating mutual relationships. It is used across the world in settings ranging from peer-run programmes in New York, to traditional services in Scotland.

During the workshop, participants will learn about the key principles of IPS. You will start to explore

how to question assumptions and judgements, and stay connected and curious in the moment. Chris will help open up new ways of listening and building trust, and how to focus on the quality of relationships instead of trying to fix each other.

### Introduction to Open Dialogue

Mark Steven Hopfenbeck

Open Dialogue is a compassionate approach that involves working with families and social networks, rather than just the individual. It equips staff of all disciplines with the tools to effect change at deeper levels, and discover how we can reshape a social response to psychosis and emotional crisis.

An Open Dialogue approach aims to minimise the use of neuroleptics, and defines madness as a process that should be responded to as a meaningful life crisis. Open Dialogue was developed in Western Lapland in Finland over the last 25-30 years. International results consistently show that it reduces hospitalisation, the use of medication, and results in less crisis recurrence compared with other approaches. Schizophrenia diagnosis rates have also dramatically dropped.

The Open Dialogue leaders say:

*"Psychosis does not live in the head. It lives in the in-between of family members, and the in-between of people. It is in the relationship, and the one who is psychotic makes the bad condition visible. He or she 'wears the symptoms' and has the burden to carry them."*







## Venue Information



### Venue

**Kingsley Hall, Powis Rd, Bromley-by-Bow,  
London, E3 3HJ**

Each gathering has been held in a venue that is therapeutic in its own way, and Kingsley Hall is no exception. Started by the extraordinary Muriel and Doris Lester in memory of their brother Kingsley, it became an important community hub and place of fellowship for all. During the General Strike of 1926, Kingsley Hall was a shelter and soup kitchen for workers. Mahatma Gandhi stayed at Kingsley Hall when he visited London in 1931, and in 1935, the Jarrow hunger Marchers stayed at the Hall. Between 1965 - 1970 R. D. Laing, Joe Berke and friends turned Kingsley Hall into a radical therapeutic community, where people could be free from restraint to emerge from madness into self healing.

**“Insanity - a perfectly rational adjustment to an insane world.” R.D Laing**

**Please bring warm clothes in case the building is draughty.** Kingsley Hall is an old and historic building, but there are few mod cons so dress comfortably. If you like you can also bring a cushion if you want to join the early arrival meditation session in the morning and prefer not to sit in a chair.

**Buddy Up** to get here - you can use our Facebook Group to meet others to travel with

[www.facebook.com/groups/CMHcommunity/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/CMHcommunity/)



### Arrival

Arrive from 9.30am to register in the Hall. You can join Skeena Rathor for two optional, early morning guided meditation sessions in the Peace Garden at 9.00 or 9.40. Please remind the Welcome Desk of any dietary or access requirements and photography permissions when you register.

### Getting to Kingsley Hall

Tube: Bromley By Bow, DLR Bow Church

Buses: 25, 205, 8, 108, S2

Parking is very limited, so please use public transport if possible. Please leave plenty of time to get here if you haven't visited Kingsley Hall before and are unsure of the location.

### Accessibility

Ground floor and Peace Garden have wheelchair access. Induction Hearing Loop for Hearing Aid Users (Main Hall). Please let us know in advance if you have any specific access requirements.

### Photography and filming policy

There may be discreet photography and filming taking place during the event for public information and publicity purposes. Please let us know at registration if you do not consent to be filmed or photographed.

### Conference Contacts

Brigid Bowen and Jenny Grewal 07711 051 241  
[ask@compassionatementalhealth.co.uk](mailto:ask@compassionatementalhealth.co.uk)

**“There’s ‘Them’ and there’s ‘Us’. We are well, happy and safe. They are mentally ill and dangerous. Is this really true? Or is the uncomfortable truth that there’s a continuum, a scale along which we all slide back and forth during our lives. When we separate ourselves we hurt those labelled as sick, ill, even mad, but we also hurt ourselves...” ~ Only Us Campaign ~**