



Abstract Nr: 192
Internet ID: 466

Type of Presentation: Workshop

Mad Studies reading groups

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Learning Goal:

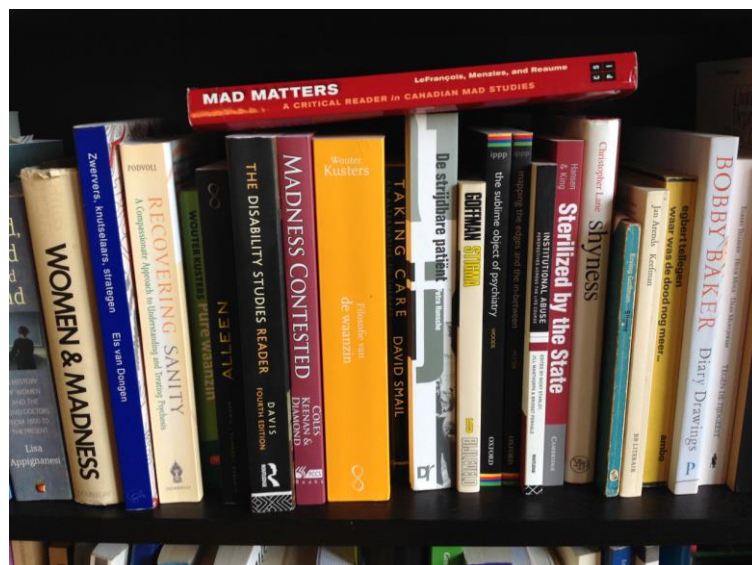
To inform service users, professionals and the public about the possibility of organizing Mad Studies-reading groups.

Abstract Text:

Foundation Perceval – a service user initiated organisation in The Netherlands- offers since 2014 Mad Studies reading groups. A group of twelve participants reads and discusses during ten meetings Mad Studies texts. The majority of the group are service users. Through the texts the participants are exposed to words and ideas that describe our experiences with other vocabularies and concepts than that of the dominant medical discourse of psychiatry. Mad Studies gives us a treasury full of words, theories and new ideas. This enables us to question and critically view the dominant views on madness. It is a laboratory for the participants to construct new identities outside the bio-medical discourse.

There is this idea floating around that mad people can not think or should not think too deeply. These groups are challenging these unspoken ideas. There is a need for these reading groups. The groups fill up easily and the participants are very enthusiastic.: *“Through this group I experienced that madness is not only a problem, it is also an interesting subject to read and discuss about.”*

My paper will be on how the reading group is organized: what do the meetings look like. The ideas and inspirations of the pedagogy of the groups. Other possible subjects that can be discussed: the attempt to de-centre whiteness in our groups; how to make a Mad Studies community; what about shy people; racist and sexist talk by participants, supporting other Mad Studies groups; making money and the co-optation that may bring; diversity in intellectual disability.



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