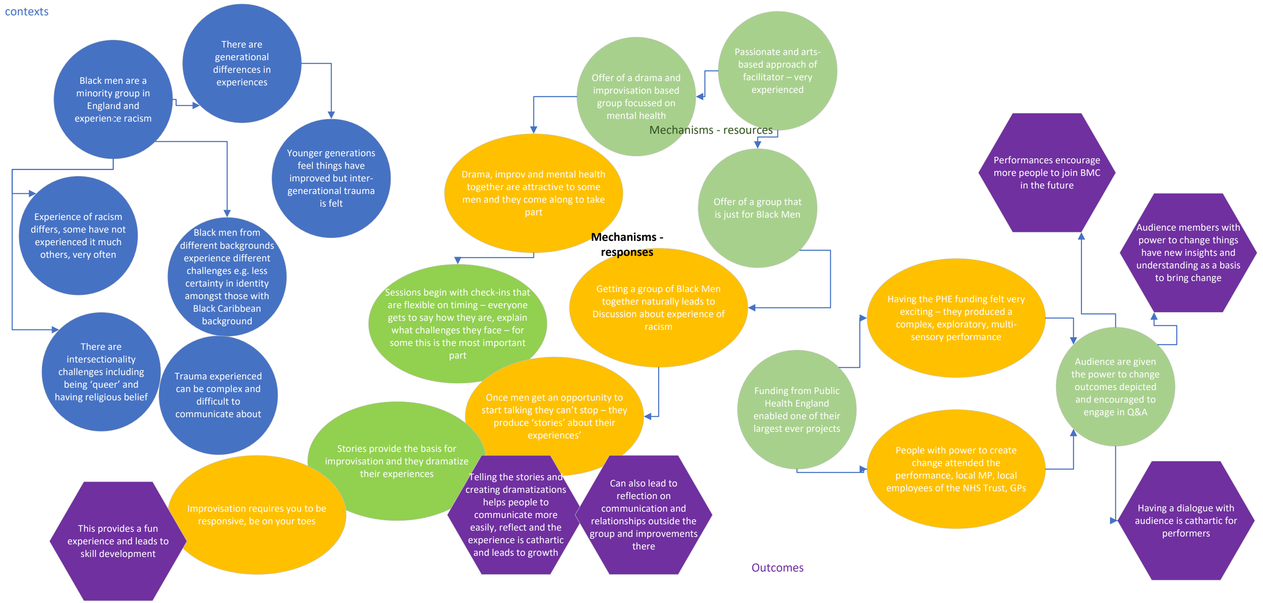
contexts
Black men are a minority group in England and experience racism
There are generational differences in experiences
Younger generations feel things have improved but inter-generational trauma is felt
Experience of racism differs, some have not experienced it much others, very often
Black men from different backgrounds experience different challenges e.g. less certainty in identity amongst those with Black Caribbean background
There are intersectionality challenges including being 'queer' and having religious belief
Trauma experienced can be complex and difficult to communicate about
Mechanisms - resources
Passionate and arts-based approach of facilitator – very experienced
Offer of a drama and improvisation based group focussed on mental health
Offer of a group that is just for Black Men
Mechanisms - responses
Drama, improv and mental health together are attractive to some men and they come along to take part
Getting a group of Black Men together naturally leads to Discussion about experience of racism
Sessions begin with check-ins that are flexible on timing – everyone gets to say how they are, explain what challenges they face – for some this is the most important part
Once men get an opportunity to start talking they can't stop – they produce 'stories' about their experiences'
Stories provide the basis for improvisation and they dramatize their experiences
Improvisation requires you to be responsive, be on your toes
This provides a fun experience and leads to skill development
Telling the stories and creating dramatizations helps people to communicate more easily, reflect and the experience is cathartic and leads to growth
Can also lead to reflection on communication and relationships outside the group and improvements there
Outcomes
Funding from Public Health England enabled one of their largest ever projects
Having the PHE funding felt very exciting – they produced a complex, exploratory, multi-sensory performance
People with power to create change attended the performance, local MP, local employees of the NHS Trust, GPs
Audience are given the power to change outcomes depicted and encouraged to engage in Q&A
Performances encourage more people to join BMC in the future
Audience members with power to change things have new insights and understanding as a basis to bring change
Having a dialogue with audience is cathartic for performers