



**Todmorden
Book Festival**
24 September - 2 October 2021



Todmorden Book Festival

Todmorden Book Festival had a fantastic line-up this year, and we were delighted that Time Out was part of it. Time Out's team leader, Tara, is also a writer and ran three workshops for students of Todmorden High School, around the theme *Tell it how it is!* With a dual focus on writing and wellbeing, a group of Year 8 and Year 10 students explored how they had been affected by the last eighteen months and how best to put it into words.

What was originally billed as two workshops became three, due to the level of enthusiasm (and not just Tara's, although she was admittedly quite inspired by how well students engaged and what fantastic writing they did).

Literacy Centre manager Amanda Brown said, *"We were delighted to be able to welcome Tara to Todmorden High School to run the Tell It How It Is workshops for a small group of our students, supported by the Todmorden Book Festival. The workshop saw the students produce some brilliant, beautiful pieces of writing, thanks to Tara's guidance which both supported them and challenged them to go further with their writing than they had before. We very much hope this can be the beginning of an ongoing and sustainable collaboration with both Time Out/Healthy Minds and the Todmorden Book Festival."*

Keep an eye on Time Out's website <https://www.timeoutcalderdale.co.uk/workshop-gallery.html> to read some of the pieces by these talented young people.



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She embraced the warm air of the beautiful Spring day. She leaped from the car on to the hard rubble of the drive. She had to see how the chicks were. They had hatched three so far over the summer holidays.

Perry was the oldest – she had begun to grow small, light ginger feathers, the start of wings. Gally was the next – small, fluffy and yellow – and then Poppy, like Gally but with a faint black dot on her head. The children loved them lots and always checked on them. There was one egg that had begun to hatch that morning and probably had now.

She embraced the warm air of the beautiful Spring day. As she reached the hutch, she knew something was wrong. Her sister was already there. The air seemed to be colder then and a part of her heart was missing. She saw two chicks in her sister's hands. Covered in wounds, covered in blood. There was one laying in the hutch, still alive but badly wounded. She felt sick and suddenly got an unbearable headache.

She didn't feel like embracing the warm air of the not very beautiful Spring day. They put the three remaining chicks in a basket inside. Two more must have hatched that day.

She embraced the last of the warm air of the beautiful Summer's day. She sat on the swing bench watching the seventeen young chicks grazing the garden. All Cora's wounds had now healed and she was finally almost grown up.

By Rosie Dowson, Year 8



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Two Weeks

Day one of the “2 weeks”

The sun pushed its way through the clouds almost as if to listen to the gossip. It's true that rumours spread fast but these weren't rumours. It was fact: 2 weeks of school. And not matter how many times the teachers felt the need to remind them that “it is only 2 weeks” or “you still have to do work” it was exciting. Sure, it was a bit stressful having to work out how it was going to work, downloading all the apps, trying to log into her email, working out a schedule of her own but it was exciting.

3 months into the “2 weeks”

As the screen turned black and the credits rolled she finally noticed the sunlight clawing its way through the cracks in the blinds. Only then did she check the time and realise she had an hour until she had to wake up and go to school – well, attend one teams meeting then go to sleep. She dragged her feet up to her room where a desk of abandoned work lay untouched taunting her as she crawled into her unmade bed and attempted to sleep. It was strange to think she once thought this would be exciting. The pile of work which just kept growing, the lack of motivation, the isolation which she tried so hard to convince herself was good for her or the anxiety she spent hours telling herself didn't exist. It was far from exciting.

5 months into the “2weeks”

The sun illuminated her face as she stared at the sky. The faint noise of the music sounded distant compared to the voices talking over it. This is what she was excited for. Waking up and deciding for herself what she was going to do that day. The pile of work was still there but was easy to ignore now that she knew everyone else was ignoring it too. Besides, she had a month to actually enjoy and embrace the sun rather than complain about how much more uncomfortable her uniform was in this weather. The freedom and lack of schedule fulfilled her need for excitement.

“2 weeks” part 2

Although the sun spent most of its time behind the clouds it never failed to greet her in the morning. These “two weeks” were different for her, better for her. The pile of work was gone and so was the anxiety. The excitement had left alongside them but the feeling of control filled the holes it had created. It may have made it more difficult to get back to school knowing the control she once had was going to be taken away. But it eliminated decisions she would've spent hours making and gave her time to think; whether this was true or not was irrelevant but it was a positive. The line between anxiety and excitement had become more clear than ever and she knew the happiness she now felt was truly exciting.

By Aneesa Kabeer, Year 10

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Endless Pacific—By HR

One day you're uncontrollably crying and the next you're like an empty shell of a human unable to feel anything.

I didn't know how to react.

I thought it was a sick joke until I was alone and ocean of tears and mixed emotions flooded my room.

That day.

That day was confusing, weird and didn't make sense, until I saw them carry you away and another wave came and it threw me back to the start.

A week later another wave came and it hit me different. This is when I knew I was in a never ending cycle of these flushes of sadness.

Over and over it felt like a storm crushing down and kept knocking me out.

But there will never be a way out of this dark and gloomy pacific, just a lesson how to accept and feel it all.

It has taken me weeks, months and now a year, but every day I wake up and fight for a hope of ease.

Then another day comes and I know it's a step closer to that clarity I desperately want. However, even now it feels out of reach.

I scream,

"I miss you"

"I miss you"

"I miss you",

Hoping you'll come back or I can see and say that goodbye I've always wanted to say.

I promise you I'll never miss you any less than what I do right now.



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TIMEOUT
FIND YOUR THING

A Flower for a Thought:

I see you little flower on the earthy hill where
you reside,

Basking in all your glory and sunshine with
pride,

Delicate flower, so pretty and prim,

You sway in the breeze, as the winds hum a
hymn,

Your vibrant petals emit a warm glow,

The world's in distress and drowning in woe,

When will it end? That I don't know...

Oh, delicate flower, I'm frightened, you see?

Being locked up indoors is all too much for
me,

How lucky you are away from the blue,

Fragile flower, if only you knew,

Timid flower, how are you on this dismal day?

Calamity struck, the world has gone grey,

Have you finally noticed all this hurt and dis-
may?

I see you over there, in the fresh open air,

All safe and sound without fear of despair,

Many have been afflicted by this curse,

For soon, I am too, awaiting my hearse,

Just a spark of light in this dark so vast,

Just a flicker of hope is all that I ask,

Sweet flower of mine, I'm in for a ride,

I did my best to hold strong, really, I tried,

I've been here for some time, on this peaceful
train,

I'm glad to awake in a place of no pain,

I dry my tears, they glisten like jewels,

Flower, at *my* destination, there are no dis-
tancing rules,

No being isolated and not seeing each other,

No, where I'm at, we'll embrace one another,

It's okay now little flower, in a meadow I lay,
where laughter echoes in the small children's
play,

I hope you're content on the hill where you
reside,

For may you continue to bask in your sun-
shine, with pride.

By Humaira Asif, Year 10