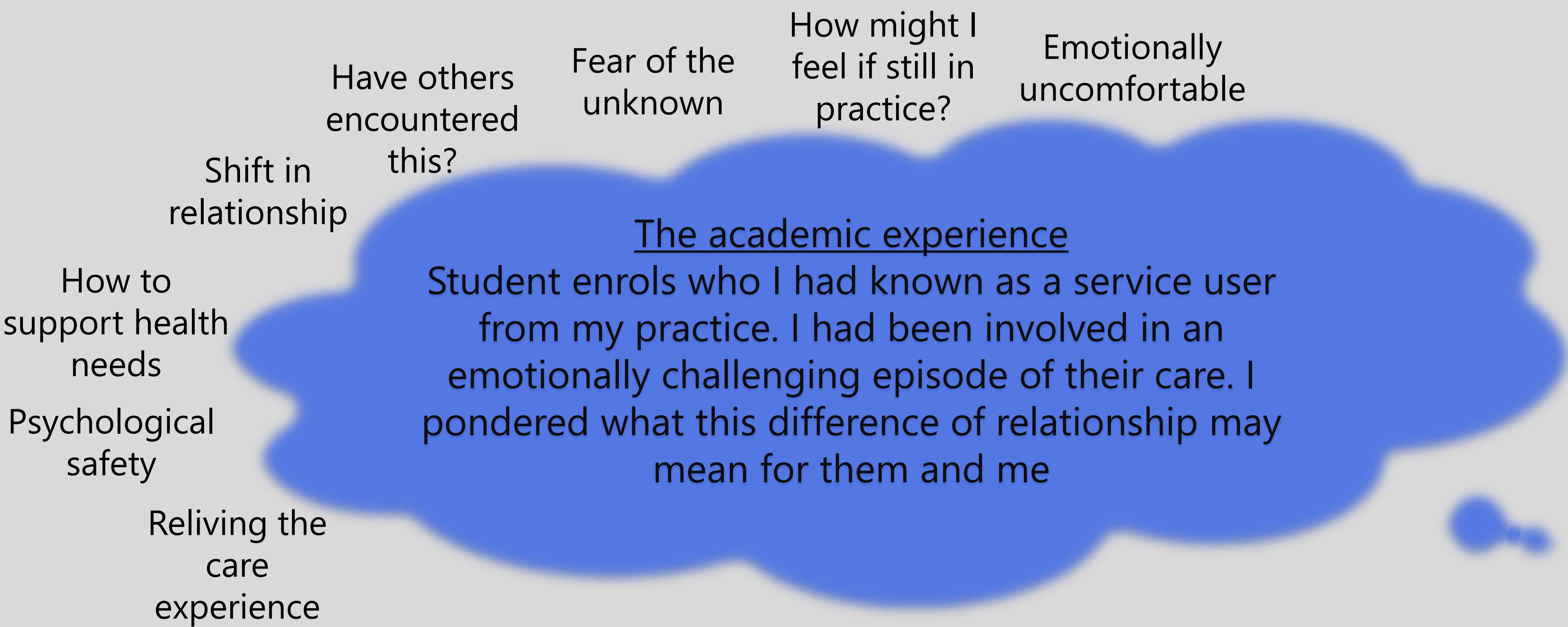


What do Mental Health Nurses think and feel when the service user becomes their student nurse: Is it really ok not to be ok?

Maile, C. BSc, PgDip, RN, SCPHN Programme Director Mental Health Nursing BSc University of Hull

Increasing numbers of university students are declaring a mental health related disability and require support to enable them to thrive and succeed (Office for Students, 2019). Developing interventions to address the barriers faced by students due to structural, personal or cultural inequalities, alongside targeted support is recognized as good practice within a whole university approach to mental health (Hughes & Spanner, 2019). Some studies have investigated how institutions can best support mental health nursing students with pre-existing mental health conditions (e.g., Ramluggun et al, 2018), but there is a dearth of literature to understand how this translates into practice for mental health nursing students accessing placements in services they have previously used. We do not know how knowledge of the student as service user impacts on the role of Practice Assessor [PA] and Practice Supervisor [PS], or what support PAs and PSs may need to effectively carry out their role. This project aimed to work with PAs and PSs through an action learning cycle to help them reflect on and learn from their thoughts and feelings towards students placed with them who had used services.

