

R E C O N N E C T

a collection of words, images and art created by Reconnect Cymru



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This book was made by the Reconnect group in April 2014. The group only met for 5 sessions and created this work.

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Introduction

Reconnect was born a long time ago....

*perhaps it is only the last 200,000 years that Homo Sapiens have walked this earth
perhaps it is only the last 20,000 years that we realised that food could be farmed
perhaps it is only the last 2,000 years that we thought we had conquered the earth
perhaps it is only the last 200 years that we have left the natural world for an artificial world
perhaps it is only the last 20 years that we have left our occupations for a computer
perhaps it is only the last 2 years that we have left our friends and families for mobile social media
perhaps it is only the last 2 months that we have lost ourselves and felt the pain and distress
perhaps it is only the last 2 days that we have completely disconnected
perhaps it is only the last 2 hours that we have lost all hope
perhaps it is only the last 2 minutes that we wished to reconnect
perhaps it is only the last 2 seconds that we reconnected
perhaps it is only now that we have realised that we only have now.....*

There once was an ordinary man. When he was young he went for long walks and just sat in the scrub waiting upon the birds and laying down upon the long dry grass with the warm stillness of the sun, comforting and caressing the home and hearth of content. An interest in doing things, making things and using the skills and passion to form. He had friends that played, laughed and communed with him.....

...then one day it all came crashing down.

Gone was the long engage of content within its nest. Gone was the passion to make and do and form. Gone were the friends, left unsure and amiss.

Chained up to the confines of a system, locked up within a medical kosh.
Straightjacket of control and promised care.
The tunnel of darkness engulfed, nothing left to connect....

A memory then cast its light, fellow attendees of the clinic joined hands, he was not alone.
The birds in song, the flutter of the wind upon the leaves called out.
The books unopened upon the shelf, invited interest. The journey back had begun....

5 principles

As the work of reconnect has progressed, that which has been hidden has slowly revealed itself. What we have all discovered is that our work follows through 5 simple principles.

1. Nature
2. Each Other
3. Activity
4. Ourselves
5. Potential

During April 2014, as a group we decided to express these principles. We started by offering the principles to the group one by one and collected the responses in word, image and art. This book aims to share our experience with others.

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NATURE

In modern times man has advanced technologically that he generally believes that science and man's innovation rules the roost. The modern world is full of manufactured, siliconised artificial solutions, all marketed for profit. We have outgrown and are too sophisticated to need nature any longer. But wait is this really the real world and nature the old world. Think again....

We are lost in our thoughts, worrying about what happened yesterday and anxious about the days to come. Are we ever present and just experiencing the now as it happens.

The first principle of reconnect is to slow down, use our senses one by one to tune in again to the natural world all around us. Smell the wild garlic, taste the sea salt spray upon the lips, feel the slight breeze upon the cheek, listen to the crescendo of bird song high up in the trees and look deep, deep into the mass of greens and browns and shades of light and dark, foliated in the forest.

To become present and mindful in nature is our core and most essential state.



What I am aware of in the environment is the fall of raindrops they pound on the roof of the timber shelter. My eyes are drawn to the cheerful bright orange flame that licks at the logs in the fire pit. Birdsong calls whirls of great puffs of smoke rise up to meet them.

Bright moss covered branches stretch are forming light and shade and shapes, their end roughly broken, signs of stormy days gone by.

by Jenny Smith



Black birds

by Andrew
Roberts

So small so dark with a bright orange beak.

It's foraging, hunting for insects to feed it chicks. I draw a flight path from the ground up to a tree, so big, the perch, the branch; the black bird balances before a swift hop and in to the air, it flies.

Simmering rains patting, popping, slapping, and slopping, form music with the birdsong pitter-patter chirp peep twit, twit, pop chiff-chaff-chuff. It's peaceful. It's harmony.

Being in this environment brings love and shelter from the noise of town life.

Sharing with nature, Delicate poise,

Falling madness,

Welcoming bird friends.



Nature Awareness

by Richard Blincow

What i'm aware of in this environment is a choir of bird song, an undulating chorus of sound against a multi greened backlog of mosses, ivy, ferns, leaves, shoots, and buds. A canvas of tree trunks, shadows and light.

Glowing ember, flickering flames lick the blackness of the squat black bulk of the kettle hovering above the heat. Fine nestling between the rocks, smoke trailing on the path to the rafters and beyond into the ether.



