

FREE

# RECOCO

RECOVERY COLLEGE COLLECTIVE

## BUSINESS AS USUAL

DON'T WORRY, WE'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE (YET).

WE'RE STAYING ON THE TOP FLOOR AT BROADACRE HOUSE ALL THE WAY THROUGH TO THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS,

SO EVERYTHING CONTINUES AS NORMAL (NORMAL FOR RECOCO, THAT IS...).

COURSES, GROUPS, ACTIVITIES, INITIATIVES, CAMPAIGNS, GAMES, CULTURE AND DEFIANTLY OPPOSITIONAL SEDITION.



0191 261 0948



[info@recoverycoco.com](mailto:info@recoverycoco.com) | [www.recoverycoco.com](http://www.recoverycoco.com)

UNFORTUNATELY, RECOCO WON'T BE ABLE TO ENROLL ANY MORE STUDENTS UNTIL THE SUMMER. WE ARE MOVING TO PREMISES WHICH ARE SMALLER SO WILL HAVE A REDUCED CAPACITY FOR DAILY ATTENDEES. THIS DECISION HAS BEEN MADE IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE CONTINUED SAFETY OF OUR CURRENT STUDENTS. BEFORE SUMMER WE INTEND TO REVIEW OUR DATABASE OF 1000 STUDENTS AND DETERMINE WHETHER STUDENTS WHO HAVEN'T ATTENDED FOR A WHILE, STILL WISH TO REMAIN ON OUR BOOKS. THIS SHOULD FREE UP SOME SPACE FOR NEW ENROLMENTS.

WE ARE ALSO APPLYING TO BECOME THE NEW CUSTODIANS OF BILL QUAY COMMUNITY FARM IN PELAW. IF WE ARE SUCCESSFUL IN OUR BID THEN WE WILL BE ABLE TO DELIVER MORE COURSES AND CONSEQUENTLY OPEN TO ADDITIONAL RECOCO STUDENTS.

SHOULD YOU WISH TO SUPPORT OUR APPLICATION TO BECOME THE NEW CUSTODIANS OF THE FARM THEN PLEASE SEND YOUR MESSAGES OF SUPPORT TO [WWW.INFO@RECOVERYCOCO.COM](mailto:WWW.INFO@RECOVERYCOCO.COM) AND WE WILL ADD THEM TO OUR BID.

WE WILL NOTIFY PEOPLE WHEN WE RE-OPEN ENROLMENTS VIA OUR WEBSITE.



0191 261 0948

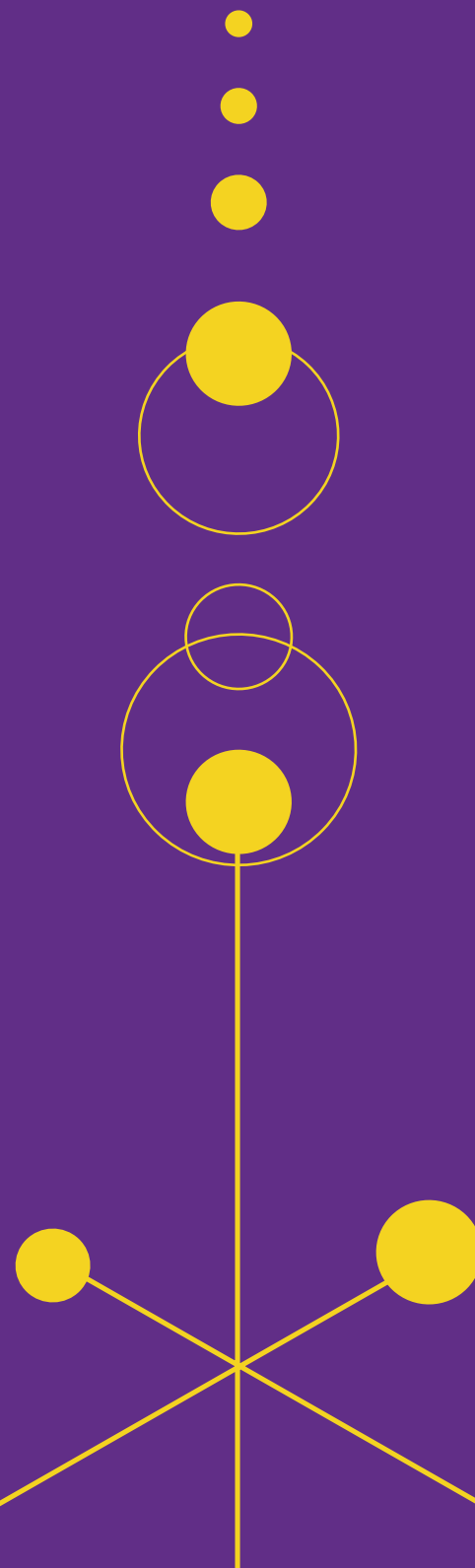


[info@recoverycoco.com](mailto:info@recoverycoco.com)

[www.recoverycoco.com](http://www.recoverycoco.com)

# COURSES

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The background is a vibrant, abstract composition of various organic, leaf-like shapes in shades of purple, blue, green, yellow, pink, and red. These shapes overlap and flow across the page. Two large, teardrop-shaped bubbles, one purple and one blue, contain white text. The overall style is modern and artistic.

//

"The initial interview put me at ease very quickly, not an easy task. It's been a positive experience and that makes me want to come back."

//

"I would like to say thank you to all the staff and course facilitators at the Recovery College. I would not be in a much happier position now in comparison to a year ago without their kindness and support."

# BEHAVIOURAL ACTIVATION WORKSHOP

1

Are you affected by depression or do you know someone who is?

Behavioural Activation is an up and coming therapy used in the management of depression and periods of low mood. In this workshop you'll learn the basics behind BA and how it came about. Come along and learn, and share your ideas on it too!

Time: Please contact Recovery College

Date: Please contact Recovery College

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Molly Storm

# BUILDING A LIFE WORTH LIVING — DBT SKILLS

2

In order for you to do this ten week course, you will need to have completed the 4 week 'Introduction to DBT Skills' course.

This is not Dialectical Behavioural Therapy but is a skills-based group. If your mental health worker thinks that you would benefit from DBT, then they should be able to provide this through your Community Mental Health Team. This is a peer led course that looks at how DBT skills can practically help people who have trouble understanding and managing overwhelming emotions. This course is suitable for people with recognized personality difficulties or those people who struggle with the following:

- Intense negative emotions
- Impulsive behaviours
- Feelings of emptiness
- Mood swings

- Wanting to hurt yourself or regularly finding yourself in unhealthy relationships.

Shared experience, validation, mindfulness and distress tolerance exercises will form a basis for every session.

Time: 1pm - 3pm

Day: Monday

Dates: 30th April, 7th May, 14th May, 21st May, 4th June, 11th June, 18th June, 25th June, 2nd July, 9th July

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Susan Reid & Cath Goode

# COMPASSIONATE MINDFULNESS CONTINUED PRACTICE GROUP

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## What is the purpose of this group?

If you have attended a Compassionate Mindfulness Group you may find it difficult to continue practicing when the group has ended or you may wish to access a group once again to benefit from the experience of a shared practice. This new monthly practice group is a response to the request by previous group attendees for a service providing such an opportunity. The group will be less structured than the initial training and will allow those attending to revise what they have learned on the initial course through further discussion and practice.

## Who can attend?

You can attend if you have already completed a Compassionate Mindfulness Course (9 or 14 weeks) with Dr. Joanne Milner, Clinical Psychologist at Tyneside Mind or WHIST.

You may wish to bring a pen and paper to make notes and glasses if you need these to read. If you have any other specific requirements, please let us know in advance so that we can find ways to help you access support to attend.

We are hoping to make this group self-running in 2018 supported by staff from the Recovery College. It will therefore belong to those attending who can work with the Recovery College staff to develop a group which meets your further compassionate mindfulness practice needs.

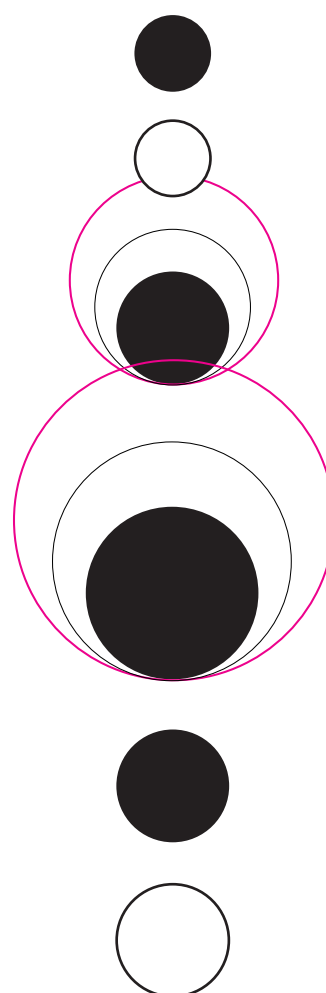
Time: Please contact Recovery College

Dates: Please contact Recovery College

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Joanne Milner





## CREATIVE WELLNESS

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It is hoped that this course will encourage students to develop creative skills which will enhance their emotional wellbeing. The focus will be on learning a series of creative skills. Creativity and the journey of recovery are individual to each person, however by combining the skills and experience of each individual within the group we hope to empower people along their journey of recovery, instilling a sense of hope.

Time: 10am - 12pm

Day: Tuesday

Dates: Weekly from the 24th April (excluding half-term)

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leaders: Lorraine Morton and Chris Hall

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## CREATIVE CORNER - FRIENDS ACTION NORTH EAST

Creative Corner meet every 2 weeks at the Recovery College. We are a friendship group and decide together what art projects we want to do. We have done pottery, printmaking, animation, photography, portraits and creative crafts. We also visit local galleries and landmarks for inspiration. This is a particularly safe space for people with a learning disability to explore their creative side.

