



Insight cards: making mental health research more inclusive

These insight cards showcase the main thematic findings from the research we did with young BAME people about their experiences and ideas around mental health.

Each card represents a different experience felt by the BAME young people we spoke to.

Use these insight cards in your own meetings, workshops and events to inspire those working in this area and help them contextualise the needs and experiences of this underserved audience.

In collaboration with

The Liminal Space

Young People don't talk to their parents about mental health / emotional issues



↑ Erin Aniker

“...Your parents just expect you to meet their expectations. I started to feel depressed. I kept to myself and tried to figure it out myself, couldn't talk to my parents and I couldn't talk to my friends.”

(Black African, Female, 16 – 18, London)

Widespread stress on young people

Compounded for young
BAMEs by additional cultural
and religious factors



Professional service are for white people only (if they know about them at all)

“They don’t understand me”

“There’s nothing there for me”



“The Black experience of the mental health system is very negative and this has influenced how they perceive mental health and the system. Black people are less likely to engage in mental health services.” Community Influencer

No specific design to help accommodate specific BAME cultural needs/ differences

Impacts on the way people receive and experience treatment



↑ Parys Gardener

“.... so many of our young people want to see a Black or Asian therapist, depending on their own cultural backgrounds.”

Community Influencer

Young men experience specific pressures and barriers

To overcome entrenched ‘strong men’ stereotypes, balance family and peer group expectations and make their way in the world



↑ Olivia Twist

“You have to think about your parents, pressure from exams, then pressure from your friends, the local area to get into a different path, drugs. It is hard...” (Pakistani, Male, 16 – 18 Birmingham)

Negative Perception of researchers / the process

Regarded as impersonal and potentially exploitative



“White men in white coats...
Why should I help them?”

Different generational experiences of racism

“Not being able to call it out” – a lack of empathy from families for experiences of the younger generation



↑ Olivia Twist

“They (young people) are the generation that has had more than everyone else but yet they are sadder than everyone else.” (Community worker)

Growing return to traditional models / structures

Some young people returning to more restrictive models in search of belonging or in rebellion against the system/ family



Services are the enemy – fear of entering services and being labelled and stigmatised forever

Parents actively discouraging young people from speaking to teachers/ services because they fear the paper trail will impact on their future chances or lead to an intervention



Pray it away...

“Not being able to call it out” – a lack of empathy from families for experiences of the younger generation



“Black and Bangladeshi parents/elders are most likely to take their children to a spiritual healer first if they think something is wrong with their child. They perceive these problems as black magic or possession.” Community Influencer

Mental health = Mad

Horror and shame of whole area
and no narrative for mental health



“We don’t have a narrative for mental health
in our culture.” Community Influencer

Often more likely to confide in trusted community individuals/ influencers rather than friends



↑ Parys Gardener

“They talk to people they can confide in and have easy access to but not friends or family. Tend to hide their feelings from people close to them....” Community Teacher

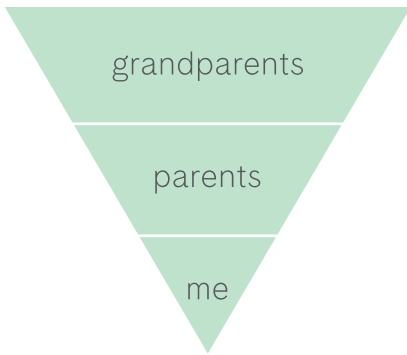
**Extremely derogative language
still used to describe mental health**

**LOOPY!
MENTAL!
NUTS!
WACKO!
CRAZY!**

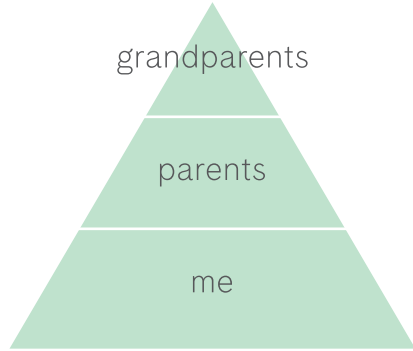
“Mental health is people who are sick,
crazy, lost, delusional, fruity, loopy.”
(Black Caribbean, male, 16 – 18, Birmingham)

Inverted intergenerational influence – increased feelings of stigma and shame for those living in intergenerational households

Pressure from family hierarchies and mistrust of intergenerational structure



↑
POWER



↑
**OPEN
MINDEDNESS**

Traumatized by the system

For people who have engaged with services, negative experiences of a broken and hostile system can create additional trauma



“The Black experience of the mental health system is very negative and this has influenced how they perceive mental health and the system. Black people are less likely to engage in mental health services.” Community Leader

Racism

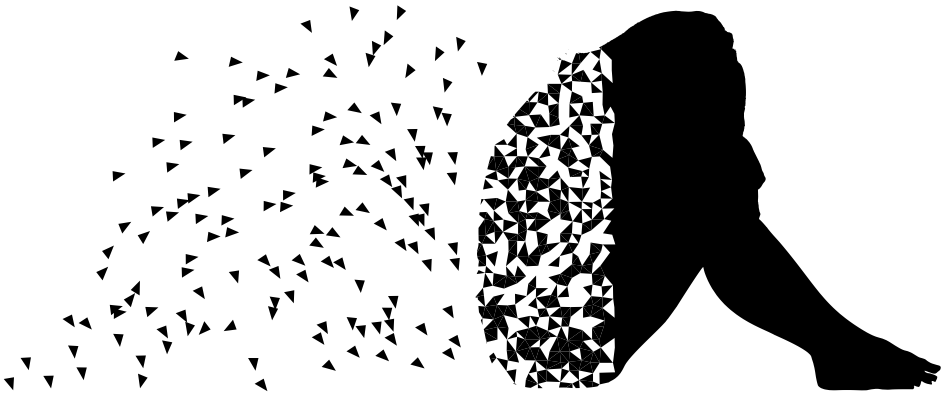
A picture of entrenched and wide-spread conscious and unconscious racism. Deepening post Brexit.