No man is an island, so they say.

To be with each other, to share support and soar with each other, that's when we feel at our best. So it is, we need each other.

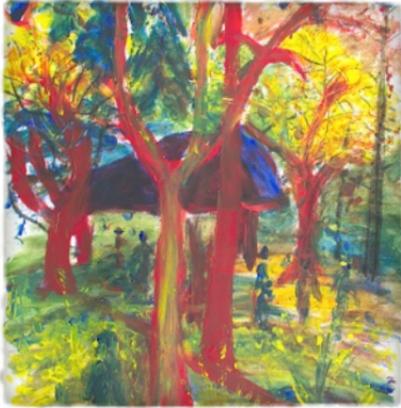
So let's be present with each other again, let's help each other, let's listen to each other, let's respect each other for who we are, space just to be ourselves, true and real.

Let's nurture friendships together and together we can be supported to overcome the challenges that life has given us.

Let's be mindful with each other.



Art by Adam Rees



~ Loyalty ~

- Being true to others and friends and family
- Supporting them.



~ Trust ~

- Acceptance
- Non-judgemental
- Freedom to express oneself
- Able to share.



~ Support ~

- Receiving encouragement.

~ Common interests
and differences ~

- Sharing as individuals
- Appreciating unity of
groups of friends



~ Humour ~

- Sharing jokes and
connecting with others.



~ Sharing ~

- The good,
- The bad and
- The ugly



Gather round the fire. by Sarah Williams

The bright lime green of clusters of leaves on branches nearer the ground standing out against the background of dark green ivy swathed tree trunks that climb into the sky.

This picture is beyond the smoking swirling fire - the colours, the trees, in sharp focus then seen through a haze of white like a filter. Eyes drawn closer. Bright orange, yellow, red dance of the fire leaping through the smoke reaching heating the dark, heavy, black kettle.

The smoke puffs out its dance reaching for one or other of us, reaching us all.





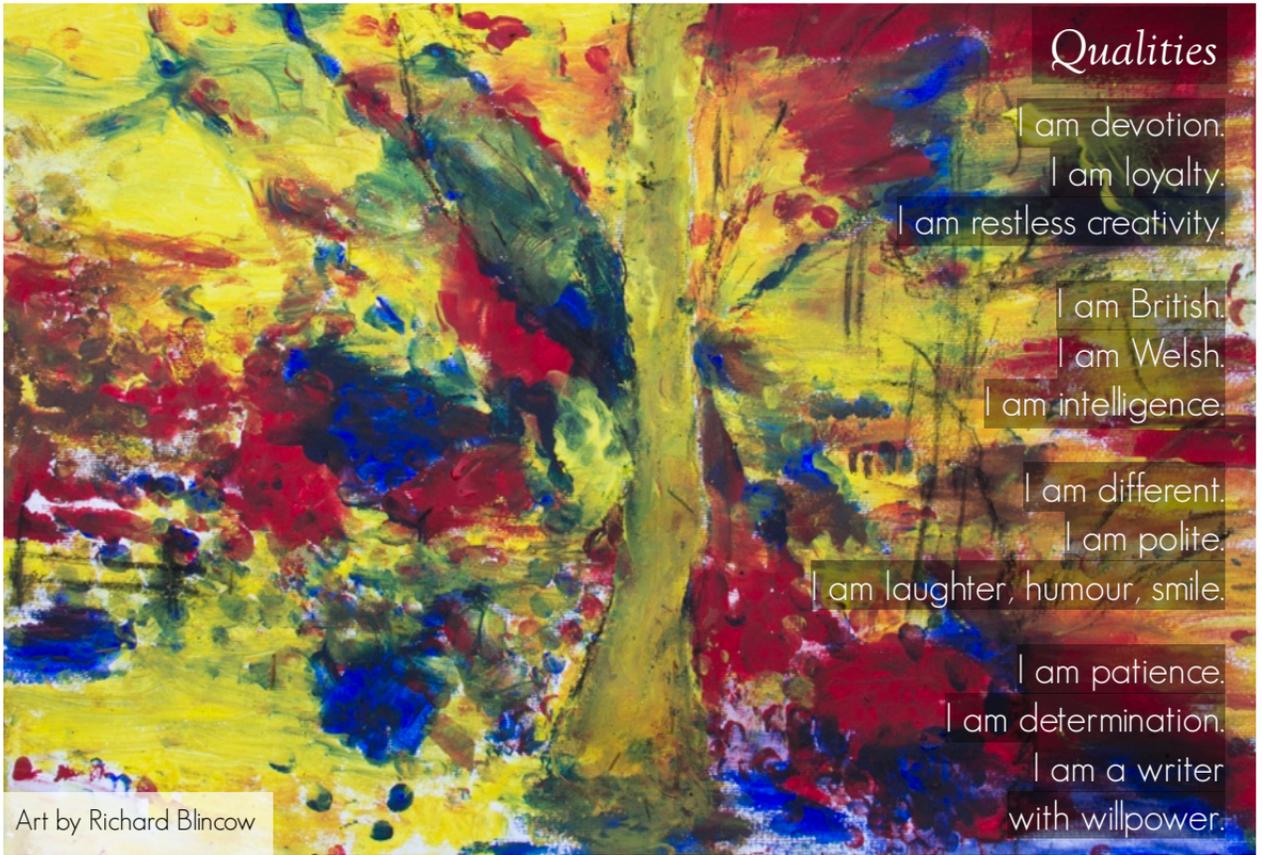
Most of us at times in our lives begin to lose touch with ourselves. We feel uncomfortable within and there is disharmony and disconnect.