Time: 12pm - 2pm

Day: Tuesday (please contact Recovery College for the start date)

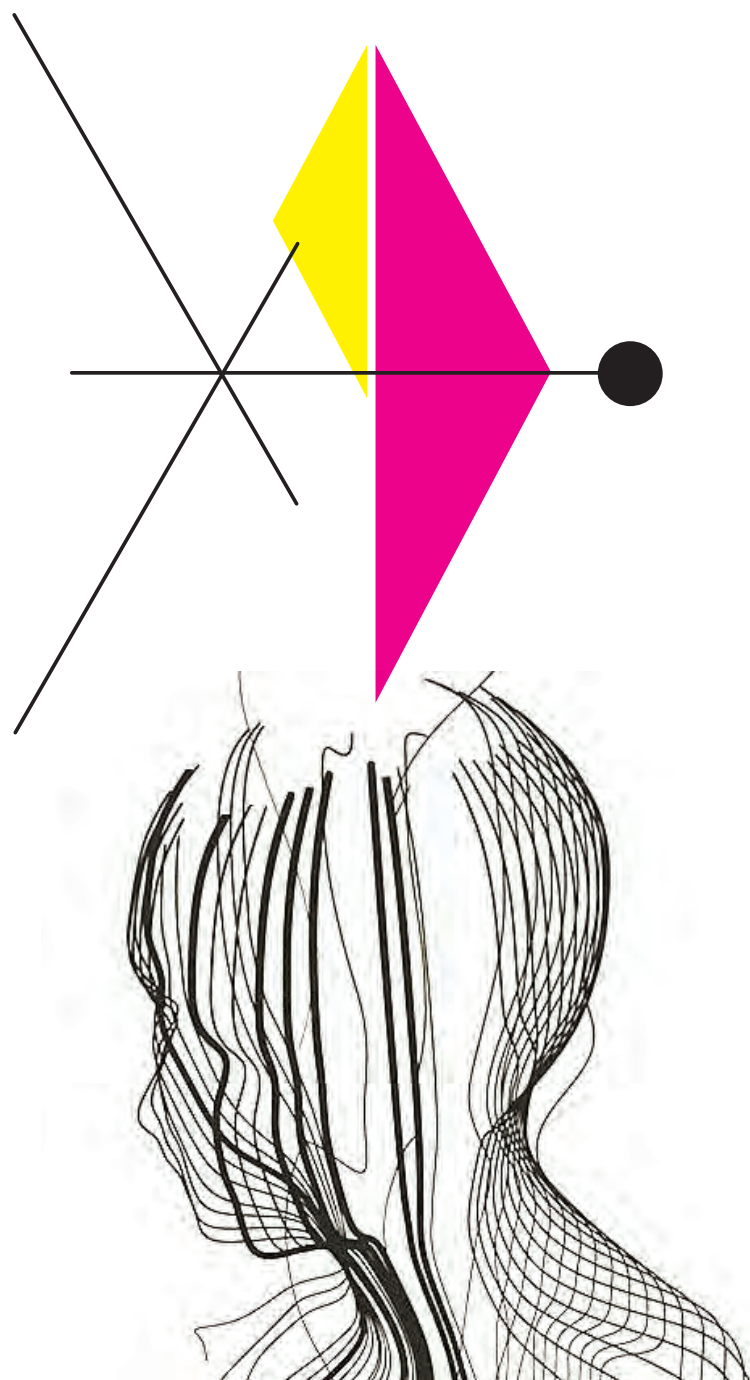
Dates: Then fortnightly

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Friends Action North East

CREATIVE WELLNESS





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## CREATIVE WRITING

The group has so far been running under the auspices of Launchpad as an informal class that anyone can join. The tutor draws on a broad range of knowledge to illustrate all aspects of creative writing, from poetry to prose to drama. The sessions are relaxed and enjoyable. Creative writing can have a powerful therapeutic effect, gently encouraging participants out of their shells. Participants are encouraged to, and will have the opportunity to, present their work in public such as performing poetry to an audience should they feel ready.

Time: 11am - 1pm

Day: Wednesday (Contact ReCoCo for start date)

Dates: Weekly (other than half term break)

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: David Kipping



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“

Feel as if I am treated as a normal person and without feeling as if I am in an institute which means it's a much more welcoming place to come to. ”





## EXPLORING YOUR TRUTH WITH METAPHOR

7

A whole new approach to being human.  
Explore, enjoy, learn even more about who you really are and travel through your thoughts to a place of none.  
No beliefs required.  
Witness the perspective of your soul.  
2-hour group, once a week.  
Experience your undisputable truth.  
Maybe some wishes can come true.  
Remember how truly beautiful and miraculous you are?  
On Facebook search for HeArt by Suzanne

Time: 10am - 12pm

Day: Friday

Dates: 27th April (then weekly except half-term)

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Suzanne Ellis



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## FABULOUS FITNESS

Stretch, tone and Pilates ending with mindfulness relaxation.  
Gentle exercise at your own pace using resistance bands.  
Come along and reap the benefits. Helps strengthen core stability, flexibility and tones those important places!

Time: 1pm - 2pm

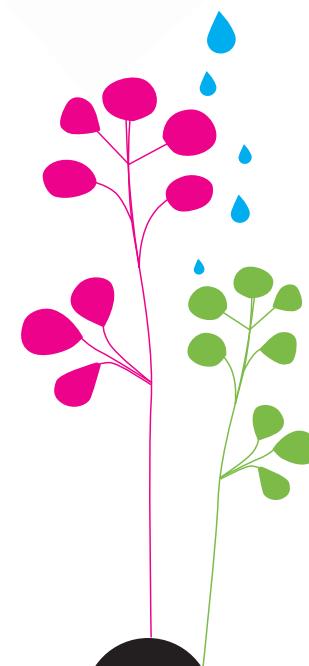
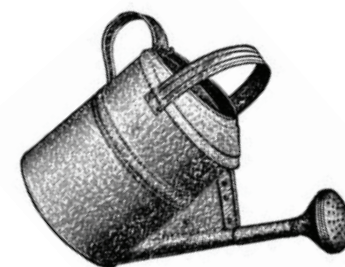
Day: Thursday

Dates: 19th April (then weekly except for half term)

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Sue Barrow



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## GARDENING

Gardening is good for the soul. It's very literally grounding, gets you outdoors in the fresh air, involves physical activity and gives a great sense of satisfaction and achievement in producing your own food whilst enjoying the beauty of nature.

This will be a weekly group working to develop and nurture an area designated as the Recovery College Garden, within the St Nicholas Hospital site. We aren't able to provide appropriate clothing so please bring clothes and shoes (preferably boots) that you are willing to get dirty. The gardening group is weather dependent. Should the weather be particularly bad, please call Michael at the Recovery College who will be able to confirm whether the group is on that day, or not.

Time: 9.30am - 12pm

Day: Tuesday

Dates: 24th April, then weekly

Location: St Nicholas Hospital

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Michael Hall



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## HEARTS GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT

Hope  
Acceptance  
Respect  
Trust  
Support

Losing someone you love or care deeply about is very painful. You may experience all kinds of difficult emotions and it may feel like the pain and sadness you experience will never go away – but even in the deepest despair we can find hope.

Week 1: Getting to know you, memories of your loved one.

Week 2: Coping strategies, what can help?

Week 3: The five stages of grief.

Week 4: Continuing Bonds – sowing seeds of thought.

Time: 1pm – 2:30pm

Day: Wednesday

Dates: 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd May

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Denise Toward

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## IMPROVISATION WORKSHOPS

These workshops are designed to boost confidence and stretch the imagination.

We will be working on improvisation skills using props, situations, and moods, we will also be doing a bit of role play, (don't panic, no one has to do anything they're uncomfortable with). These are no pressure workshops the emphasis being on fun. Hopefully improving confidence and communication skills.

All ideas are welcome, so if you are worried about dealing with a situation, come along and role play it first. You will be directing the content of the workshops, so any ideas or improvements will be welcome. These workshops came about because of my awareness of how I became 'someone else'. Depending on the situation I am dealing with. We all wear our safety masks at some time, the trick is to be aware of it and not take it too far.

Time: 12.15pm - 2pm

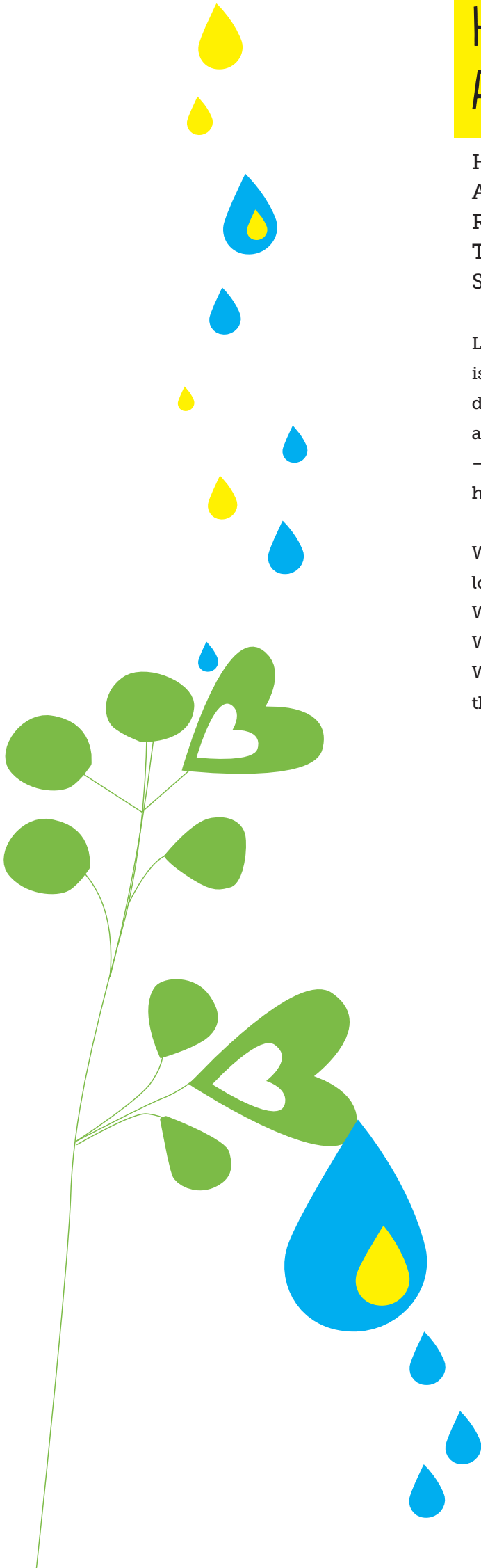
Day: Friday

Dates: 11th, 18th, 25th May; 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th June; 6th, 13th, 20th July

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Lorraine Morton





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## INDIAN HEAD MASSAGE TASTERS

Indian head massage has lots of therapeutic benefits as well as being really helpful to relaxation. Why not try a taster treatment here and ReCoCo and discover for yourself.

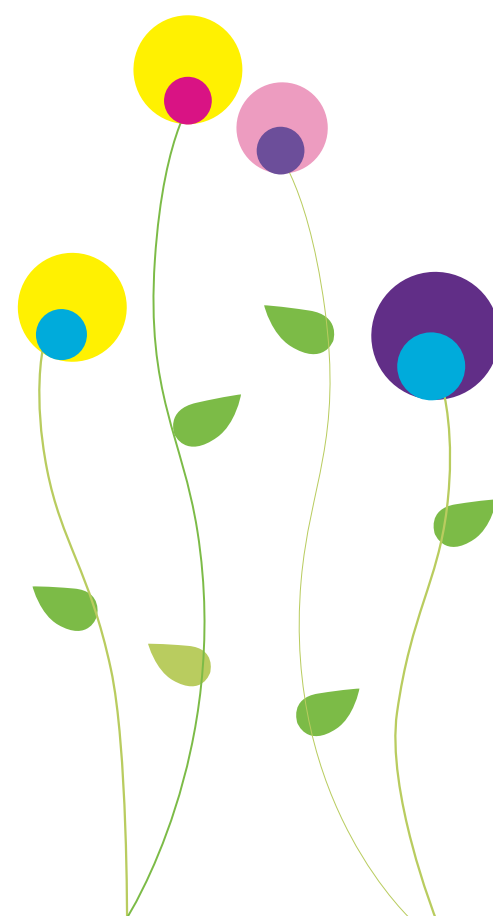
Time: 11am - 1pm  
 Day: Wednesday  
 Dates: Weekly (except half term)  
 Location: Broadacre House  
 Contact: Recovery College Collective  
 Course Leader: Robert Buckley

13

## INTRODUCTION TO DBT SKILLS

This is not Dialectical Behavioural Therapy. It is a skills-based group giving an overview of what DBT is, exploring and trying out the skills that people find helpful in managing their emotions.

