

Ms Sandy Jeffs, poet and author with lived experience, opened the Mental Health Complaints Commissioner's inaugural learning from complaints forum on ensuring sexual safety by delivering her insightful poem 'McMadness #2'. In her reading, Ms Jeffs reflected on her experiences of and aspirations for the mental health system.

McMadness #2

Hello, do you have a Big Mac delusion
or a Cheeseburger delusion?
Is that one voice with grandiose ideas
or two voices of persecution?
Have you spent all your savings
& bought three new Ferraris & a Rolls lately
& slept with every Tom, Dick & Jane?
Are you self-harming or
feeling unremitting misery?
Then drive thru the *fast*psychiatry public ward
we'll have you McDiagnosed,
treated, medicated & McSane
in two shakes of a pill bottle.
McSanity is our business.

Now that you are here
terms & conditions apply
you can only stay a few days
but don't worry we'll get you McSane
before you can say
can I have some compassion with that?
& if you have a hint of childhood trauma
there's a guarantee to retraumatise you.
By the way, if you are a woman
you'll be stalked, harassed & threatened
& put into HD for your own McSafety
& don't stress if the staff think your fears are delusional
you *are* McMad after all.
If you are lucky there might be a women's corridor
without men in it in which to feel McSafe.
There will be drugs that will fatten you up
turn you into a zombie
& bring on premature death.
We'll have you out of here in the blink of an eye
because someone McMadder will need your bed.
You will be so distressed
you'll never want to set foot in a public psych ward again.
But cheer up because we'll offer you some McTherapy
to help you cope with rejection, poverty, isolation & PTSD.

& now for some McTherapy:
hello
how are the voices today?

keep taking the medication
we have to finish now
credit or savings
see you in 6 months.

It's a McMad world
everyone has forms to fill in & boxes to tick
I's to dot & T's to cross
performance requirements to meet
risk assessments to make
& pressure, pressure, pressure
*Fast*psychiatry is the name of this game.
Ah McSane, we've done it again.

A Wild Psychotic Fancy

In my wild psychotic fancy
I see women healing with art, music & poetry
curative gardens, therapy dogs
empathetic peer support
soothing sensory rooms
no ice-fuelled men wreaking havoc
no seclusion rooms
no security guards
no fishbowl
nurses not just medication monitors
psychiatrists who heal the soul
trauma informed care to restore wounded psyches
& Old Father Time has no watch.
McMending with the lot
& some kindness & sensitivity with that.
Call me mad, call me insane
*slow*psychiatry is the name of this game.

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