

Emily Crosby

Emily is performance maker, visual artist and Performing Arts graduate. She has gathered a wealth of experience of utilising creativity to process her lived experience of mental illness. After having joined Bright Sparks as a service user, she now contributes as a participatory artist.

Lucy Ovenall

Lucy is a performance maker, writer and director. She is currently undertaking a PhD in Drama at De Montfort University. She is a firm believer in the restorative powers of creativity for mental health, drawn from both her academic research and personal experience.

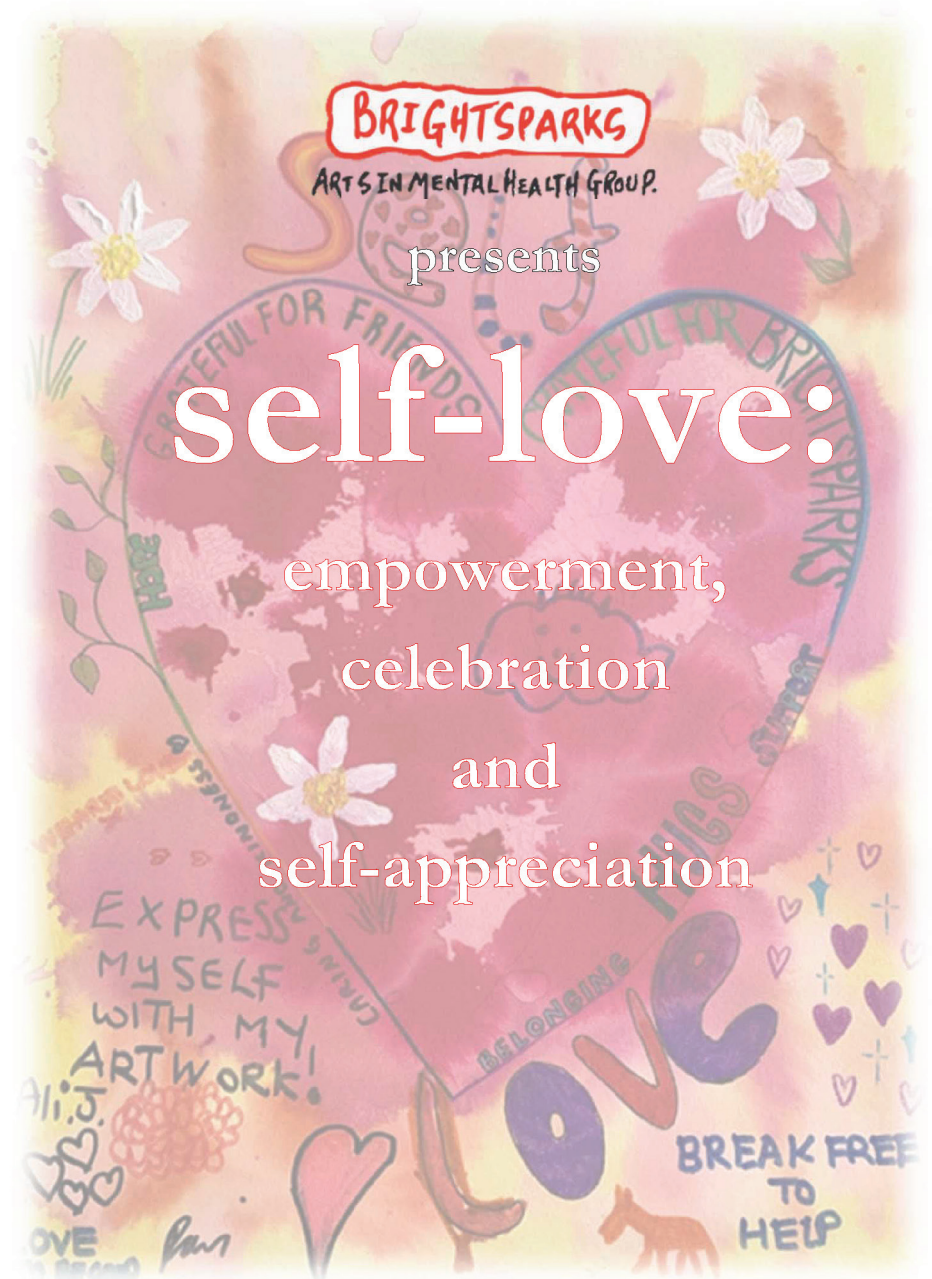
“It has been a joy to work with Emily, Lucy and our mental health service user artists & writers to produce this wonderful anthology of writing and art, with associated exhibition. Our service users have become totally engaged with the whole process of discussing wonderfully inspiring topics then producing beautiful works of art and writing.”