Time: 3pm - 5pm  
 Day: Monday  
 Dates: 30th April; 7th, 14th, 21st May  
 Location: Broadacre House  
 Contact: Recovery College Collective  
 Course Leader: Cat Barrett & Bekah Davis



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## JOELENE ENGLISH

Joelene English is a Contemporary Dance Theatre choreographer and performance artist. Since graduating in 2006 she has gone on to choreograph and perform in an array of genres and venues, as well as teaching a wide range of students and professional artists. She is interested in using dance, film and theatre to explore human nature when destiny becomes trapped by reality. Her work combines taut choreography, beautiful scenography and emotional performance. She is fascinated by mental illness and its impact on everyday life.

To date Joelene English Dance Theatres' work has had a relationship with mental illness, this has been hugely influenced from personal experiences. Researching and delving into personal cob webbed memories for work opens up a world of questions and few answers. The sessions will be playful and fun using different art forms including creative writing, movement, drama, visual art and photography to explore the creation of an alter ego. To tell a personal story taking moments from well-known stories as starting points and weaving the real lives of its creators in amongst fragmented fiction. There is a story within us all and spoken word can often get in the way of communicating it with others. These workshops will offer each individual a different way to speak a voice through physicality, objects, photographs or if they dare dance. Each workshop will create an environment for challenge, discussion, creation and silence. What is created within the workshops will form the basis of a collaborative multi medium installation of individual personal journeys, including photographs, sound and objects. This course is for people who haven't undertaken Joelene's course before.

Time: 10am - 12pm

Day: Friday

Dates: 27th April; 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th May; 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th June; 6th, 13th, 20th July

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Joelene English and Vikky Beat



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## JOYFUL WELLNESS DROP-IN

A fun time to take care of you, learning about active mindfulness, balancing your chakras and spiritual healing.

There are many alternative approaches to wellbeing that have been around for thousands of years longer than psychiatry. Join Phil the healing tent to explore how you can introduce different techniques into your life to help keep you spiritually and emotionally strong

Time: 12.00pm - 1.00pm

Day: Wednesday

Dates: Please contact ReCoCo for dates

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Phil Waugh





## JOYFUL WELLNESS CONTINUED PRACTICE

16

*If you regularly attend the drop-in sessions why not continue practice at this session for students with more insight into mindfulness.*

Time: 1pm - 2.00pm

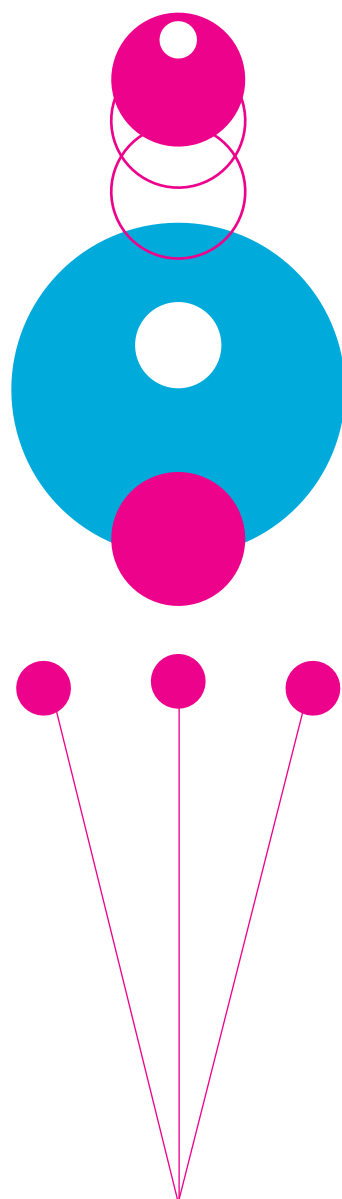
Day: Tuesday

Dates: Please contact ReCoCo for dates

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Sue Barrow



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## MINDFUL CIRCUS

Learn introductory circus skills including spinning plates, juggling and poi, with an emphasis on experience and mindful participation.

Circus skills are fantastic escapism, but they can also be used as a stress reliever, relaxation technique, distraction, and to help you focus on the present moment.

Juggling in particular can help quickly clear a crowded mind — the practice takes such intense focus that you simply have no capacity to ruminate, catastrophize or overthink at the same time. In contrast, a skill like poi is well suited to act as self-soothe.

A great compliment to DBT. Clowns not included.

Time: 1pm - 2pm

Day: Thursday

Dates: 26th April; 3rd, 10th, 17th May

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Angeline Lucas



# MINDFULNESS AND MEDITATION AT THE RECOVERY COLLEGE

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We really believe that mindfulness can help us gain control over our emotions and help us feel in control of our lives. It's also really enjoyable so if you think that it could help or that you deserve a little bit of YOU time then why not come along and give it a try.

We now have a mindfulness drop in every weekday at 12.00pm which lasts approximately 45 minutes. All sessions are suitable for absolute beginners.

## Meditation with Warren

Warren is a practicing Buddhist and his meditation sessions incorporate traditional Buddhist practice such as 'Mette Bhavana' and 'mindfulness of breathing'.

Day: Monday

Time: 12pm - 1pm

Date: Weekly (except for half term)

Drop in Leader: Warren Milburn

## Mindfulness Drop-In

Sue can help you look broadly at mindfulness. She incorporates very simple mindfulness exercises that you can do anywhere without it being obvious, so you can learn to take control of your breathing in all circumstances. Sue's mindfulness is particularly helpful for people who find it difficult to sit and meditate and looks at incorporating more physical exercises such as the 'body wash'.

Time: 12pm - 1pm

Day: Tuesday

Dates: Weekly (except for half term)

Drop in Leader: Sue Barrow

## Mindfulness Drop-In

Time: 12pm - 1pm

Day: Wednesday

Dates: Weekly (except for half term)

Drop in Leader: Phil Waugh

## Meditation with Warren

Time: 12 pm -1 pm

Day: Thursday

Dates: Weekly (except for half term)

Drop in Leader: Warren Milburn

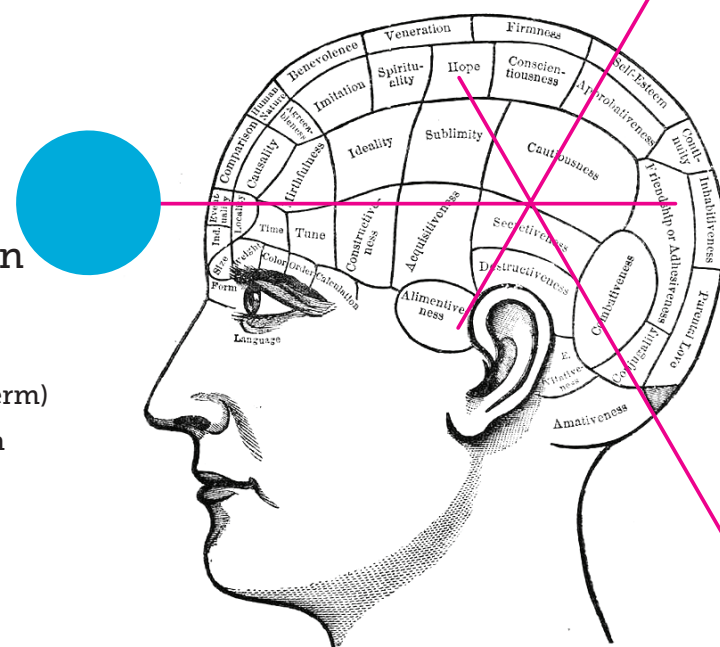
## Mindfulness

Time: 12pm - 1pm

Day: Friday

Dates: Weekly (except for half term)

Drop in Leaders: Sue Barrow and Molly Storm



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# MINDFULNESS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

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This course is for students aged between 17 and 25 years old.

## What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is paying attention to the present moment, without getting stuck in the past or worrying about the future. This can really change the way you manage and react to stressful situations, giving you a valuable tool to stay mentally healthy, and an ever-expanding body of evidence shows that it really works.

It can be easy to rush through life without stopping to notice much. Paying more attention to the present moment – to your own thoughts and feelings, and to the world around you – can improve your mental wellbeing.

Some people call this awareness, 'mindfulness,' and you can take steps to develop it in your own life. Good mental wellbeing means feeling good about life and yourself and being able to get on with life in the way you want.

## What can I expect from the Mindfulness Group?

A warm welcome. An opportunity to practice short guided mindful relaxation exercises. Discussion with and support from other young people attending the group.

Pat Hanley is a registered member of the Health and Care Professions Council and The Mindfulness Association. Qualifying as an Iyengar Yoga Teacher in 2002 Pat has practiced Mindfulness since 2005; studying at The Centre for Mindfulness Research & Practice at Bangor University and The University Aberdeen.

Time: 1pm - 2pm

Day: Wednesday

Dates: 25th April, then weekly except half term

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Pat Hanley

([www.BeMindful.co.uk](http://www.BeMindful.co.uk))

## NEW BEGINNINGS

A 10 step course on beating anxiety and motivating you to a happier life.

This 10 step course is designed to help you to overcome your anxieties and stresses which prevent you from living a happy, fulfilled life by using tried and tested techniques which are simple yet very successful.

During this 4-week course you will learn:

- How to push through your anxiety
- How to take responsibility
- How to become a positive thinker
- How to deal with negativity
- How to expand your horizons
- How to get more out of the world by getting more into it!

You, like everyone, deserves the best of what life has to offer, so what are you waiting for? Today is the first day of the rest of your life; all you have to do is take that first step to a New Beginning.

Time: 10am - 12pm

Day: Thursday

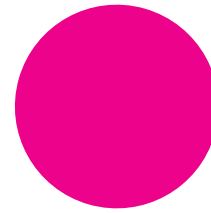
Dates: 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th May

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Grace Platten (previously

Feel the Fear Trainer)



**"**The students/volunteers/  
staff are friendly, trusting,  
empathetic, accepting and  
non-judgemental."**"**





## RISING STRONG

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Following on from last terms *The Daring Way*, we continue to look at the teachings of Brene Brown and the impact that shame has on us. You don't need to have done *The Daring Way* to undertake this course but some knowledge of Brene Brown's teachings might be useful. There's plenty of information on the internet and a great TED talk on Shame that you will find on Youtube.

*The Daring Way* is a highly experiential methodology based on the research of Dr Brene Brown. The method was designed for work with individuals, couples, families, work teams and organisational Leaders. It can be facilitated in clinical, educational and professional settings. During the process we explore topics such as vulnerability, courage, shame and worthiness. We examine the thoughts, emotions and behaviours that are holding us back and we identify the new choices and practices that will move us towards more authentic and wholehearted living. The primary focus is on developing shame resilience skills and developing daily practices that transform the way we live, love, parent and lead.

