

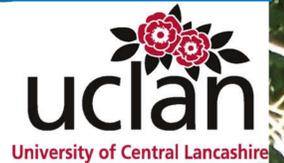
Forgiveness and Freedom in terms from aphasia: findings from WELLHEAD and SHALOM

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BACKGROUND

- **Aphasia** (acquired language impairment) restricts verbalisation for communication and for **inner rationalisation**, so it brings huge challenges for resolving issues where words are the normal currency, such as forgiveness and reconciliation.
- This project is a **collaboration** with people with aphasia working from the broad definition of spirituality as the search for **meaning and purpose in life**. The project crosses traditional boundaries between medical, psychosocial and spiritual models, building on previous work in adjustment post-stroke (Mumby and Whitworth 2013) and a model reported in Mumby and Hobbs (2017).
- This **pioneering project** establishes a structure for **spiritual assessment and a novel intervention (WELLHEAD)**.

METHODS

- The project, supported by the hospital chaplain, involved an aphasia steering group selecting a **spiritual health assessment** (SHALOM, Fisher 2010) and shaping a toolkit (WELLHEAD) developed by Mumby (2017) for **supporting life review, spiritual self-assessment and goal-setting**.
- Under UK NHS Ethical approval, ten additional people discharged from speech and language therapy with aphasia and diverse religious backgrounds took part in **in-depth videoed interviews** piloting these materials.
- **Thematic qualitative data analysis** of the interviews in NVivo was subject to cross-checking and considered spiritual health in accessible terms, highlighting the role of **verbalisation in processes concerning spiritual change and growth**.

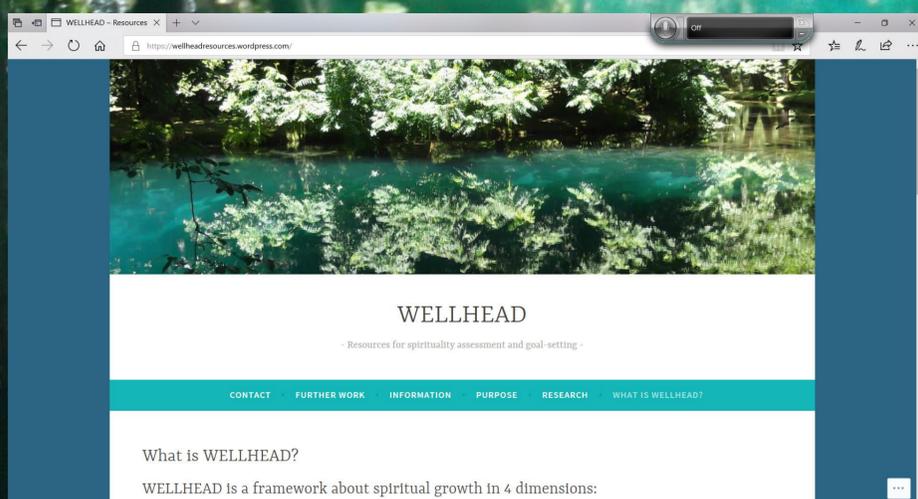
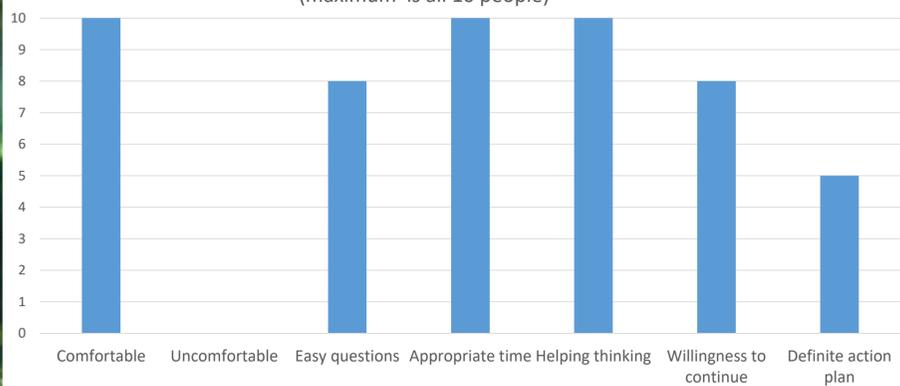
RESULTS

- 'Total communication' **facilitated** the use of SHALOM and the WELLHEAD toolkit and the results were anchored to the dimensions in WELLHEAD of **WIDE LONG HIGH and DEEP** in exploring spiritual health.
- Allowing people to **explore spirituality in their own terms and on their own terms** was crucial to the process, including insights into **forgiveness freedom and reconciliation**.

CONCLUSIONS

- **Simplifying the terms** in use for spiritual dialogue offers a way to promote **inclusion, positive change, and a sense of unified purpose**, illustrated in aphasia.
- The findings provide a **platform** for using WELLHEAD in other settings and for wider **populations for whom verbalisation may be challenging** e.g. in those with dementia.

Participants who said 'yes' in feedback questionnaire (maximum is all 10 people)



Dimension	Score /10	Key aspects
A single case example: WELLHEAD results		
WIDE	7	Small groups are easiest for being connected. Calm is found from the environment e.g. by the sea, or remembering that.
LONG	6	Still feels like 'early days'. Personal story now has meaning – it has become clearer in the last few months (? Linked to job role). A sense of having 'crossed a bridge'. Tradition may mean doing things regularly.
HIGH	6	'Unknown' is the main word. Hope for the future is there, based on information rather than belief or truth (needs to be realistic). A sense of searching for something beyond.
DEEP	8	A positive sense of finding freedom, within self. Needing to deal with guilt – painful. May involve forgiveness (of self and others). Feels like 'leaving the cage'.

Next steps:

You felt that DEEP, though well-developed (8/10) may need to move forwards to help growth in the other areas.

Not just alone, as previously, but with others.
 Needing to let go of some things – on my own.
 Considering help from a more neutral person.
 Helping others through my experience



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