

# Relevant Outcomes for a Growing World

## Measuring the Impact of Participating in Community Food Cultivation

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# Seminar Aims

1. Understand the health and wellbeing benefits of food growing for individuals and communities.
2. Consider the process of collaboratively developing an outcome measure that is context-specific and accessible.
3. Understand the process of validating an outcome measure for a specific setting.

# Context

# Approach

**Co-operative run with permaculture approach to design of garden, work and community:**

**‘People Care’, ‘Earth Care’, ‘Fair Shares’** Holmgren (2011)

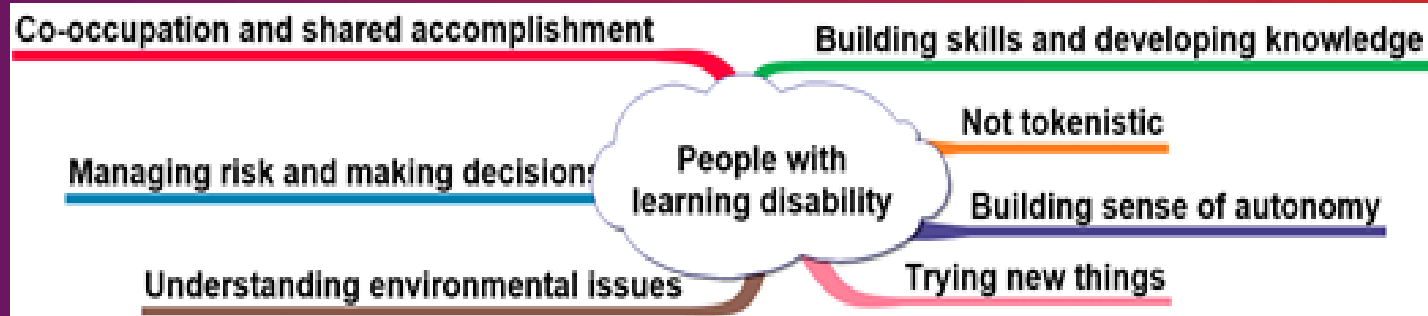
12 Permaculture principles that promote inclusive and accessible ideas in society as well as horticulture, such as:

- *‘use the edges and value the marginal’,*
- *‘integrate rather than segregate’*
- *‘use and value diversity’*

# PhD study and beyond

- **Participatory action research and critical ethnography**
- Examining the experience of occupation for people with differing capabilities in a food growing social enterprise
- Consultation project on outcomes

# Summary of findings: People with Learning Disability



# More findings and literature

## Food growing and wellbeing:

### PhD findings and relevant literature

- Skill development and work progression
- Naturally therapeutic space
- Lack of judgement – neutral spaces
- Connection people and nature
- Seeing different perspectives – social and environmental
- Collective occupation – social inclusion and belonging

# What could go wrong?

- Incomplete or unsuccessful tasks
- Exclusion within inclusion
- Access, travel and support
- Progression
- Race for relevance
- Managing expectations
- Changing the feel and focus of the garden



# Need for a more sensitive outcome measure

- Increasing and multiple demands for measurement of wellbeing from funders, health and local authority (mental and physical, plus loneliness, confidence etc)
- Prove our impact for social prescribing – as social prescribers, and as a destination activity
- Nature of many existing tools and additional form-filling – a challenge in the non-clinical, outdoor, low tech setting
- Can we develop one solution for the **community horticulture sector**?

# What is Wellbeing?

- *“how people feel and how they function, both on a personal and a social level, and how they evaluate their lives as a whole” NEF (2012)*
- How satisfied people are with their lives
- Sense of autonomy
- Purpose in life
- NOT moment-to-moment happiness; not external conditions; not personal resources

# Consideration of existing tools

- SUSTAIN's Which Tool to Use Guide – very helpful in decision-making
- Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS)
- Nature-Relatedness Scale (short and long forms)
- Psychological scales
- GAS Goals
- A physical measure of wellbeing eg. pedometers; heart rate; etc.

# Outcome measure development – what we needed

- Suitable for wide range of needs/purposes
- Accessible & Ease of use on a growing site
- Measurable against a similar, pre-established tool
- Incorporates permaculture values/principles
- Considers relationship to nature, sense of wellbeing and skill development
- Relates to current guidance/policy

# Process of developing the tool 2017 - 2019



# The Organiclea Wellbeing Log (OWL):

- Motivation
- Sense of wellbeing
- Physical health
- Autonomy
- Eating habits
- Connection to people
- Connection to nature

# Important considerations for outcome measure development

- Validity – The degree to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure
  - Face validity
  - Content validity
  - Criterion validity
- Reliability – If no real change has occurred, the test will produce the same results (\*no measure is universally reliable)

# What we are measuring OWL against

- Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS)  
<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/med/research/platform/wemwbs/development/swemwbs/>
- The Short Depression-Happiness Scale (Joseph *et al.*, 2004)
- Nature-Relatedness Scale (NRS) (Nisbet et al 2009)



# Early findings from on-site trials of OWL

- Using it for full population, and individual tracking.
- Welcomed by partners and other organisations. Other organisations now piloting it.
- Helpful learnings
  - increase in wellbeing plateaus over time
  - structured trainings create bigger impact
  - connection to people most significant
- Still up against demand to use multiple other measures by different funders. Will this reduce when impact proven?

# Where to next?

Current research project to establish validity in general community population – Sept 2020 (**Ref 17048**)

- Report back to funders
- Disseminate, discuss, review, research
- Trial with specific groups eg. Dementia, LD, young people etc.

# TRY IT OUT!

**Compare and comment on each of these according the following:**

Accessibility - how easy was it to understand and fill in?

Usefulness in green care (community garden) setting

Would you change anything?

Where else might you be able to use it?

If you were to choose one for an outdoor setting, which would you choose and why?

# If you would like to participate in the OWL validation study (HSC ethics ref: 17048)

- Email [scoetzee@essex.ac.uk](mailto:scoetzee@essex.ac.uk)
- Thank you for being an active research participator!

# References

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