**Using Mind Maps in Social Work**

If you’re involved in social work, you may wish to use a mind map to help you think more clearly about how to improve the lives of people in your care. In my experience, as a User of Social Services in Newcastle, mind maps were the most useful tool that helped social workers to rebuild my life from scratch after I was injured in the workplace. The result of using this social work intervention has been a dramatic improvement in my quality of life.

Origin:

British Author and TV personality Tony Buzan popularised the term ‘mind map’ in the 1970’s in his BBC series, Use Your Head, and in his books, such as Modern Mind Mapping for Smarter Thinking. However, the concept of visually mapping out ideas dates back much further.

Definition:

A mind map is a tool for the brain that captures the thinking that goes on inside your head. Mind Mapping helps you think, collect knowledge, remember and create ideas. Most likely it will make you a better thinker.

A simple example:

**Figure 1:**



Family

Health

Finances

Friends

Leisure

Housing

Work

**Aspects of Life**

Education

Figure 1 shows a simple mind map that has been used by Newcastle Social Services and I to improve aspects of my life after I was injured whilst working as a Mechanical Engineer in Industry. Today, I have good relationships with Family / Friends, my Health has been addressed from a mental, physical and chaplaincy perspective, I have studied a Level 7 Education course at St Martin’s College in the Lake District, I am solvent, I have explored new interests, I live in the Ouseburn Valley in Newcastle, I run a Training and Development business and I am a Friend of Northumbrian Industrial Mission. The social workers that helped me bring about these social changes were Angela (Summerhill Hostel, Newcastle), Derek (Northumbria University) and Tim (Westgate Community Complex, Newcastle).

Conclusion

Mind Maps can be used to create social change in the lives of people who are in the care of social workers. It is recommended that new social workers learn how to use mind maps to improve their practice.

Further Reading:

There are plenty of resources about Mind Maps on the Internet or you can buy books on the subject on Amazon.

Matt

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