The Overall Outcomes for Rising Strong™:

- Continue to lead and participate in a global conversation about vulnerability, courage, shame, and worthiness.
- Increase global access to information on emotion and how emotion is connected to behaviour and thought.
- Awaken people's curiosity about emotions – awareness and the ability to articulate – and build our understanding of emotions.
- Use the rising strong process at both the micro and macro levels to increase wholeheartedness in living, loving, and leading.

Time: 3.30pm - 5pm

Day: Thursday

Dates: 26th April; 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th May; 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th June; 5th, 12th, 19th July

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Claire Robinson

Further information can be found at [www.thedaringway.com](http://www.thedaringway.com)

"I love the Recovery College, I have learnt so much and have met amazing people and it has helped me get a job again."

"The Recovery College is amazing. Readily available, kind, caring and you can talk to people who understand because they've been through it!"



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## SELF ESTEEM

This course is brought to you by The Kindness Project.

We believe that real self esteem comes from a healthy respect for yourself and an understanding of what your role is in the world. Each week we will look at a different aspect of how you feel about yourself and how to build on that. Some of the topics covered: interactions with others, low and positive self esteem and positive affirmations.

We look forward to welcoming you to a friendly, creative group session that explores the need for healthy self esteem, finding ways to enhance in a peer environment and develop and discover new things about who you are and who you would like to become.

We look at many areas including;

- Your awareness of who you are
- How you think and feel about your strengths and weaknesses
- The expectations you place on yourself
- Your awareness of what you want from your life.
- Do you accept yourself for who you are or not?
- How you view yourself in comparison to others
- How you think and feel about what other people say about you

Time: 10am - 12pm

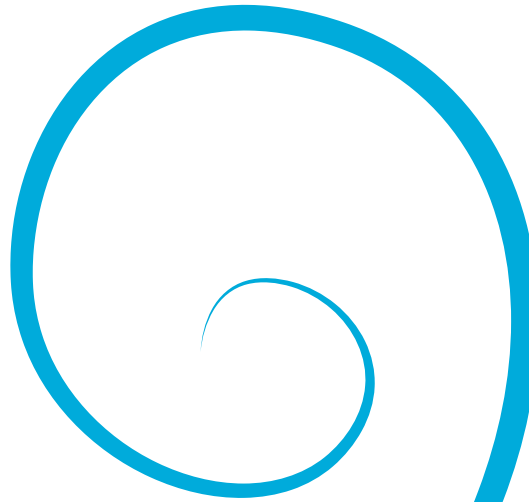
Day: Friday

Dates: Starting on 27th April, then weekly (except half term)

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Sara Lourenco



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## SINGING GROUP

Singing is good for your wellbeing. These are informal sessions that will gently bring out the singing voice that you have inside. Come and find your voice.

Time: 3pm – 4pm

Day: Friday

Dates: 27th April, then weekly (except half-term)

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Lydia Hayman

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## SMART RECOVERY

SMART recovery is a science-based programme to help people manage their recovery from any type of addictive behaviour. If you feel you need help and guidance with such issues please feel welcome to join us in a relaxed and informative weekly meeting where we will provide you with the tools, skills and knowledge of how to deal with these difficult ongoing issues.

Time: 2pm - 3.30pm

Day: Tuesday

Dates: 24th April, then weekly (except half term)

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Martin Tunney and

Marc King

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## SONGWRITING ABOUT RECOVERY

Do you like music? Do you have a story to tell? Join us and we will help you to write music about it. No experience needed. Your lyrics can be as vague as you like. Bring any instrument you can carry by yourself, including your voice(s). Consider taking headphones for electronic instruments if you are bringing them. Our facilitator has worked in hospitals since he was a lad in varying roles, has been a semi-professional musician and an experienced facilitator and tutor. He has his own material to write about, in terms of wellbeing and recovery. You will leave with some lines of song. Previous sessions have led to brief recordings and were well rated by attendees. You will retain copyright.

Time: 1.30 pm - 3.30 pm

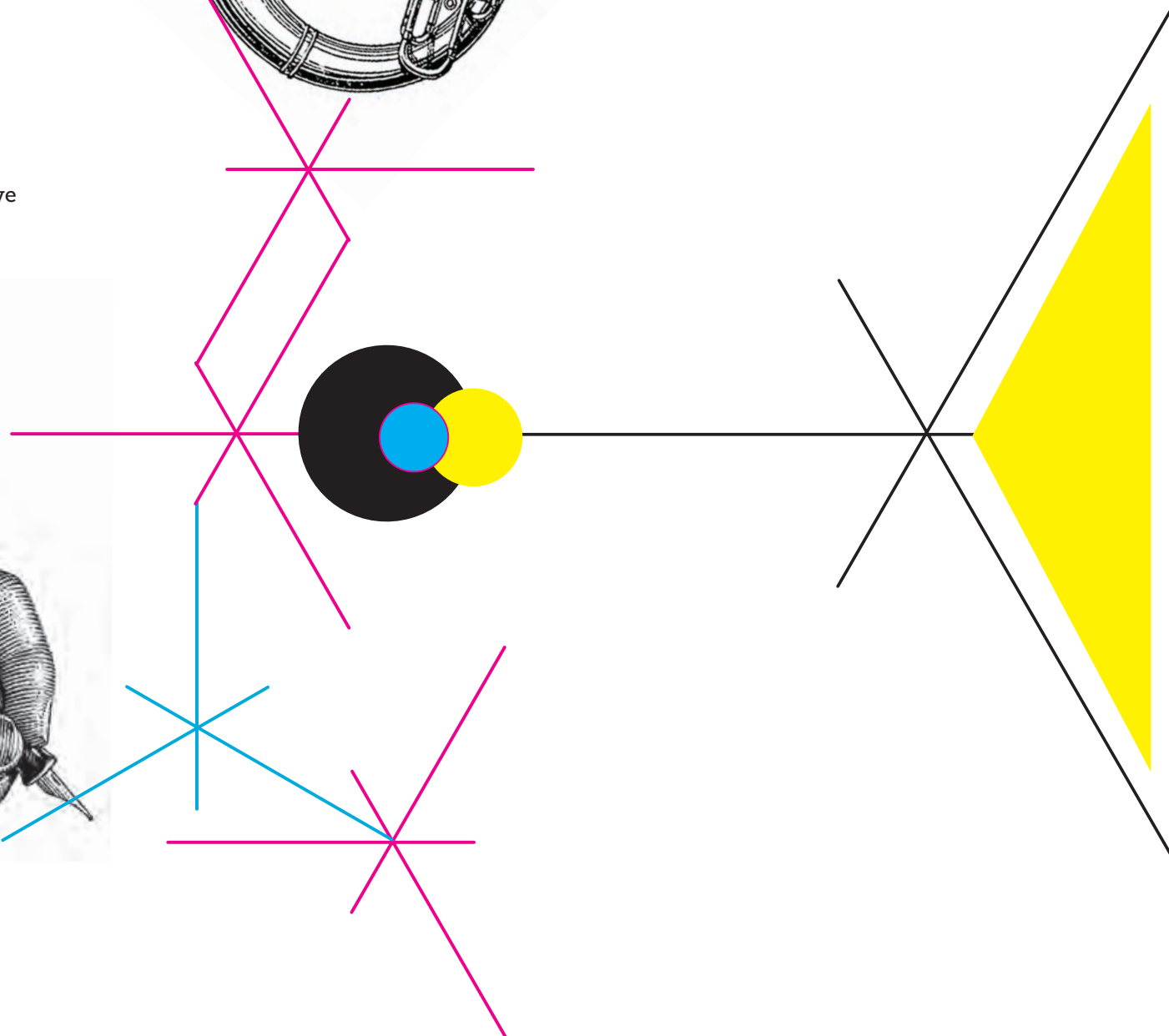
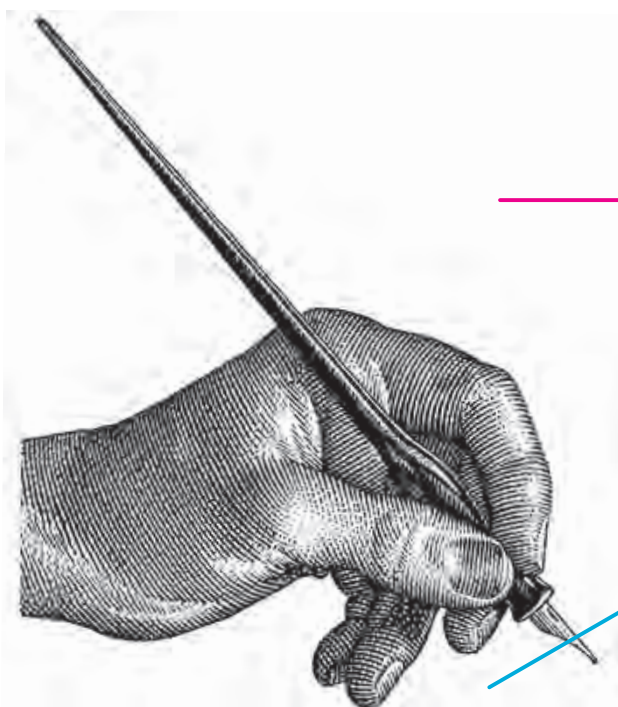
Day: Thursday

Dates: 14th and 28th June

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Keith Reid





Time: 1pm - 3pm  
Day: Thursday  
Dates: 26th April, 10th, 17th, 24th May  
Location: Broadacre House  
Contact: Recovery College Collective  
Course Leader: Neil Cockling

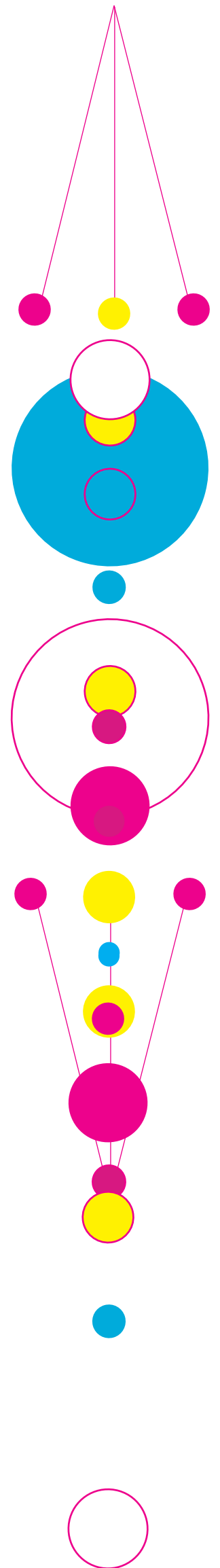


# SUPPORT FOR MALE SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

If you are a man living in Northumberland or Tyne & Wear you can join our support group.

At our monthly support group, in the centre of Newcastle, you can meet up with other men in a similar position, share your story, and look to move forward through resilience training. Please just come along on the dates/times shown below.