We very much hope that you enjoy reading and viewing this anthology.

Tim Sayers MSc RMN Arts in Mental Health Co-Ordinator
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For further information about the groups and BrightSparks: Arts in Mental Health Group please visit <https://www.brightsparksarts.uk/>





ArtSpace group collaboration. Autumn 2021.



Alison Johnson. Autumn 2021.

Gratitude.

I am grateful for being alive,
Even though I have to work hard,
And strive to keep going,
Everything I do is worth it,
I am a very lucky person.

Dawn Seaman

Let's exist on purpose.
 Let's enjoy the sun.
 Let's pick first ourselves.

Let's wake up early.
 Go to bed the same.
 Let's laugh.
 Let's love.

Let's sing and dance in the rain.
 Let's converse with monkeys.
 Let's ride the horses for fun.
 Got flowers in the garden.

There is no need for a gun.
 Let's exist forever.
 Swim in the deep blue sea.
 Nature is our playground.
 I surely hope you agree.

Ashanti



Sarbjot Sandhu. Autumn 2021.

Art Space and Showcase Collective

Are two groups of mental health service user artists and writers who meet up every week at The Attenborough Arts Centre to produce visual art and creative writing in a safe and welcoming environment.

In Autumn 2021, over a period of 10 weeks, the artists from Bright Sparks' Art Space and Showcase Collective produced a series of moving, extraordinary and celebratory work responding to various stimuli falling under the umbrella of *Self-Love*. Guided by participatory artists, Emily Crosby and Lucy Ovenall, they created the insightful work that can be found here in this beautiful anthology.



Christian Toon. Autumn 2021.



Meeting at the bar. Richard Abraham. Autumn 2021.



Ravi. Autumn 2021.



Richard Abraham. Autumn 2021.

Four Haikus.

I spent a pleasant
evening with a quiet soul
drinking tea with hugs

Walking through a pool.
Of russet Autumn leaves
marks your steps in life

Grin like a cheshire
Twinkling your cat eyes smiles
To everyone

Be the love to others
That you want to believe in
Also love yourself

Sarbjot Sandhu

Reading.

I find it hard to find the time to read, but when I find that time. I find that it nourishes my brain and my capacity of knowledge. I love to read and can only wish that I could do it more than I am currently doing.

I find that when I read, I have a feeling that I am in a different dimension and different world. Maybe the seventh heaven, even the matrix, the mantra, the man trap. It gives me the space to be able to talk to family and friends with a new take on a continuously changing thought process.

If I don't read, I watch TV and that has a more concise thought cultivation. But when I do read it is merely quietly inside my mind and that has a calming effect on my soul, my being, my spiritual self. I have read the holy bible several times once aloud and other books which have the same theme and if it wasn't for the English language, I wouldn't be able to read any of vast catalogue of any genre.

Ashanti



Everyone Matter.
Mandy Brook.
Autumn 2021.

Trees.

Love makes the world go round
Listen to the sounds
I love my brothers, I love my sister
There are no others, she ain't a blister
I love my girlfriend Paula
That is her name
We live our lives
We play the game
My family and friends are a network
Like the roots of the trees
Intertwined like spaghetti
Trees talk to one another
One of the roots could be a brother
Mycelium is like a network of cables
Fungi sit upon our tables
The trees connect underground
This is what scientists have found
They interconnect like an operation
Up and down our beautiful nation

James McAtear

Love.

