



The 'Keep the heid' newsletter!

April 2021

What's been happening?

Our lovely MAD group members have been adjusting to life with slightly less restrictions in place recently and have been reporting this as being a real positive.

Our MAD sunflowers are also thriving which is amazing to see... please note the use of a kebab stick to help keep them upright. Very impressed with the recycling effort there too!



Thoughts for this month

During discussion with a Justice Services service user this month they remarked that they felt that people who have misused drugs or alcohol are often labelled that way for the rest of their lives. Even moving on from a heroin addiction that ended around four years ago, he told me that people will still call him negative names on the street. He admitted that it can be disheartening and that he struggles to cope with this when it happens and on low days it can even make him think about using again – a sort of “if people say I am, I might as well be” mentality. Thankfully he is stable enough in his recovery that he wouldn't do this, but it prompted a lot of thought around the harm labels can do especially to people trying to make changes... or indeed, make a difference to their lives.

When we were speaking about it, he mentioned that he still thinks of himself as “an offender” because he's on a community Order. When it's over, he admitted that he probably will think of himself as an “ex-offender”. We talked about the impact of that terminology and spoke about other, more positive, labels such as father, partner, friend. He acknowledged that while he knows he is all of those things, he doesn't often feel they are primarily how he is viewed or views himself.

It's sad how often we view ourselves with negative labels and how these can often be reinforced by those around us in the community. Why are they the ones that seem to stick?

Some more poetic moments for 2021!

Billy has given us a very powerful poem for us to share with you today. It shares some personal experiences and thoughts. * Trigger warning for discussions of suicide/child abuse *

We will have a personal story share next month from a friend of the MAD group.

On the edge of the moon (27/02/2021)

What became of those children,
Will they be loved or abused?
And what will become of their mother,
Was she happy to be used?
Their father he left and slipped out of
sight.
No one there to protect them at night.
Evil looming in every room inside that
cottage,
On the edge of the moon.

Whatever happened to that Police Station,
Only a hundred metres away?
Did the Police just turn their backs,
And carry on with their day?
Whatever happened to that cottage,
That has gone with age?
Evil loomed in every room, inside that
cottage,
On the edge of the moon.

What happened to those children,
Now that they have grown up?
Only one has survived,
The rest, they just gave up.
The past has gone, but still in my
head.
The only survivor, the rest are
dead.
Evil loomed in every room inside
that cottage,
On the edge of the moon.

Last but not least...

This month we did a 'Very Special Bangers and Mash' which went down a treat with everyone!
Please let us see your attempts if you give it a try!

Ingredients (makes 2 portions)

- 1 Red Onion
- 1 Tablespoon of Onion Chutney
- 6 Sausages
- 2 Carrots
- 4 potatoes
- Butter
- Flour
- 1 Beef Stock Cube
- Oil
- Salt and Pepper





Preparation

1. Wash the carrots, cut the top and bottom off and cut into slices.
2. Peel and finely dice the red onion.
3. Wash and cut the potatoes into small cubes with the skin on (you can also peel the skin if you don't like it left on).
4. Preheat the oven to 220°C (200°C if fan or Gas mark 7).
5. Boil the kettle.

Instructions

1. Add the Carrots to a baking tray put a small drizzle of oil over them and season them with a pinch of salt and pepper.
2. Add the sausages to the tray and put into the oven for approximately 20 minutes until the sausages are cooked right through.
3. Heat some butter in a pan over a low heat. Once hot, add the onion with a pinch of salt and cook until the onions start to caramelize (around 8 minutes).
4. Whilst your onions are caramelising, add boiling water to a pot over a medium-high heat and add the potatoes. Cook until soft (around 10-12 minutes).
5. Boil the kettle again and use 250ml of boiling water to dissolve the beef stock cube in a separate pot. Add in the onion chutney and mix it until it's combined – this is your onion gravy stock.
6. Once the onions are caramelised, add 1 tablespoon of flour to the pan and cook for around 1 minute, stirring to make sure the onions are evenly coated. Add in the onion gravy stock and increase the heat to medium-high. Cook for another 7-8 minutes or until it has thickened into a gravy like consistency.
7. Your potatoes should be ready to mash. Drain the water from these, replace on a very low heat and add a bit of butter and splash of milk. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper and mash until they are as smooth as you like them
8. Serve the sausages, mash and carrots on a plate and add as much gravy as you like. Enjoy!