Time: 6pm - 8pm  
Day: Thursday  
Dates: Then weekly  
Location: Broadacre House  
Contact: Recovery College Collective



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## TAKE HOLD OF YOUR EMOTIONS

This is a new approach, which will get you to understand the way, by which you produce your emotions. Knowing the "HOW" is the basis to become able to keep on top of them.

The course is scheduled for 3 group sessions, each a week apart:

Week 1 – For definitions, so we avoid misunderstandings

Week 2 – For the process of producing emotions

Week 3 – The basics of how to work to become able to keep on top of your emotions

You will not learn how to suppress your emotions. You will be enabled to experience them in a more satisfying way. In session one and three you are asked to fill in a short sequence of questions. At the end of session one you will receive a longer questionnaire "The Personal Baseline".

As it is about your emotions, it is understood, that you will have to look into yourself in a new way.

This is a "Starting you on the way" course. Afterwards we have one-on-one meetings to keep personal things personal.

Man In Centre is the provider.  
Walter Morauf is the presenter;  
with over 40 years of experience in dealing with emotional problems of others.

Time and date: TBC (Please contact Recovery College)  
Location: Broadacre House  
Contact: Recovery College Collective  
Course Leader: Walter Morauf

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## THIS IS ME

A new 10-week course on becoming self-aware. This course will seek to help you recognise the skills and insights that you have gained from your experience of distress and trauma.

These are the skills that have kept you alive. Sue will help you to recognise the gifts and assets that you carry with you and use them to adopt a new way of life and a new way of being.

Using mood boards, WRAP, Behavioural Activation, DBT Skills, Positive affirmations, diary keeping, mindfulness and life formulations this course is intended to increase your confidence and self-esteem by drawing on your skills and enabling you to make sense of who you are, and why.

We ask that participants undertake the 2-day WRAP Awareness course before doing 'This is Me'. Participants will be expected to complete homework tasks.

Time: 10am – 12pm  
Day: Monday  
Dates: 23rd April for ten weeks (excluding half term).  
Location: Broadacre House  
Contact: Recovery College Collective  
Course Leader: Sue Barrow

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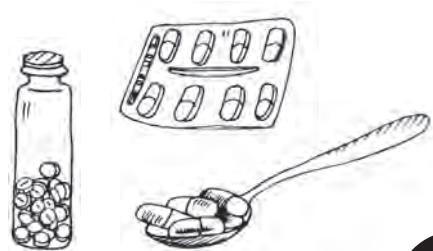
## TJUZ!

TJUZ! workshops are an opportunity to express yourself and come together to celebrate our diversity. All materials are provided and any level of experience is welcome.

Proposed activities include customising existing clothing, t-shirt printing, head dress making and creating carnival costumes for Newcastle Pride parade in July. Sessions can be co-designed with you to meet your preferences and needs - we are open to proposals.

These are inclusive workshops for anyone who identifies as LGBTQ+

Time: 12pm – 3pm  
Day: Wednesday  
Dates: 25th April, 2nd May, 9th May, 16th May, 23rd May, 6th June, 13th June, 20th June, 27th June, 4th July.  
Location: Broadacre House  
Contact: Recovery College Collective  
Course Leader: Matthew Docherty



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## UNDERSTANDING MEDICATION

This two-hour workshop explores the practical and physiological impact of taking medication. It's an informal discussion group with a senior pharmacist that explores issues through shared experience. This workshop is suitable for anyone who wants to learn more about medication or for those who are thinking about changing, reducing or coming off medication.

We intend to run this workshop 3 times this term

Time: Please contact Recovery College

Date: Please contact Recovery College

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Location: Broadacre House

## UNDERSTANDING PSYCHIATRY

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The session will initially describe the approach taken by psychiatrists in assessing, understanding and treating mental disorder. It will include briefly the development of psychiatry as a branch of medicine, looking at similarities and differences from the rest of medicine and will also describe the areas of information that are considered important in the history and investigation and consider the concepts of diagnosis and formulation as used by psychiatrists. It will set out the approach taken to consider the many different influences on a person's health and how these are taken account, by psychiatrists, in reaching a conclusion and planning care and treatment. We will then look forward to an interactive discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of this approach. Like all approaches there are limitations, some of which psychiatrists are aware of, and others less so. Others still, are better understood by those who use psychiatric services.

Facilitated by the former Medical Director of Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust, Dr. Suresh Joseph.

The session will run 2 times this term. Please contact us for the specific dates.

Time: Please contact Recovery College

Date: Please contact Recovery College

Location: Broadacre House

Course Leader: Dr. Suresh Joseph



## VERY BASIC I.T. SKILLS WORKSHOP

### ('LEARN MY WAY')

Are you technophobic? Have you missed out on learning how to use a computer? It's never too late. Increasingly people need to be able to use emails, websites and write simple documents. People even need to do this to apply for benefits, jobs, deal with energy companies etc.

The Recovery College offers one to one support, in small groups of up to five people. This class is for complete beginners or people who are just beginning to learn. As well as tutor support we are registered with 'Learn my Way' which offers a wide and diverse range of online tutorials such as how to use a mouse, how to access the internet, basic literacy and numeracy, how to construct a word document etc.

Go on and take the plunge! We are a friendly bunch, all in the same boat and non-judgemental. Empower yourself and build your confidence.

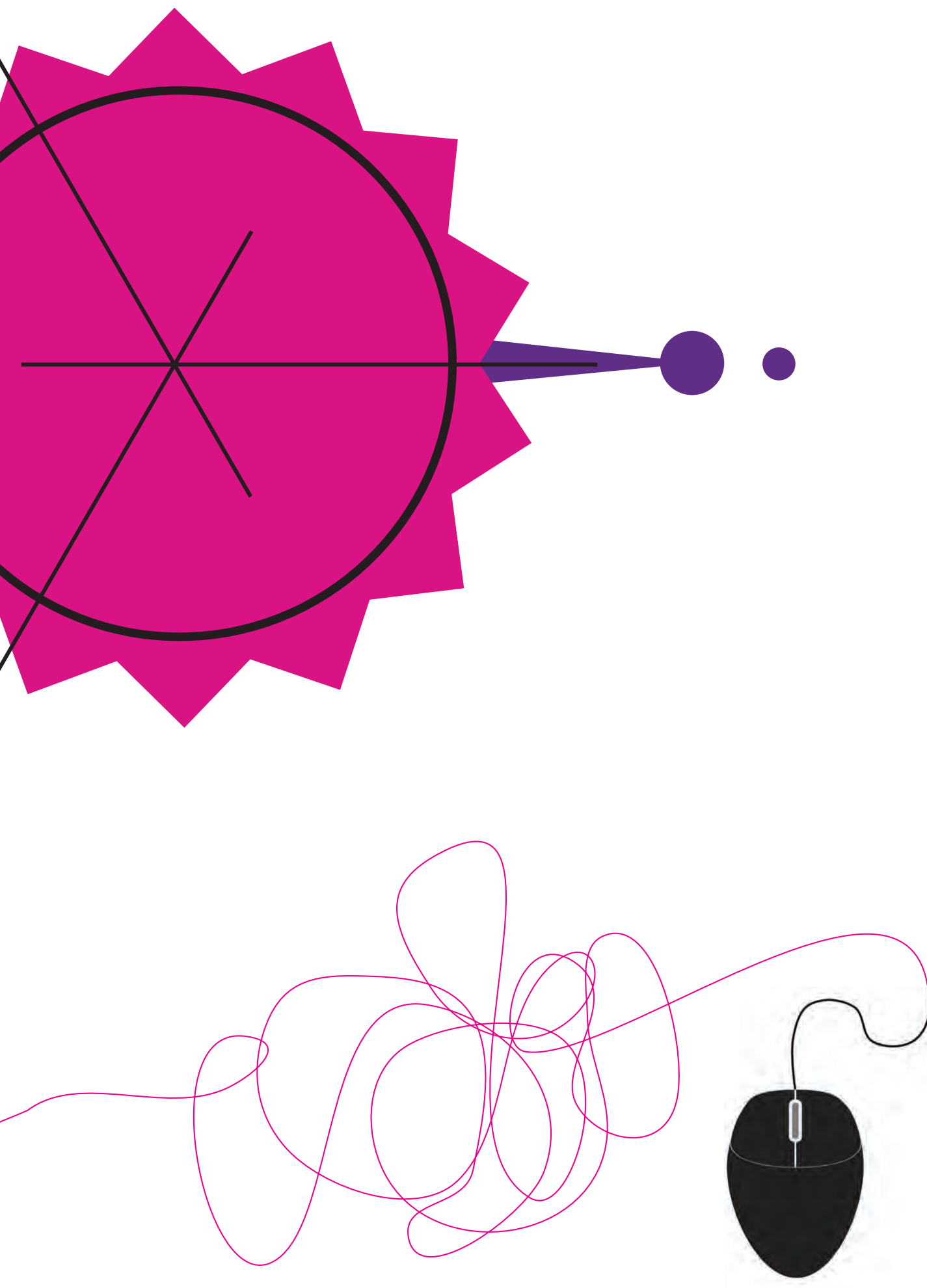
Time: 10am - 12pm

Day: Tuesday

Dates: 24th April then weekly (except for half term)

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective  
Course Leader: Keith Havley







## WOMEN'S ART

The course will offer a safe space for women to make and learn about art, developing a number of different creative skills. Each session will be inspired by a piece of feminist art work, so students will learn about art alongside making it. It is hoped that the workshops empower women through creativity, allowing students to develop new skills and just enjoy making art. The course will be largely student-led, deciding together what projects we want to do. This could be any number of things such as painting, sculpture, embroidery, collage-making, drawing and many more.

Time: 10am - 12pm

Day: Thursday

Dates: Please contact ReCoCo for dates

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Anna Skulczuk

## WRAP AWARENESS

A workshop for people who experience mental health challenges and for those who care about them. It promotes a structured approach to developing a range of strategies to support self-management in recovery from distress. WRAP® (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) is a plan designed and managed by you and is designed to:

- Decrease and prevent intrusive or troubling feelings and behaviours
- Increase personal empowerment
- Improve quality of life
- Assist you in achieving your own life goals and dreams

People find that doing WRAP with peers can give lots of ideas as to how you can increase your wellbeing and plenty of opportunity to bounce ideas off like-minded people. We recommend WRAP for all of our students so we will be running WRAP workshops 4 times this term.

