

TUC Midlands Festival of Learning 2022

02/09/2022 10:00-16:00

TUC & CWU Offices
47 Summer Lane, Birmingham, B19 3TH

AGENDA

- 10:30 Welcome and Introductions (Lee Barron, TUC Regional Secretary; Steve Croke, ULR Forum Chair)
- 10:45 Election of ULR Forum Vice Chair (Steve Croke); TUC update plus Q&A (Marie Hughes & Matt Pointon, TUC)
- 11:00 **Guest Speaker:** Ben Davis (CWU), Creative Writing
- 11:30 **Guest Speaker:** Jamie McGovern (CWU): Building a Mental Health Network
- 12:00 **Workshop 1: Choose from:**
- Robin Graham (Feelgood Communities): Laughter for Wellness**
- Exploring what laughter is, why and when we do it, and how it helps us in our lives. We will try out some gentle, playful games to help with the learning and understanding.
- Mark Rowe (Karillapig): Art with Mark**
- The session will be an engaging event covering basic drawing techniques and will be suitable for all abilities from those who say they can't draw upwards. The session will cover a number of ways to get you drawing!
- 13:00 Buffet Lunch with stalls and information from providers and the WMCA
- 13:50 **Workshop 2: Choose from:**
- Mark Robinson (PCS): Writing your first song**

What makes a song and how do you go about writing your first one? Mark talks us through the basic elements and explains how to transform your vague ideas into a beautiful piece of music.

Robin Graham (Feelgood Communities): Laughter & Relaxation

We can to a certain extent be our own chemist shop. So, in this session we will explore how to use our breath, laughter as a specific form of breath, visualisation, and relaxation exercises (including a laughter meditation) to help our wellbeing.

15:00 **Workshop 3:** Choose from:

Clare Shaw (Royal Literary Fund): Writing for Well-Being

There's a wealth of evidence that expressive writing is good for your health - so come along and try it out for yourself! Facilitated by a professional author, this workshop is free, friendly, and fun, Expect chat, simple writing exercises and a creative break from the usual routine.

Mark Robinson (PCS): Writing your first song

What makes a song and how do you go about writing your first one? Mark talks us through the basic elements and explains how to transform your vague ideas into a beautiful piece of music.

16:00 Close

Your speakers and facilitators



Jamie McGovern is the winner of the TUC Safety Representative Award 2022. Jamie became a Mental Health First Aider and subsequently an Instructor. He has trained over 150 delegates, taking them through the 2-day MHFA training course. He has also been part of the group that set up the Mental Health networks in Merseyside and in the Northwest Region. Jamie recently won the national 'Inside-Out' award for his work on Mental Health and Stress.



Ben Davis writes funny books for older children and teenagers. His first book, The Private Blog of Joe Cowley series has been hailed as a Wimpy Kid for a new generation. He has also written standalone books for younger readers, like the supervillain tale, Danny Dread, and the critically acclaimed My Embarrassing Dad's Gone Viral. Before he became a published author, Ben wrote jokes and sketches for radio shows and various other bits and bobs. When he's not writing, he regularly visits schools and leads creative writing workshops. He's also a postie and CWU member.



Robin Graham has an MA in Health and Happiness Awareness, is an honorary chief in a community and Ghana, is the first International Ambassador for Laughter For All Association, Ethiopia, and a Laughter Yoga Ambassador for Laughter Yoga International. His laughter work was inspired by a message from His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar of the International Art of Living Foundation who said we need more laughter in the world. He set up the UK Laughter Network in 2004 and has been running an annual UK Laughter Championships since 2012. His physiology is unique: he is made up from 50% chocolate, 50% cheese, and 100% of a substance called connection. A poet, playwright, and certified gibberish professor, today he took two tests, a lateral flow test for covid and an IQ test, and both came back negative.

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|  | <p>Mark Rowe has always had an interest in art and particular cartoon illustrations. Having worked as a trade union rep most of his life, he is now a semi-retired illustrator. Mark illustrates ‘The Amazing Adventures of the Karillapig’, a little guy from the dark side of the moon written by the children’s author Michelle Graham.</p> |
|  | <p>Mark Robinson was formerly the Midlands Region Learning Organiser for PCS, and is a dyed in the wool trade unionist. He is also a country music artist, having written over 300 songs, and performs in the USA, Ireland and The Netherlands as well as here in the UK. He has sold his music in over 30 countries</p> |
|  | <p>Clare Shaw is a Bloodaxe poet with a background in mental health, Clare is passionate about using poetry to support health and wellbeing. Clare will deliver the Royal Literary Fund’s established Writing for Well-Being session. The Royal Literary Fund is a benevolent fund for professional published authors; it is funded exclusively by bequests and donations from writers and others who wish to help writers.</p> |

Please note: the venue is within the Birmingham Clean Air Zone and there is car parking available. The nearest railway stations are Snow Hill and New Street.

Please note that timings of individual workshops might change due to attendance numbers, speaker availability and other factors.

Any queries, email mpointon@tuc.org.uk