I love to ride the bus boarding, riding, praying, arriving. I get on I enjoy the duration, especially the scenic route. I do love having short conversation with people I know, until I or they get off. I love the fact that I can get a discount if I can buy a special ticket. A week ticket or a flexi week ticket which is my favourite and the word is love.
I love you.

Ashanti

Gratitude.

My favourite moment of the day!
Is in the morning having my breakfast!
Weetabix with green top milk!
Or rice crispies and green top milk!
Or toast.

Alison Johnson



Wonderful World. Mandy Brook. Autumn 2021.

Climate change speech.

To the New York Environmental Group.

I was devastated to find that much of our planet is burning in rage, we have fire everywhere.

In places like Australia, Siberia, France, and Calcutta.

To stop this burning we need to cut our polluting emissions which are killing off all parts of the earth.

If we carry on this way, we won't have a home for our children and grandchildren.

Please make sure that everybody makes an effort to use less pollutants. This is more important than you could ever imagine, because not many of us can walk on fire.

Dawn Seaman.



Vanessa. Autumn 2021.

All of the Amazing Things about Me.

I've got attitude and a fashionable sense of style!

I am a very creative and independent lady!

I love to cook a Sunday dinner, spaghetti bolognese, chicken casserole, tuna pasta, puddings, strawberry crumble and custard, apple crumble and cream, life's a dream!

My artwork is very abstract!

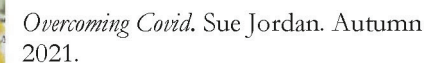
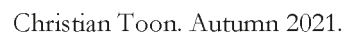
I love to sing, and I love rap!

Purple and green are my favourite colours!

Sparkle and shine to show my true colours!

Alison Johnson

They are down and out,
Cold hands stretch out.
They see the stars on cold
hardy nights,
Cardboard mattress
attempting to warm,
The souls of the
downtrodden.
Their clothes don't see
washing machines,
Nowhere to shower and
shave.
Sadness fills the mind of the
no fixed abode, and the sofa
surfers,
A coin or two, they say thank
you,
There is a meal in that or
something to wet the lips.
Some get drenched in alcohol,
It's all they have, it becomes
their friend.
Some go round the bend
seeing no future,
Which breaks the heart of the
lovers,
Wherever we may be, let
compassion run free.



I love me,
Who I can be, Someone
thinks I am sexy,
Which made me love my
body.
I love me conditionally,
Friends tell me they love
me,
Janet, my cousin loves me,
So, I must be okay, or they
wouldn't love me.
I am intelligent,
I am a comedienne,
I am a writer,
I am an actress.
I am a poet,
I am a musician,
I am a teacher,
So, I must be alright. Or I
wouldn't be these things.

Netty Jonas

I am Mandy not a Transit Van.

I am Mandy not a transit van
To be trans, was John, brother on holiday, away
Sister Mandy, big girl, loves art, writing, gardening
Love making fun of Boris and Trump, idiots
My best friend, she nice looking, keep me in order
Leicester is my home, born in Yorkshire
Love my bus pass, travelling around England
My friends are like my family
Love my garden, drawing, spoken words
Meeting people, Bollywood, dancing, Rob Gee show
Glass of vino, strawberries, ice cream
Love music, Shadows, Rod Stewart, Queen, Frank Sinatra
Helping each other
Thank you to BrightSparks, Remit, Phoenix
Love Leicester, everyone matters
Days out, my friends
Yes, I fly to the moon, break free
Pint of Tiger
Mandy Brook

A Love Letter my Body.

I love my body,
Not being muscular, but quite healthy,
Not necessarily wealthy.
God is so important to me,
The beat goes on is my phrase, my acronym.
This possible mental attitude and last one is
No failure 1962
I love to help and be caring and thoughtful all in one
But I thank Jesus who is my No 1.
Peace
Ian Liburd (Romeo)



Alison Johnson. Autumn 2021.