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

WRAP Leader: Sue Barrow

WRAP course facilitators: Simone Wiseman, Deb Summerill, Annette Rutherford, Jamie White, Susan Reid, Wendy Ritchie and Jonny Blythe

WRAP Dates for Summer Term 2018:

10 am – 2 pm

Session 1: Tuesday 24th April

Session 2: Tuesday 1st May

Session 1: Tuesday 8th May

Session 2: Tuesday 15th May

Session 1: Tuesday 22nd May

Session 2: Friday 25th May

Session 1: Tuesday 5th June

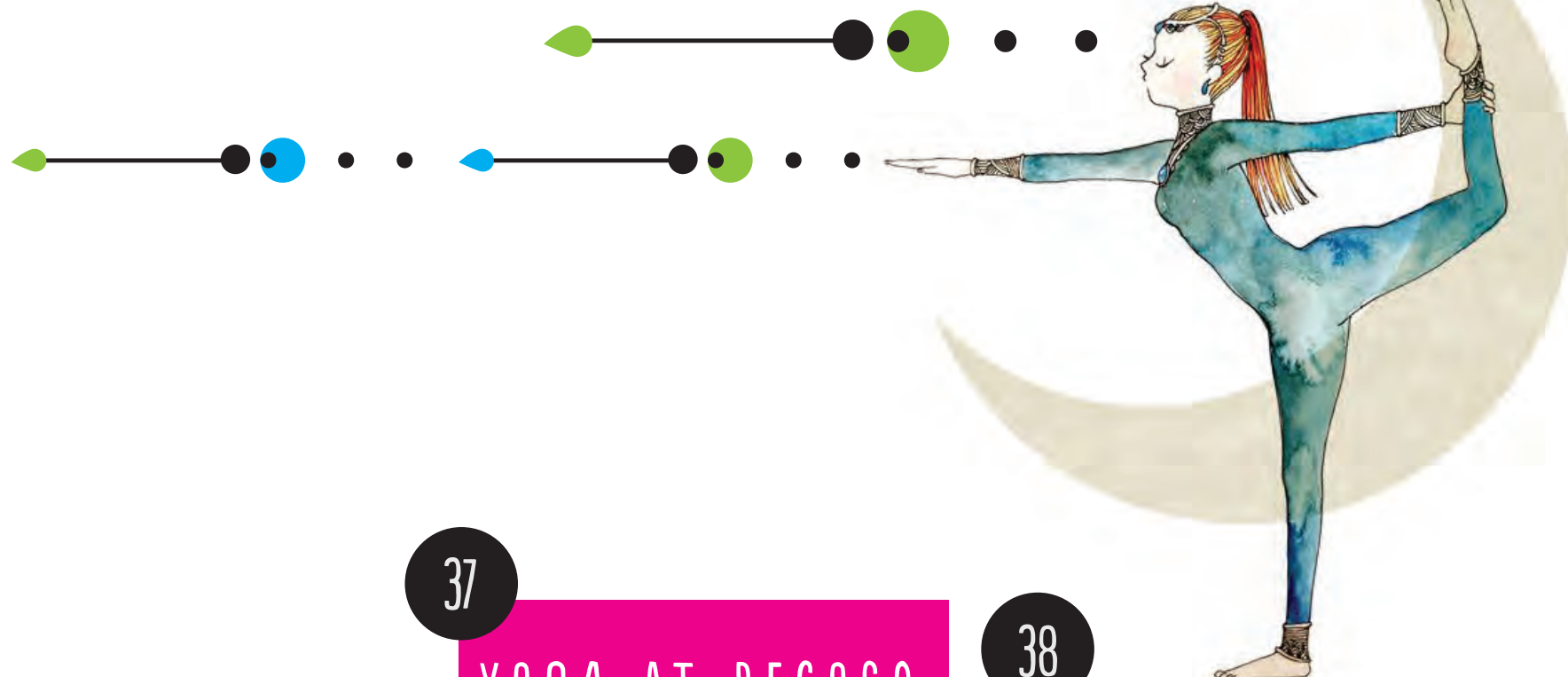
Session 2: Tuesday 12th June

Session 1: Tuesday 3rd July

Session 2: Tuesday 10th July

Session 1: Tuesday 17 July

Session 2: Friday 20 July



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## YOGA AT RECOCO

You've probably heard by now that yoga is good for you. Maybe you've even tried it and discovered that it makes you feel better. A consistent practice offers all kinds of mental and physical health benefits. Some, like improved flexibility, are clearly evident. Others, including mental clarity and stress reduction, may be more subtle but are just as powerful. We at Recovery College Collective certainly believe that learning to inhabit your own body is important to feeling in control. Yoga is a brilliant way of inhabiting your body. You don't have to be bendy or flexible or super fit or like quinoa. You can just be you.

Time: 2pm - 3pm

Day: Tuesday

Dates: Please contact ReCoCo

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Chris Burgin

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## TRAUMA SENSITIVE YOGA — YOGA FOR POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

*"The guiding principle of recovery is restoring a sense of power and control to the survivor"* - Judith Herman

A gentle and mindful yoga class that builds a sense of connection to the self, giving you choice about what feels right for your body and time to notice, whilst having a positive effect on your emotional and mental health.

Everybody is welcome, from absolute beginners with limited movement, to those with an interest in the mind body connection and mental health.

There is no touch or adjustments made by the teacher in this class and yoga mats are provided.

It's good to wear comfy clothes that you feel relaxed in.

Time: 2pm - 3pm

Day: Monday

Dates: 30th April, 14th May, 21st May, 4th June, 11th June

Location: Broadacre House

Course Leader: Lorna Evans

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## WRAP DROP-IN

Have you been on the WRAP awareness course?

Would you like to continue to develop your own WRAP?

Do you need help finding your triggers, exploring new coping methods or with any other aspect of your WRAP?

Do you need help to build or refresh your current plan?

Our WRAP Leader is running a weekly WRAP drop in for students who have completed their two-day WRAP Awareness and would like to discuss or revisit their plan.

Time: 3pm - 4pm (by appointment)

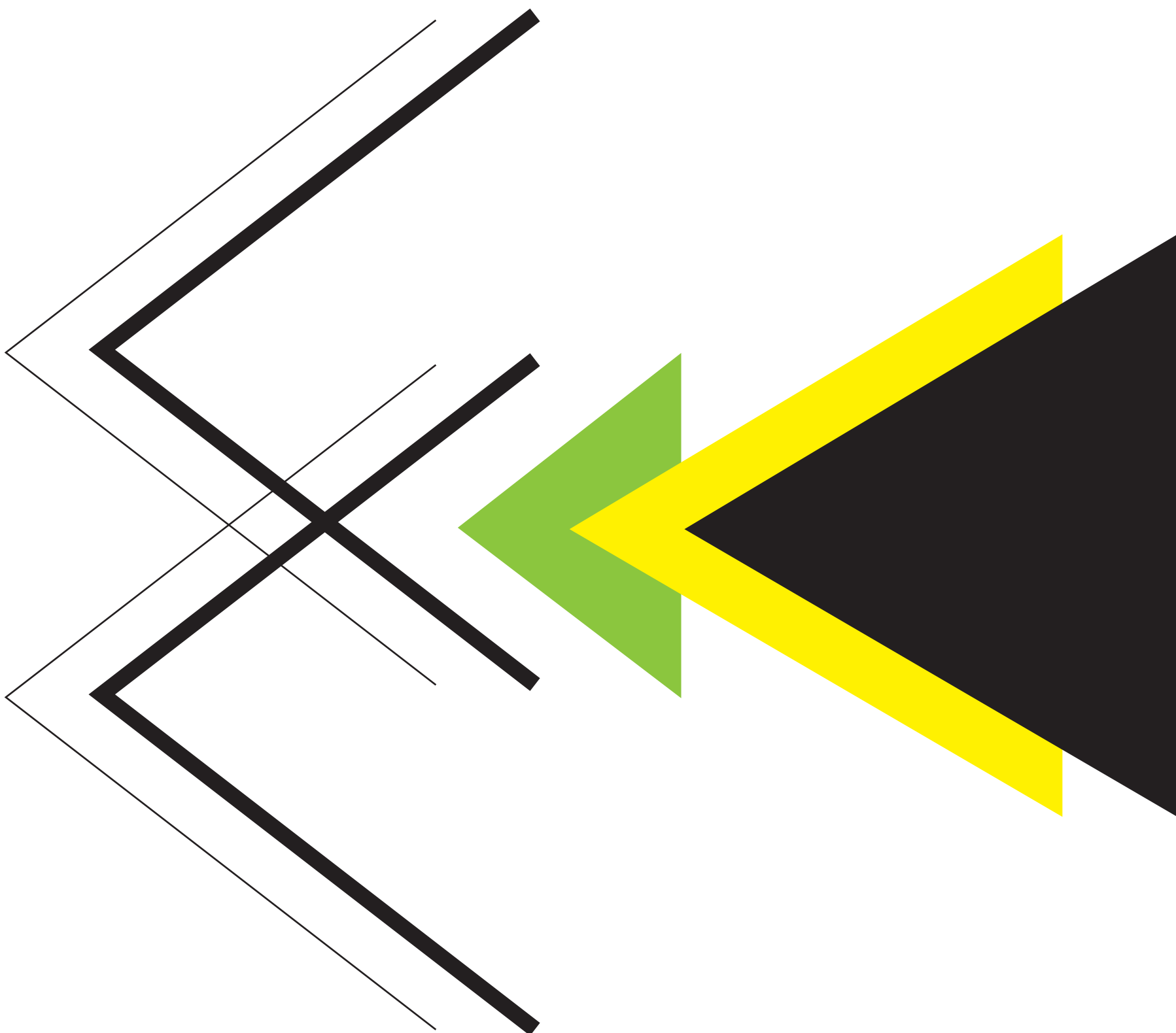
Day: Any day except Wednesday

Dates: Starting 24th April

Location: Broadacre House

Contact: Recovery College Collective

Course Leader: Sue Barrow



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"ReCoCo is a special place a centre for recovery, learning and a sanctuary. ReCoCo is a community. No other place or service comes close. You couldn't prise me out of here with five hairy men and a crowbar "

# A REASON, A SEASON, A LIFETIME

by Sue Barrow

People come into your life for a reason, a season, or a lifetime.