This project of reconnect which is beginning to unfold deep within the heart of Pembrokeshire is helping to reconnect people again with themselves.

Becoming mindful in nature, a sense of the now and the healing connections of nature are offering glimpses of who we really are and where we have come from. The new friendships, the encouraging words, the fresh social engagement offers a supportive and helping hand and affirmation of -

" yes I know it's tough, it's tough for us also but together we can move forward, offer hope to others and hold up each when we feel the despairing depths".

Getting interested in doing things, discovering talents and enjoyments. Through all of this, we begin to feel comfortable again with ourselves. We begin to fit again, we begin to reconnect with ourselves again.



Qualities

I am devotion.

I am loyalty.

I am restless creativity.

I am British.

I am Welsh.

I am intelligence.

I am different.

I am polite.

I am laughter, humour, smile.

I am patience.

I am determination.

I am a writer

with willpower.

Art by Richard Blincow

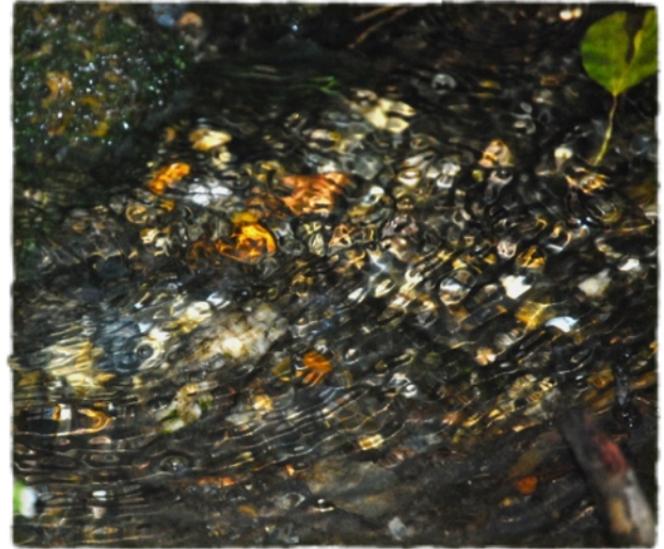
Welsh, polite, good writing skills.

by Andrew Roberts

I had psychosis through stress and anxiety and one of the things that helped me to overcome this was through a support group that showed me there where others going through the same things.

I also live with asperger syndrome, all be it very minor, I overcome my shyness by asking others about their hobbies. The birds in constant communication





Like Water

by James Harper

Relentless flow of the river to the sea.

Cycle of precipitation.

Evaporation, transportation, deposition.

Water cycle.

Resilience, endless, effortless.

What is my nature?

Overcoming

by James Harper, Andrew Roberts, and Sarah Williams

Building upon past experience to cope with future problems.

Walking in the woods.

Playing games to take focus off problems.

Focus on solutions rather than the problems.

One of the things that helped me to overcome was through a support group and showed me how there were others going through the same thing.