Self-care.

A Cadburys chocolate
Twirl,
it made me feel so good,
Those endorphins make
me feel better,
Better than I thought I
could.
Stroking my dog Karma,
She makes me feel much
calmer.
Speaking to my mum,
She made me feel so
happy,
Going for a walk,
I passed a dog who was
so yappy.
Doing meditation,
Makes me feel so calm,
Smelling lovely smells,
Takes away my alarm.
Going to Brightsparks,
Keeps me feeling sane,
I won't have another
breakdown,
NEVER EVER
AGAIN!!!

Dawn Seaman

Self-care.

Wake on sunny day
Bright sunshine with headache
Drink glass of Highland Water, no need for a pill
Open French door, walking in garden
With Rod Stewart, with sailing, and walking in garden
Dreaming of a salmon and salad outside in garden
Drawing of beautiful garden, in my world
Ring my mobile, go out for a day with friend
My bus pass is very good friend
Visiting garden centre to have nice fish and chips

Mandy Brook



Tara. Autumn 2021.



Rob Holt. Autumn 2021.



Catherine Bromley. Autumn 2021.



Patrice O'Reilly. Autumn 2021.

Short Poems.

Let the day open
Up and enjoy
The moments as
They occur. Some
On the spur of the
Moment.

Once you do some-
Thing good for
Someone - it
Will follow onto
Others through the
Day.

Don't let things
Or anyone put a
Dampner on your
Day. Remember
Cherish each day.

Think of your
thoughts
And think before
you speak, so as
Not to offend any-
One and make a
Friend.



Sarbjot Sandhu. Autumn 2021.

Well, here's a motto anyway,
Make someone's day bright in some way,
Make them all laugh for all day.
Make a light for someone. Hope
it shines all the day long
Let it shine henceforth.

Look after your fellow man,
Make and do something for them all,
That is my own plan.

Vanessa

Four Haikus.

Give to the needy,
Never hold anything back,
It's good, to give love.

Keep it in mind that,
Love is the final answer,
No matter the time.

This is my theory,
Live love laugh. Do it again,
Breed love until when.

Let us live in love,
I believe in chivalry
And love at first sight.

Ashanti



Pritam. Autumn 2021.



Sue Jordan. Autumn 2021.

Three Haikus.

The wind blows the grass
I watch the bushes thinking over
Each bush is different

I sing and cook tea
The dog snuffles loud
He begs for food quietly
Then wags his tail loud

Carrots are orange
They crunch in my mouth nicely
Give me more carrots

Jane Knight

I Care for Myself.

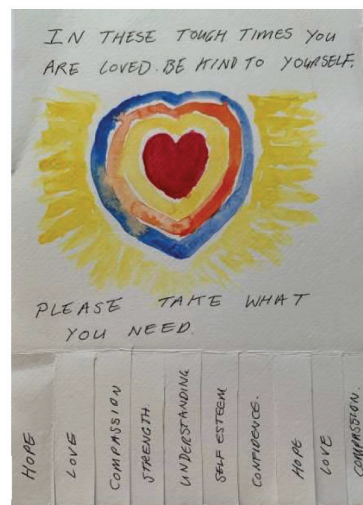
I care for myself and others,
I love my mind,
I love my friends,
I just make amends.
Without my mind,
I would never find,
I wouldn't know I am kind.
Please just give me a sign,
Or give me a bottle of wine.
Someone I know loved my body,
Which means I can't be shoddy,
At least I'm not Showaddywaddy,
And I don't drink toddies.
So I can't be that bad,
Or I would be sad,
And everyone would be mad.
And I wouldn't be loved by lads,
And I would be a tad,
I wouldn't have a pad.
So now I am glad,
I am me.

Netty Jonas

Maria. Autumn 2021.



Evony. Autumn 2021.