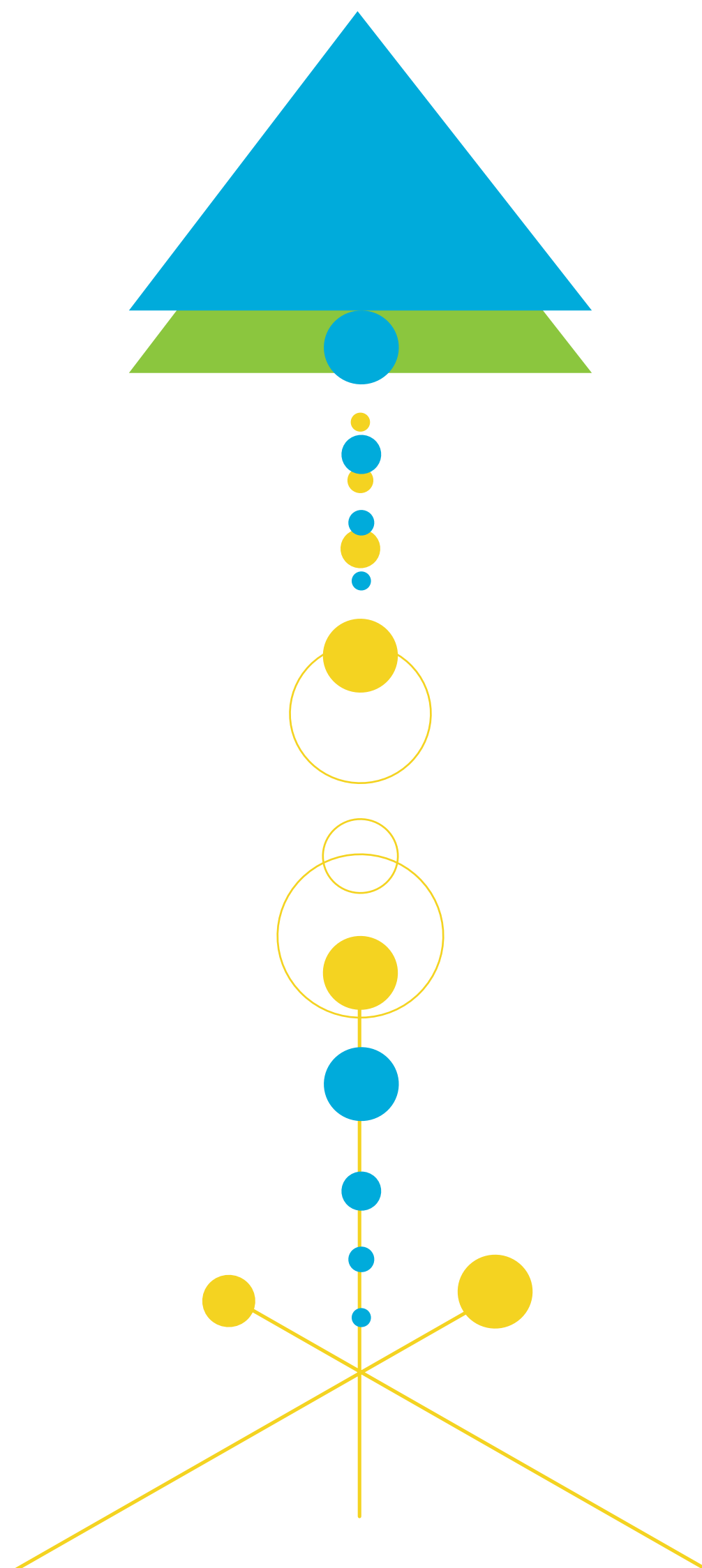
When you know which one that is, you will know what to do for that person. When someone is in your life for a reason, it is usually to meet a need that you have expressed. They have come to help you through a difficulty, to provide you with support and guidance, to aid you physically, emotionally or spiritually. They may seem like a godsend, and they are. They are there for the reason you need them to be. Then, without any wrong doing on your part, this person will say or do something to bring the relationship to an end. Sometimes they die. Sometimes they walk away. Sometimes they act up and force you to take a stand. What we must realise is that our need has been met, our desire fulfilled, their work is done. The prayer you sent out has been answered and it is time to move on.

Some people come into our life for a season, because your turn has come to share, grow or learn. They bring you an experience of peace, or make you laugh. They may teach you something you have never experienced. They usually bring you a huge amount of joy. Believe it, it is real but only for a season.

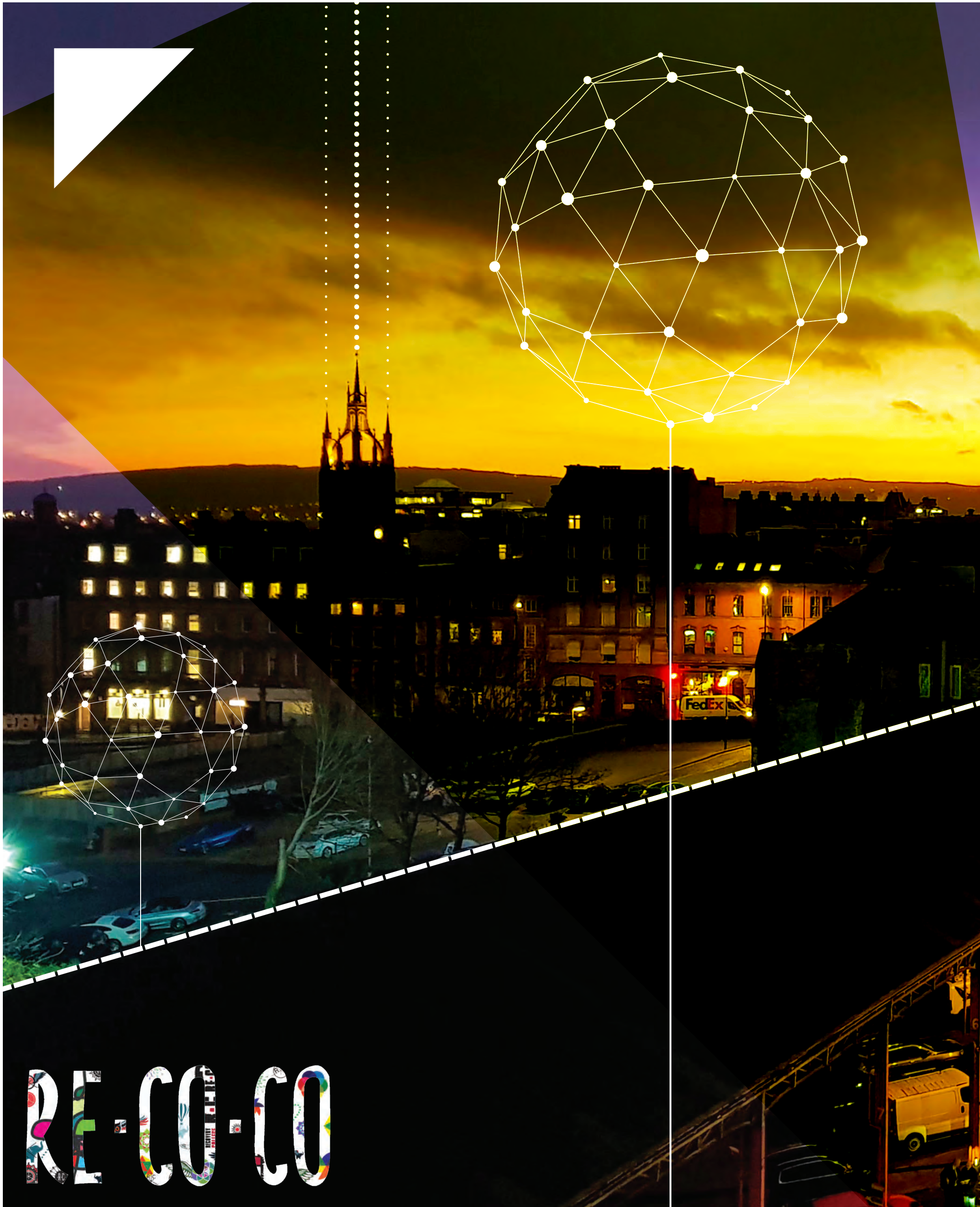
Lifetime relationships teach you life's greatest lessons, things you must build upon in order to have a solid foundation. Your job is to accept the lesson, love the person and put what you have learned to use in all other areas of your life.

It is said that love is blind, but friendship is clairvoyant.

Thank you for being in my life.







RE-CO-CO







# BEING PART OF SOMETHING

**I've been asked to write a little bit about my experience coming to the Recovery College, and to be honest, I have so much to say I don't know where to start.**

I first came to the college last year after being aware of it for quite a while and a week or so of my CPN encouraging me to give it a go. I eventually agreed and we arranged a time for her to accompany me. Coming for the first time was quite overwhelming. There were a lot of things going on: a mindfulness session in the tent, people sitting on the sofas chatting and a group going on in the classroom. I had spent the 3 months before this mostly alone in my room at home, not answering the phone, not seeing people or going outside, just trying my best to get through the days. It was like coming from the dark into colour, and as I walked in I became spaced out as my senses were overloaded. I was enrolled by a peer support worker called Johnny, who I had met once before at my local community mental health clinic, but was too anxious to actually talk to him and just listened to him tell my CPN about the college. The enrolment didn't take too long; I had trouble speaking and looking at people in the eye, and as I walked back to my CPN's car it felt like I'd been in a whirlwind. I wasn't able to think very straight at this time, but I knew that this place was different - from my local day

centre, from the community mental health clinic, from anywhere I'd been before.

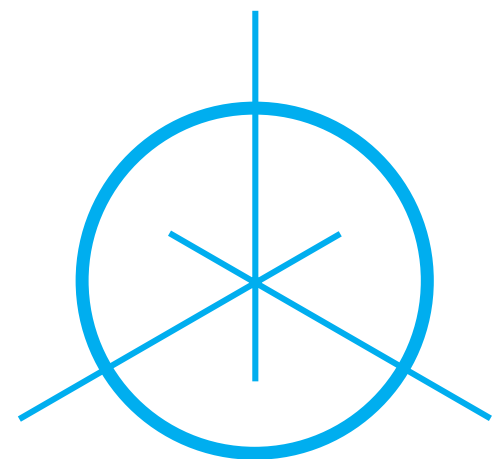
It took me a few weeks to pluck up the courage to go back. I hadn't travelled anywhere alone for some time but I knew I wanted my life to change, I just didn't know how. I hoped I would maybe be able to enrol on a course or two and be in a room with people without 'freaking out'. I desperately wanted to be able to talk to people but in my relapse my voice had left me around the same time as my mind. I somehow managed to get on the bus into town and as I approached the building everything in my body was screaming to turn around and run.

**I was on the verge of a panic attack as I got in the lift to the 5th floor. The doors opened but instead of walking forwards and pushing the door into college I quickly ran into the toilets.** My heart was pounding.

I felt sick and dizzy as I hid in a cubicle trying to calm down. After 10 minutes or so and what seemed like an eternity of arguing in my head I slowly made it out of the toilets towards the door, feeling more nauseous with every step I took. I made it to the door... but after a few seconds ran back to the safety of the toilets. This back and forth happened two more times, and by this point I was exhausted. I had been in the building for nearly 40 minutes and had managed to get to the door again when out walked someone and found me standing there, frozen. I must have looked like a terrified animal, sweating and shaking, but they didn't make any sort of deal of it at all. She smiled and asked if I was wanting to go inside and I nodded. Later I found out this was Angela, one of the staff members who set up the college.

As if it was the most normal thing in the

world, Angela walked me through and introduced me to Simone, a volunteer peer support worker who ran the drop-ins. There were people sitting round on the sofas but my feet wouldn't let me walk over. Too many faces. Simone understood straight away and asked if I would like a cuppa and to sit on the other side of the floor, just us two. I hadn't had a conversation for so long, and I didn't know what to talk about. My life was very small and I had forgotten who I was. I was terrified of sounding stupid or going silent, or of talking about myself and being judged. I had never experienced anyone else talking about living with mental health problems, never heard someone talk with true understanding and empathy. She explained that here, no-one judges. I thought 'yeh right!' but she told me that people feel safe here to let things out, and if that means crying or 'freaking out' THAT'S OKAY. It was so different to hear someone talk like this, and the complete opposite of what I had experienced in my life. As I sipped my tea I was still in panic mode, but I was able to listen and look at Simone in the eye, which was a big deal for me at this time. After half an hour or so I knew I needed to get back home as this had been a massive step for me, and as I walked out into the fresh air of my home town I felt a small something inside that was new - I felt proud of myself, and a tiny bit hopeful things might change.