Refusing to believe this was a situation that ended me. It ended a part of my journey in order to start a new chapter. I used visualization to see a different future. It helped to share with friends.

Taking action on a new goal.



ACTIVITY

The question is often asked, how can our lives be happier. The answer often shared is, something meaningful and purposeful to do with my life. Therein lies a key to our future fulfillment.

To become absorbed in a hobby, activity or occupation can be the most fulfilling thing.

To really enjoy doing something is a key for all of us.

It is so easy to become lost in the angst of our thoughts, going round in circles in our heads.

To step out of that internal arena and to become absorbed in an activity outside of ourselves, gives release from our internal struggle.

An alternative paradigm of objective engagement offers the hope of purpose and fulfillment.

Losing yourself in activity

by John Cox

Group activities, especially facilitated ones give me permission and encouragement to explore where I may be reluctant to venture by myself. What joy.



Hearing the world differently

"The first time I did audio recording with headphones on there was so many different things that I had never really noticed before. The birds were so much louder, the tone of people's voices was very clear. It was like listening to the world in a totally different light. I heard things I've never heard before."

Mair Hamid talking about working with the digital media team





Creative images

by John Cox

Often an image or object will start a process. The activity of shaping a piece of found wood immerses one in a timeless creative space, resulting in surprising outcomes.

Nature for me is often the gateway to this magical inner resource.



And finally, we are left with ourselves and what's next. We have opened up eyes and ears, stirred up friendships. People have discovered interests, activities and talents. The hidden passion is being uncovered. Everyone has something they enjoy doing or are good at. Everyone has a right to a fulfilled and meaningful life. There is potential in everyone to find their place and to function to their best. To do this with others is powerful and there is great potential for great things to happen together.

So the journey of reconnect has only just begun, great things can be achieved.....it's up to us.

Who am i becoming?

by Sarah Williams

The path ahead unseen.

The butterfly.

Trees surrounding.

The path behind.

The hut.

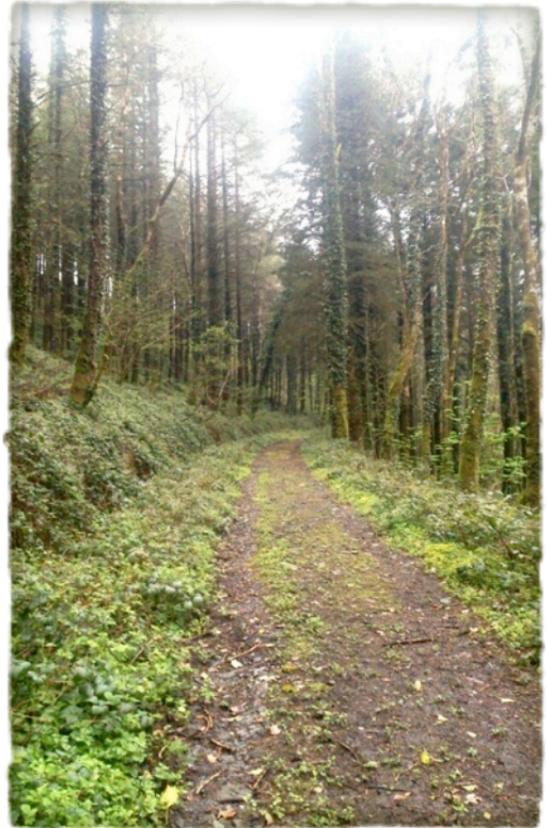
The path ahead.

Slow steps.

Surer steps.

You're learning where to step. More sure where you won't
slip or fall.

If you slip you can steady yourself.





If we are just ourselves that is all we can be. That is the best we can be.
Becoming more of who we really are.

by Jenny Smith



by Shon Devey



by John Cox



by Andrew Roberts

Steps forward

Share more

Sing and create

Trust myself

Find courage

Listen more to everything

Go for more walks

Work with emotional balance

Have confidence in the path

Do what makes me happy

Reconnect is a project run by Walk with Friends Community Interest Company,
which is a not for profit social enterprise.

From February 2012 to May 2014, there have been 8 different groups working
with the themes of reconnect and we have worked with around 70 participants.

If you are interested in the work of reconnect, please get in touch through our
Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/reconnectcymru>



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Made in the moment by Reconnect Cymru

Cover art by James Harper

