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The Social Psychology of Social Prescribing

Introduction to the Seminar Series

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Addressing the Social Determinants of Health



The screenshot shows the BBC News website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the BBC logo, a 'Sign in' button, and a menu with categories: News, Sport, Weather, iPlayer, TV, and Rad. Below this is a red header with the word 'NEWS' in white. Underneath the header is a secondary navigation bar with links for Home, UK, World, Business, Politics, Tech, Science, Health, and Family & Education. A sub-menu for 'UK' is expanded, showing links for England, N. Ireland, Scotland, Alba, Wales, Cymru, and Local News. The main article headline reads 'Minister for loneliness appointed to continue Jo Cox's work', dated 17 January 2018. Social sharing icons for Facebook, Twitter, Messenger, Email, and a general 'Share' button are visible at the bottom of the article preview.



The screenshot shows the The Telegraph News website. The masthead includes 'The Telegraph' logo and navigation links for HOME, NEWS, and SPC. The main heading is 'News'. A secondary navigation bar lists categories: UK, World, Politics, Science, Education, Health, Brexit, Royals, and Investigations. The featured article is titled 'NHS to divert 'frequent flyers' to A&E with coffee and counselling', with a sub-link 'News' and a home icon.



Belfast Telegraph DIGITAL

Doctors' leaders urge funding of social prescribing in all GP practices

Researchers found an average drop of 28% in demand on GP services following a referral to a social prescribing service.



THE SUNDAY TIMES

LEADING ARTICLE
MAY 8 2018, 12:01AM, THE TIMES

Social Prescribing

GP's surgery can do much to help the lonely by bringing in the voluntary sector

Social Prescribing: A new method of health service delivery

- SP tackles the social needs of vulnerable populations by linking at-risk individuals with local community support
- Main method of NHS delivery is via primary care
 - Suitable patients referred to a link worker who co-produces a social prescription with the client
 - However there are other routes and other models of SP
- SP is gaining in popularity but as with any new approach it is not without its challenges and sceptics
 - Some concern voiced around the evidence base

Tackling the “loneliness epidemic” by building social connections

What do we know about social prescribing?

Open Access

Research

BMJ Open Social prescribing: less rhetoric and more reality. A systematic review of the evidence

Liz Bickerdike,¹ Alison Booth,² Paul M Wilson,³ Kate Farley,⁴ Kath Wright¹

We...have found little convincing evidence for either effectiveness or value for money (p.15)

Have we missed a step?

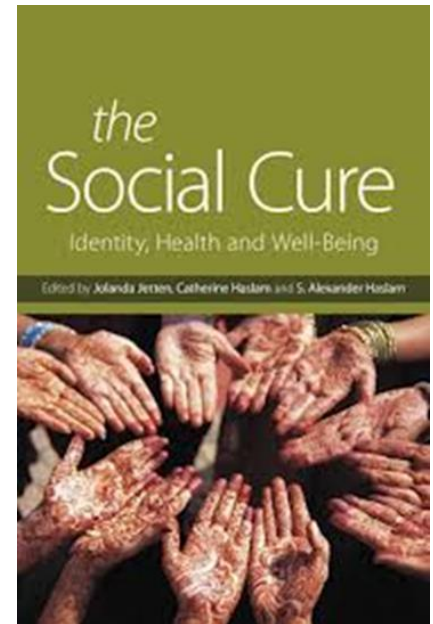
What are the 'active ingredients' of Social Prescribing?

- How do social connections benefit health?
 - How can individuals be most effectively linked to activities?
 - What leads to perseverance, active participation or disengagement?
 - What are the social and economic as well as health benefits?
 - How do we deliver sustainable services?
- The role of Social Psychology
 - A growing evidence-base that can help to answer these questions
 - Develop SP interventions that are theoretically-informed



