

The Power Threat Meaning Framework and alternatives to the biomedical disease model of mental health

The Power Threat Meaning Framework is an ambitious attempt to outline a conceptual alternative to the diagnostic model of psychological distress and unusual experiences. The project was funded by the British Psychological Society's Division of Clinical Psychology over a five-year period, and was launched in London, UK on January 12th 2018. The Framework builds on the Division of Clinical Psychology's 2013 Position Statement 'Classification of behaviour and experience in relation to functional psychiatric diagnoses' which called for 'a paradigm shift ... towards a conceptual system which is no longer based on a "disease" model'.

Project members, representing a mixture of professional and survivor backgrounds, were Lucy Johnstone (project lead), Mary Boyle (deputy lead), John Cromby, Jacqui Dillon, David Harper, Peter Kinderman, Eleanor Longden, David Pilgrim, and John Read. The Framework offers an alternative, evidence-based, non-medical approach to identifying patterns in distress, including those that are called 'psychosis'. It synthesises the causal roles of power, threats, evolved threat responses, social discourses, and personal meanings and narratives, and can serve as a knowledge resource for the construction of narratives of distress both within and across cultures. Most importantly, it restores the link between personal distress and wider contexts of inequality and social injustice, and is thus relevant to campaigning and change at multiple levels.

The Power Threat Meaning Framework explores:

- 'What has happened to you?' (How is Power operating in your life?)
- 'How did it affect you?' (What kind of Threats does this pose?)
- 'What sense did you make of it?' (What is the Meaning of these situations and experiences to you?)
- 'What did you have to do to survive?' (What kinds of Threat Response are you using?)

The workshop will give delegates the opportunity to learn about the key principles of the Framework, demonstrate how the Framework might work in practice, with examples and exercises, and participate in discussion and feedback about the Framework.

Presenter:



Peter Kinderman is Professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Liverpool, studying the psychological and social determinants of mental health. He is a practicing NHS Clinical Psychologist, Clinical Advisor at Public Health England, and former President of the British Psychological Society. He is the author of various journal articles and book chapters, as well as "A Prescription for Psychiatry" (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014) and "New Laws of Psychology" (Little, Brown, 2015). His latest book 'A Manifesto for Mental Health' is due to be published later this year. He can be followed on Twitter as @peterkinderman

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