“You hear stories about Black people being beaten by guards, being locked up. White people don’t understand Black mental health and our issues. It’ always been like that. And then, Black people don’t talk openly about it because there is a lot of fear, suspicion and they don’t trust in people who work in health.”
(Black Caribbean, Female, 19 -24, Birmingham)

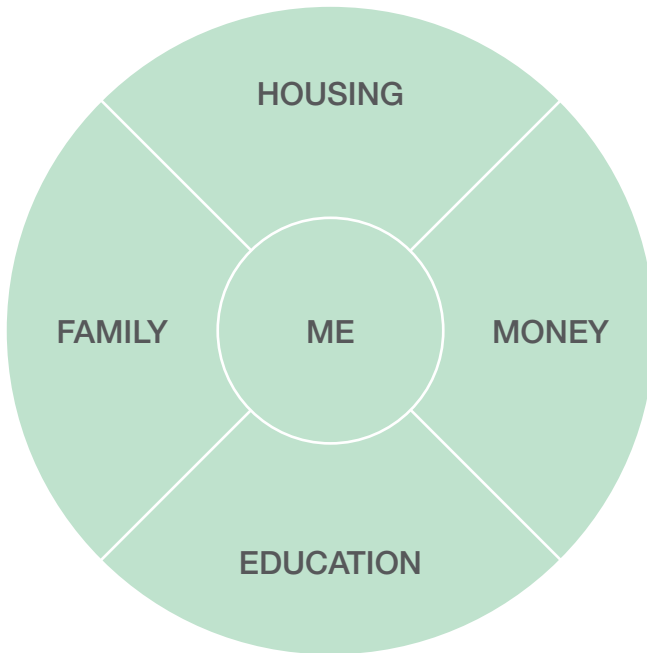
Mistrust in all the aspects of the system

Bad first-hand experiences and those of others have created widespread and intense mistrust



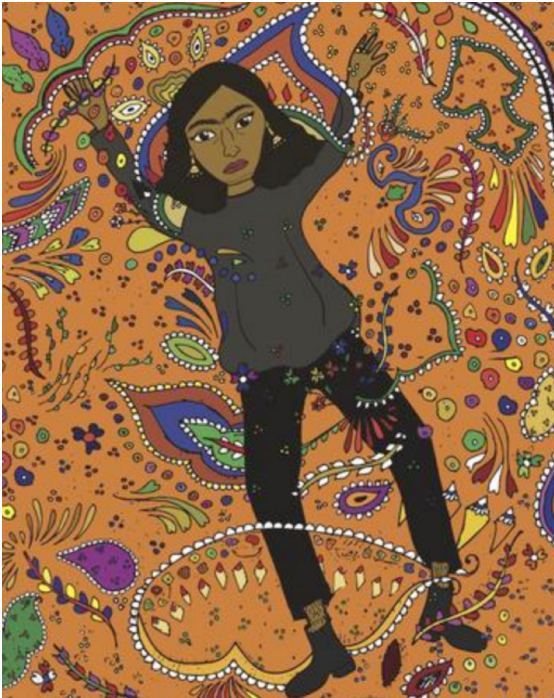
The individual cannot be decoupled from their social context

Family situation, socio economic position, housing, education and environment all feed into a young BAME person's mental health experience widespread and intense mistrust



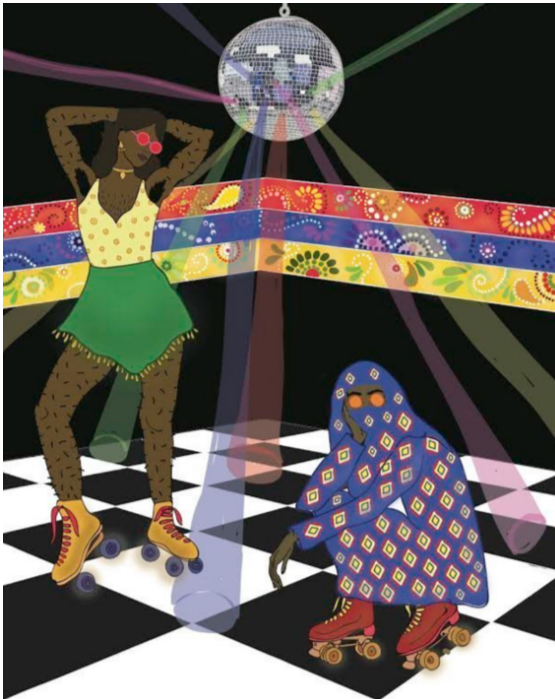
Young women face extreme pressures from many directions

They are caught between external expectations, personal aspirations and imposed limitations. May be encouraged to go to University but then have to care for children, parents, grandparents and in-laws



The tension of living with dual / polarised identities

Different identities for home and wider world. (Particularly pronounced for South Asian young people)



↑ Ayqa Khan

No awareness of mental health research (why should they?)



↑ Noah Silliman

Difficult conversations happen in safe physical spaces



“I’ve been at events where young people are sharing their personal experience of mental health in a safe environment. It’s so powerful, helps people to realise that they are not alone.”
Community Influencer