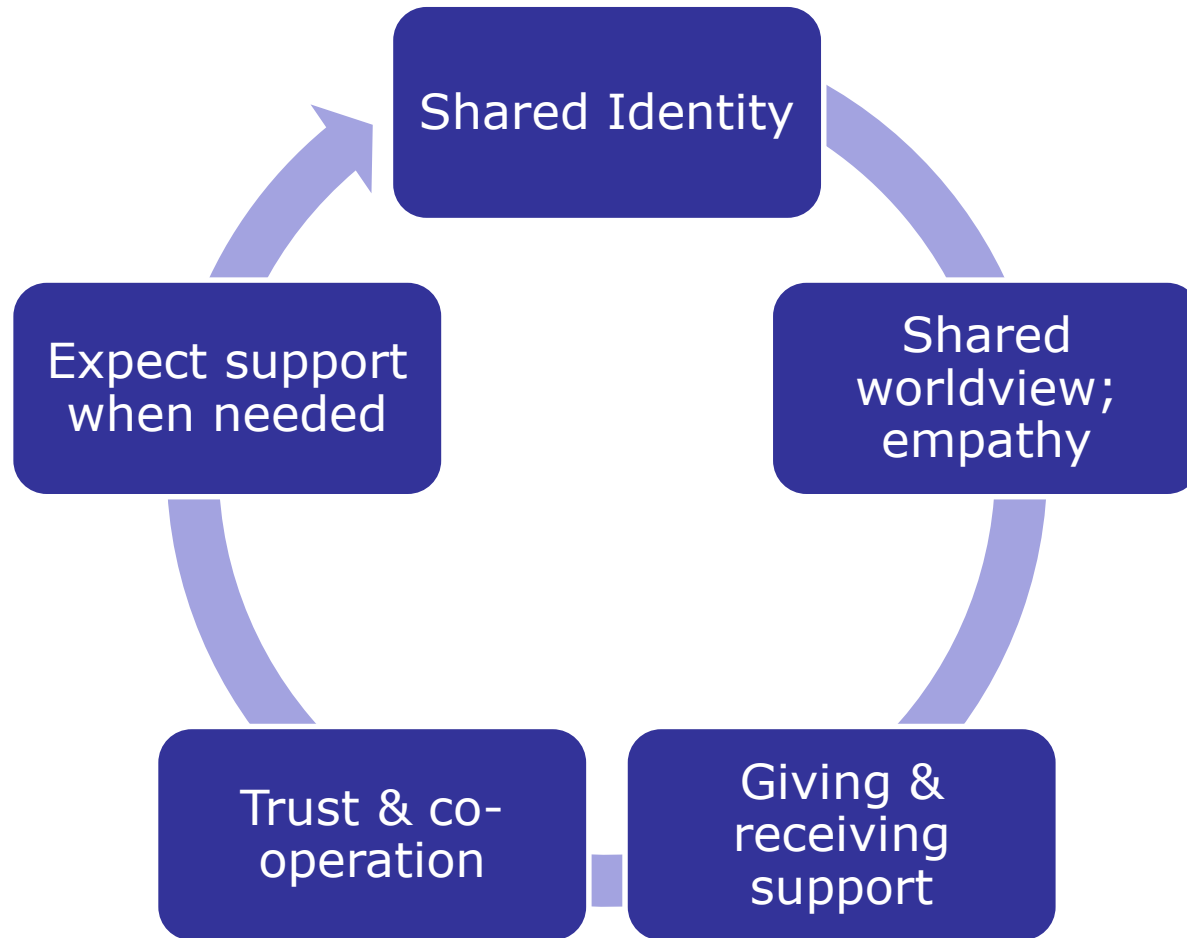
Our Approach: Group Memberships & Health

- The 'Social Cure' (Jetten, Haslam, & Haslam, 2012)
 - Groups give us a sense of meaning, purpose & belonging
 - Important source of support
 - Groups motivate us to engage in behaviours that impact our health & well-being
 - But only to the extent that we *identify* with these groups



“Virtuous Circle of Identification”

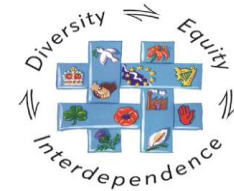
(Sani, 2012)



