



The Tidal Model

Reclamation and Recovery in Mental Health Care

www.tidal-model.com

The Ten Tidal Commitments

1. Value the voice
2. Respect the language
3. Become the apprentice
4. Use the available toolkit
5. Craft the step beyond
6. Develop genuine curiosity
7. Give the gift of time
8. Know that change is constant
9. Reveal personal wisdom
10. Be transparent

Getting personal

All people are unique.

Describing people as 'patients', 'clients', 'users' or 'consumers' suggests that they are not like us.

Tidal refers to everyone in need of care as **people** or **persons**, thus acknowledging their humanity.

It's all about values....

Developed by *Dr Phil Barker and Poppy Buchanan-Barker*, the Tidal Model¹ is now recognised internationally as a key theory for the practice of mental health nursing². **Tidal** is also one of the first recovery models to be subjected to rigorous research, in practice settings.

First launched in England in the mid 1990's, over 100 projects have been established in Scotland, Wales, England, Ireland, Canada, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. These projects are developing

person-focused care across the health and social care continuum: from outpatient addictions, through acute and forensic units, to the care of older people with early stage dementia³.

Practitioners in palliative care are also exploring Tidal as an alternative philosophy for the care of the dying.

Tidal is directed by the *Ten Tidal Commitments*. These represent the core values that guide every aspect of the practice of the Tidal Model.

1. Barker P and Buchanan-Barker P (2005) *The Tidal Model: A guide for mental health professionals*. London: Brunner Routledge

2. Brookes N (2006) Tidal Model of Mental Health Recovery In AM Toney and MR Allgood (Eds) *Nursing Theorists and Their Work* (6th Ed) St Louis, Mosby Elsevier

3. Buchanan-Barker P (2004) The Tidal Model: Uncommon sense. *Mental Health Nursing* 24(3) 6-10

Origins and influences..

"We began thinking about Tidal in the mid 1980s when working with women with a diagnosis of manic depression (Phil) and people with multiple disabilities (Poppy). We felt we were 'working too hard' trying to help *change* people. We came to realise that people had great personal resources that were being overlooked. We asked ourselves: "how can we help people live a more meaningful life by using what they already have?"

Around this time we discovered the work of

Shoma Morita, who developed a highly original form of psychotherapy in 1920s Japan. Morita called his 'patients' *students*, believing that his role was to help them learn something from life, so experiencing change directly.

We use Morita's most famous maxim '*do what needs to be done*', in the Tidal Model. This reminds us that change is rarely easy but, if we are live more effective or meaningful lives, we must

act, not just sit around talking about it.

Other influences have been the writings of **Harry Stack Sullivan**, **Thomas Szasz** and **Steve de Shazer**.

By far the biggest influence on the development of the Tidal Model has been the people we have worked with over the years, who taught us that we too are 'students' – learning what 'needs to be done' and then supporting the person in doing it".

Poppy and Phil

"You can't cross the sea merely by standing staring at the water." Tagore



“Tidal fanned the fires of our passion for nursing, and gave us a language to speak our practice”

Marg Tansey & Nancy Brookes,
Canada

“Tidal has made room for my voice. I am not just another ‘patient’ who is mentally ill. I am a person, with goals and dreams and a life worth living. I get to discover and learn and make changes. Now I can think, decide and act for myself. I don’t need someone else to save me anymore, because I have been given the opportunity to save myself.”

Sharon C. from Ottawa,



Poppy Buchanan-Barker
and Phil Barker

The Tidal Metaphor

Life is a voyage taken on the ocean of experience. All human development involves discoveries about life, made on our voyages across that ocean.

At critical points in the voyage people may experience storms (*problems of living*) or even piracy (*crisis*). At other times the ship of their lives may feel becalmed (*stuck*) or begin to take in water, and the person may face the

prospect of drowning or shipwreck (*breakdown*).

The person may need to be guided to a safe haven to begin to undertake necessary repairs (*crisis care*) on the ship of life, or to recover from the trauma they have experienced (*rehabilitation*).

Often helpers need to build a bridge to make contact with the person, who is cut off from them, physically or emotionally.

Only once the ship of life has been made intact, and the person has regained the necessary sea-legs, can the ship set sail again, aiming to put the person back on the life course (*recovery*) so that they might begin to steer the course (*reclamation*).

This metaphor reminds us of the universal nature of human problems of living, which we all experience, and need help and support to deal with.

Message in a bottle – the stories people tell

The **Tidal Model** assumes that people are their stories.

In practice, the Tidal Model emphasises *storytelling* – through both individual and group work. By talking about their experience, people appreciate the background and meaning of their story, and the help they can offer to, and receive from, others.

The **Tidal Model** helps people:

- Describe and discuss the *experience* of problems of living, in their own words
- Reclaim ownership of ‘their’ story
- Develop personal care plans – focused on their *unique* needs
- Develop a collaborative relationship that emphasises ‘*working together*’ to explore their needs
- Make genuinely informed decisions and *act* on them
- Begin to clarify ‘who’ they are - as **people**, rather than as ‘*patients*’

Want to know more?

If you are interested in finding out more about the Tidal Model visit our website.

There you can download more information, get free papers and articles, and meet some of the people from around the world

who are developing recovery-focused mental health care.

www.tidal-model.com

If you are interested in hosting a Tidal Model workshop, or want to join our **Tidal Newsletter**

circulation list, send an email expressing your interest to:

tidalmodel@btinternet.com

Yours in Friendship

Poppy and Phil