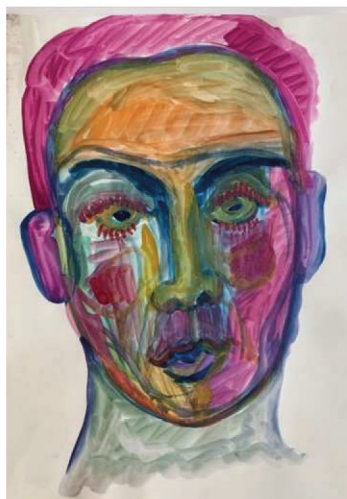


Things that make Life worth Living.
Working towards my third guide dog,
Trying to learn all the streets and roads on the way to the shops.
Feeling my greyhound Karma,
Giving her kisses and cuddles and making her feel good.
Writing my poetry, which takes me to another world.
Eating delicious food, especially curries.
Going for long walks in the countryside,
Pubs that let dogs in.

Dawn Seaman



Jemima Ridgeway. Autumn 2021.



Christian Toon. Autumn 2021.

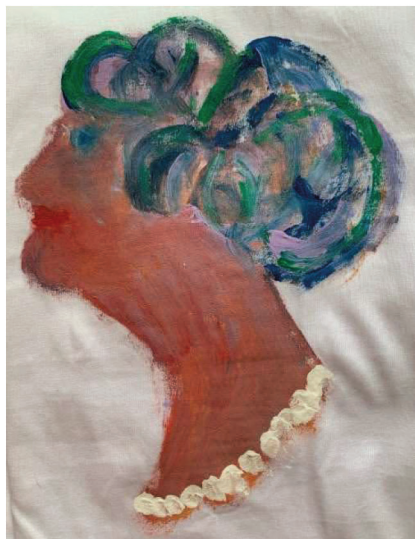
Cooking a Meal.

Cooking a meal,
I cook and it turns
into a masterpiece.
I sing and cook at
the same time,
The dinner is a
success, tasty.
I sit and eat.

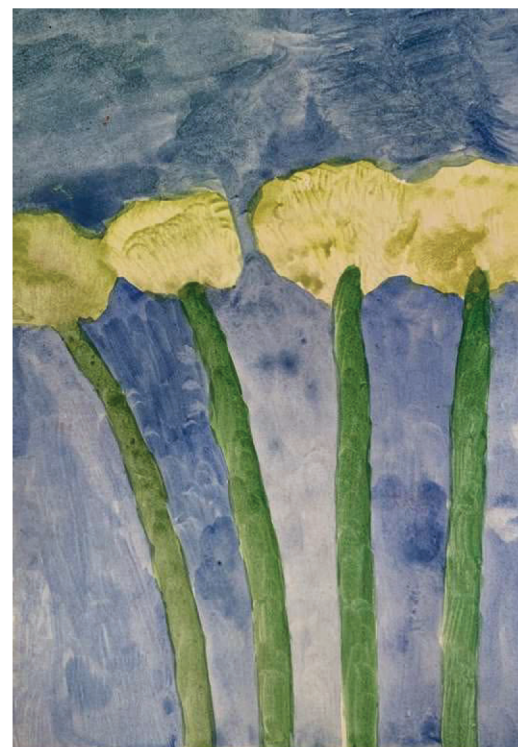
Jane Knight

Love iz not a mizunderstanding
Loneliness is needs supportive
empathetic people
Around them
Sunshine is more than vit D
It iz love beauty nature all in one
The sea in the bible meanz people
Not necessarily a church steeple

Ian Liburd (Romeo)



Jane Knight. Autumn 2021.



Rob Holt. Autumn 2021.

Nature.

Walking down a
path,
Close to trees,
green leaves.
The time of year is
spring, flowers,
daffodils, yellow,
Different tones.
Nature is amazing!
Beautiful!
Full of love to
inspire me with my
artwork,
You call it mellow
yellow, quite
rightly!
Blue sky, high
above is so clear,
brilliant,
The glow of the
sun keeps me
warm.
Bright, shiny
golden, beaming.

Alison Johnson