LIMERICK
REGENERATION



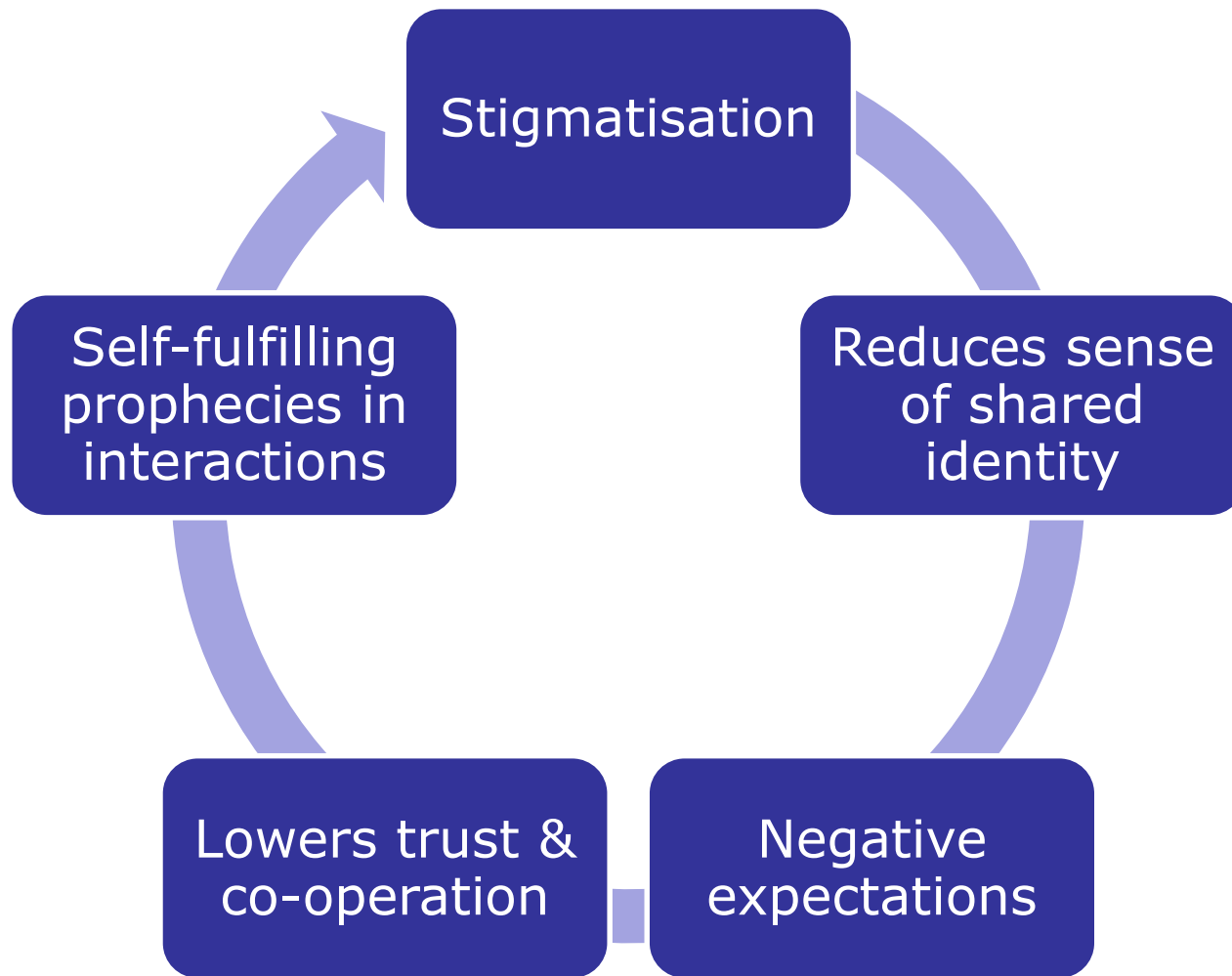
Community Relations Council



Groups, Identities & Health Research Group NTU



Stevenson et al. (2014) "Vicious circle" of disengagement



The 'Social Curse'

Why Social Psychology? Today's seminar

- An introduction to the social psychological approach to social prescribing
 - A growing evidence-base
- Advocate a groups-based approach
- Connections need to be meaningful
 - Not just about putting people in activities
- Helping individuals to take charge of their social worlds
- SP evaluations: For whom and how does SP work?
 - Measuring key constructs of interest to those providing and commissioning social prescribing services
- Vulnerable groups – how to engage the “disengaged”?

References

Stevenson, C., McNamara, N. & Muldoon, O. (2014). Stigmatised identity and public service usage in disadvantaged communities: Residents', community workers' and service providers' perspectives. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 24(6), 453-466.

Available at <http://irep.ntu.ac.uk/id/eprint/26020/>

Bickerdike, L., Booth, A., Wilson, P.M., Farley, K., & Wright, K. (2017). Social prescribing: Less rhetoric and more reality? A systematic review of the evidence. *BMJ Open*, 7, e013384.

Available at <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/7/4/e013384>