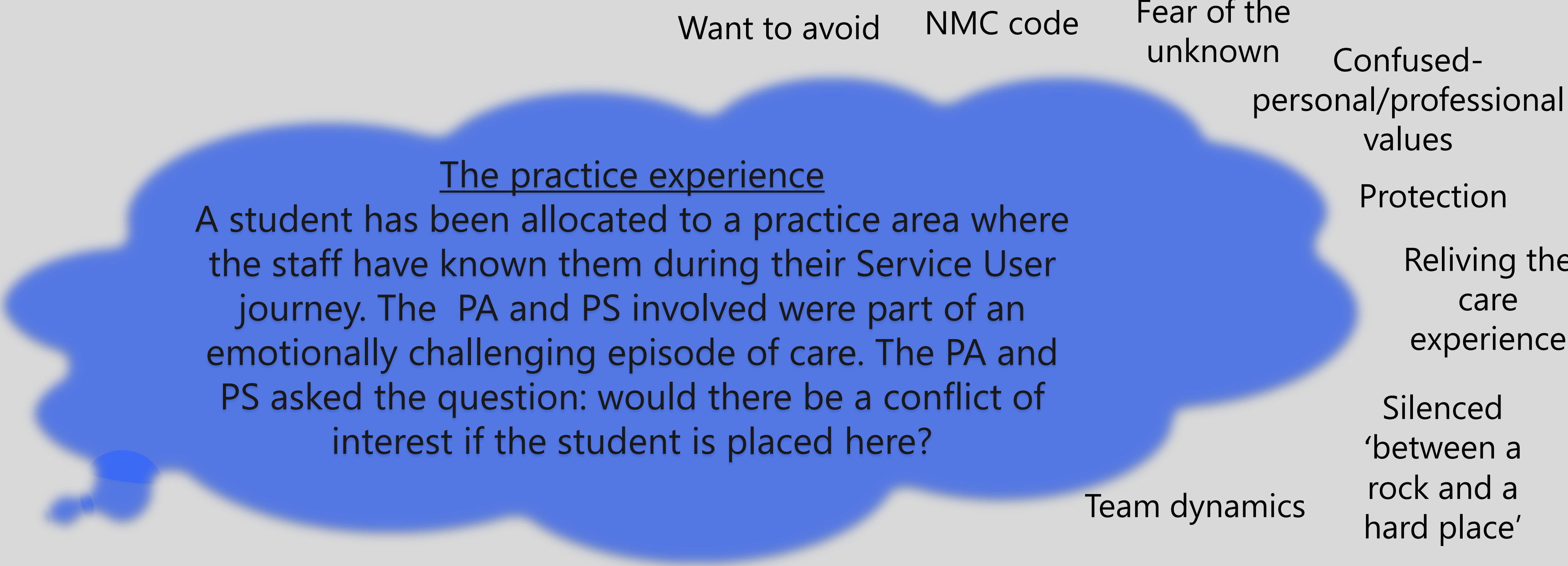


After some reflection and supervision I asked my peers within the Mental Health Nurse Academic UK (MHNAUK) forum for their views and experiences-

- What experience they have on this concept?
- What do they do?
- Is there any literature?

We discussed-

- Managed case by case
- No repository of good practice
- Little evidence on what PAs and PSs think and feel
- Emerging concept in light of changing societal attitudes – for instance wellness- ‘its ok not to be ok’



Recommendations

- Spaces should be created for nurses to discuss their thoughts and feelings without fear of judgement
- Research should focus on identifying the themes around thoughts and feelings
- A repository of good practice interventions should be evidenced and accessible to support supervision

Conclusion

- The thoughts and feelings expressed by academia and practice were often experienced for self and the student
- Current clinical supervision may not meet the needs of the assessor in terms of being able to be open and honest with a view to validation and reframing
- Mental Health Nurses can feel stuck ‘between a rock and a hard place’ often battling with their professional values and their inner feelings when exposed to traumatic work experiences

Discussions between myself, the PA, PS and the Placement Learning Facilitators allowed for confidential discussion around thoughts and feelings experienced by the PA and PS by creating a psychotherapeutic alliance and using action learning cycles-

- Identification of the personal and professional thoughts and feelings of the assessor was garnered
- Ongoing set reflective discussions throughout the placement- focussed on the thoughts and feelings of the PA and PS followed by goal setting
- Reframing of uncomfortable emotions through validation and reflection
- Discussions of possible outcomes and how to address
- Feedback and discussion of what worked well/not well

Literature cited

Hughes, G. & Spanner, L. (2019) The University Mental Health Charter. Leeds. Student Minds.

Office for Students (2019) Mental Health: Are all students being properly supported? Insight brief #5. London, Office for Students.

Ramluggun, P., Lacy, M., Cadle, M. & Anjoyeb, M. (2018). Managing the demands of the preregistration mental health nursing programme: The views of students with mental health conditions. International journal of mental health nursing, 27 (6), 1793–1804

Acknowledgments

Dr Jacquie White- Mentor, co conspirator ad all round good friend

Dr Keith Ford- Contributions to the national discussion and philosophical input

Beth Allanson- Student Mental Health Nurse and Advocate for understanding the lived experience

Paula Fox- RNMH and Practice Assessor who has helped me to further my understanding

Claire Teirnan Smith- Attendee of the network- Placement Link Facilitator

For further understanding and commentary about this poster, scan the QR code. This will take you to the University of Hull repository where you can listen to a podcast to accompany this poster. During the second half of the podcast you can listen to conversations from some of those involved In the development of the emerging theory and to the lived experience of a student mental health nurse.