Over the next few weeks I went to 2 more drop-ins, working my way up to sitting on the sofas and listening as people talked, to joining in a little bit of conversations, to getting to know people's names and feeling more physically comfortable in

other's company and in the college space. This was a HUGE change for me. I was still very quiet but I was starting to find my voice a tiny bit, encouraged by the friendliness and understanding of the volunteers and students and staff. At first I felt like I didn't fit in, that everyone else



was chatty and funny and I was the weird, quiet, sad girl trying to get people to like me. But that only lasted a short while. It felt really good that I was making the journey to and from college alone, and each time I went I found it easier to look at people in the eye and speak as I knew somehow these were my kind of people - even though everyone was so different - all ages and backgrounds - I felt part of something.

With the new term starting I signed up to two courses; a DBT skills continuing practice group and a course called 'Maximising Potential and Effectiveness'. One had a lot of people on the course and the other I was one of 3. I found these courses difficult at first because of my social problems and dissociating but I stuck with them, and as the weeks went by I gained so much knowledge but also confidence in myself. I had structure to my week for the first time in so long. I felt like if anyone asked me what I was doing with my life I could say with confidence I'M AT COLLEGE - (SO HA!). I met facilitators who were in the same boat as me, 'service users', who shared their stories and I couldn't believe their strength and bravery. They made me see that my future wasn't so full of barriers and blocks to achieving things. They showed me how by meeting different

people - slowly and at my own pace - not only did my world open up but so did opportunities to try things I had always wanted to do 'if I got better': learn how to teach mindfulness, train to co-facilitate DBT skills, get involved in interesting projects at universities and meet new people... I could try them out even though I was still struggling. Suddenly my world wasn't so small and empty. It was full of funny canny people who genuinely cared. I started to trust people again, very slowly, while strengthening my skills and learning how to manage my problems.

**It wasn't all rosy - I still had to live each day with severe panic disorder, depression, emotional dysregulation,** OCD and

PTSD, and I still had my home life to contend with, but what I learnt for the first time in my life was that I could TALK TO PEOPLE ABOUT IT. And the best thing about college was that they GOT IT. When someone asked me how I was, if I had self harmed the day before or hadn't managed to get out of bed, I could say 'Actually I've had a rough week, it's been really hard' and they would look at me with genuine compassion and really mean it when they said 'Well done for getting here today - it must have been really tough'. Sometimes I would come into college just to get away from things and go into the mindfulness tent and curl up a bit and feel safe for 10 minutes, then feel strong enough to come out and face the world again.

**I've been coming to the college for nearly a year now, and see the wonderful people there as my second family.** They have helped me more than they can ever know. There are no barriers between people like in

traditional mental health services. There are no 'professionals' and no 'patients'. Everyone has experienced mental health problems, the staff, the volunteers and the students. In that way we are all the same. They taught me what recovery means, and I am now finally in a stable place in my own recovery. It's been a long journey for me, I have been in secondary services for years, on different medications, but now I look back and see that all of that pain and suffering means I am strong and resilient. A year ago I couldn't say one nice or kind thing about myself. I had no strengths, I was a terrible person. A failure. I saw those who had turned their lives around as the lucky ones... maybe they didn't have it as bad as me, maybe they had more help. I looked at Peer Support Workers through bitter eyes... 'How come THEY got through it when I've tried SO hard!??' It just reinforced how much of a piece of shit I was that I was still 'ill' when others had succeeded.

What I know now is that recovery isn't a destination. You don't wake up one day and suddenly don't have any problems. You still went through the same trauma; you still have the same past. It still rears its ugly head and makes you act in ways you don't want to. I still get triggered. I probably always will. But now after what I have learnt on the courses and through the shared wisdom of others I am confident in my ability to handle my triggers in an effective way. Things don't hurt as much, life is so much easier and hope is a SKILL that is DEVELOPED. It's places like the Recovery College where hope and empowerment and purpose are discovered and cultivated, and lives are changed.

And so to the end of this piece of writing, but not the end of my journey through recovery. **I want to let everyone know that no matter how awful and alone you feel reading this: I was you.**

And in the same light: you are me, a year ago!



If someone were to tell me in a year's time you will go from not working for nearly 5 years, to enrolling on courses which lead on to train the trainer workshops which lead onto becoming a volunteer and then getting a place on a Peer Support Development Programme - all at the Recovery College - which will lead onto becoming successful in getting a job (!) as a paid NHS Peer Support Worker (!!) working in a young persons' inpatient ward (!!!) .... I would have thought it was a sick joke. But it actually has happened like that!

## I start my new job very soon, but I will still be coming in to the Recovery College.

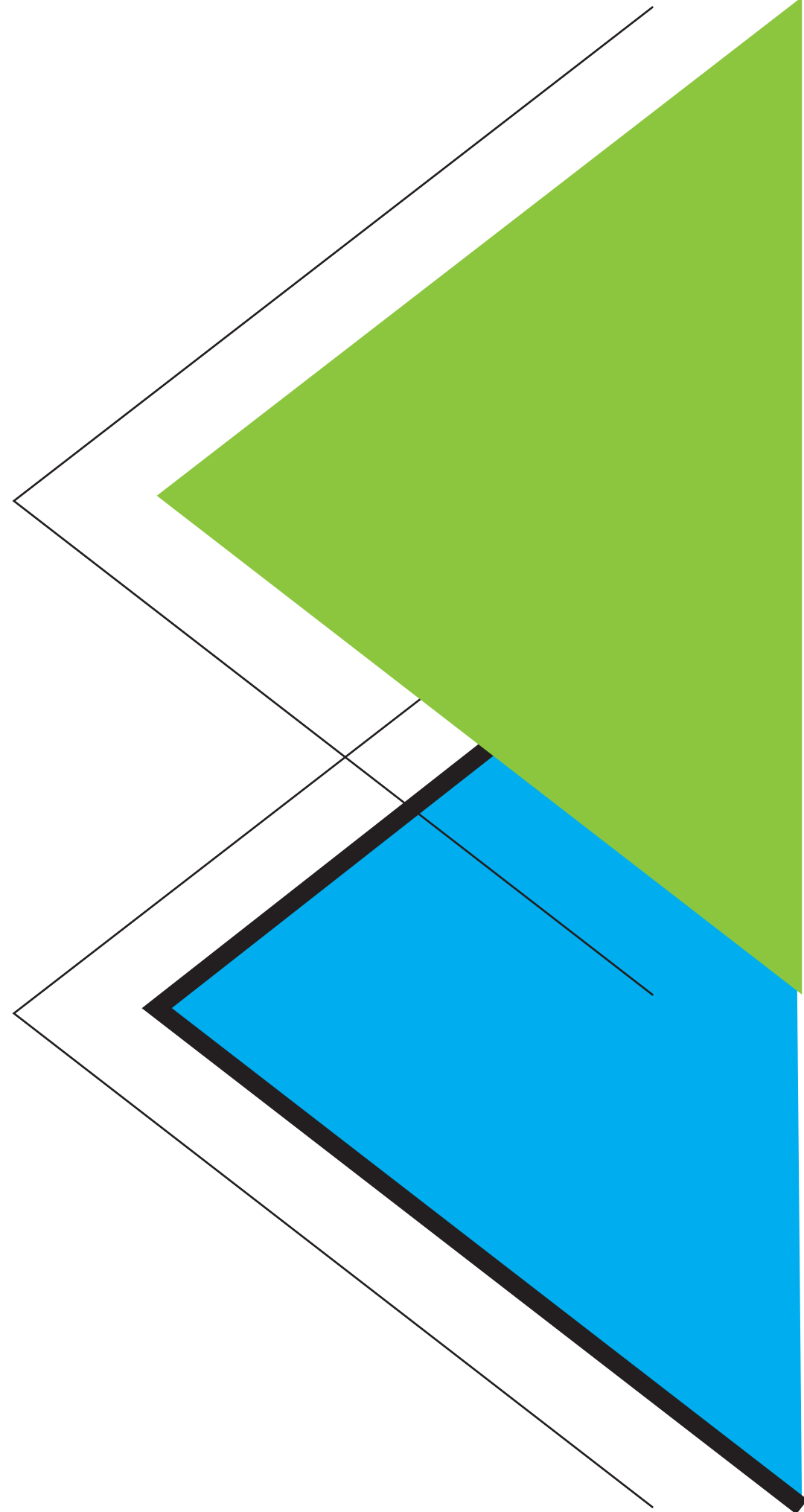
I need to. I'm not 'fully okay' even though I got a job. I still need the support of people who understand, I still need the safety and the comfort, and I still need to give back to the place that has helped me become the person I am today.

If you are wanting to take that first brave step and see what the college is like, I know how difficult it is. Take your time. It might be that they are full for this term, but believe me it is worth the wait. It might be that you feel ringing up and speaking to someone on the phone about enrolling is impossible - you can always email instead. It might be the thought of coming in for the first time by yourself brings on total panic (and then a shame spiral of hating yourself more for not being able to do it - yep, I get ya) - would a friend be able to accompany you for a look around?

I hope you give it a go, and I hope I get to meet you and give you a hug and tell you how unbelievably brave you are for taking this massive leap to trust a stranger that things will get better. Because they WILL, because even though you don't believe me, you are STRONG and you CAN do this.

See you soon,

Fran



I WAS 17 YEARS  
OLD WHEN I WAS  
FIRST ADMITTED  
TO A PSYCHIATRIC  
HOSPITAL, I WAS  
41 WHEN THE  
REVOLVING DOOR  
STOPPED.

by Sue Barrow

I have received all kinds of medication. Too many to mention, even ECT treatment. Anything to get better. In 1997 I was referred to a women's centre.

A voluntary organisation where there is a person centred, holistic safe place for women to go. I received counselling then moved onto courses to look after myself using alternative therapies. Then it was assertiveness, confidence building which worked so well I went on to do lots of courses. As I passed and received recognised qualifications my confidence grew more. Then one day I was asked if I would like to go on a course called WRAP. I said I didn't like that music. It was explained to me it was about looking after myself. I went. It changed my life. My 50th year was the best year of my life. I thought, 'yes, I'm fixed. I can get on a bus, metro, even a plane and have a holiday.' I overdid it, also had a family crisis, stopped listening to my signs. I was becoming unwell. All the things I had learnt went out of the window.

I put myself last on the list. BANG!,,,,, crisis 5 year blip back in services back to my heart so full of pain, head

so confused and believing I'll never get well. I was given a support worker and started from scratch.

A few years later I went to a health day. John from the Recovery College was talking about mindfulness. I'd done that course at Dryden Road and understood it. At the end he asked if anyone had any questions. I asked a worker to ask about this Recovery College place. Thought about it for a week then told my support worker, I want to go there. He brought me, the quiet girl who didn't talk much, definitely did not mix with anyone. The college did its thing, gave me everything I needed to grow, get stronger, use the skills I had forgotten. Three years later I'm facilitating classes, encouraged, believed in.

I feel worthy, useful, valued and have a purpose. I have been to the point of trying to end my life (a few times). I am glad I didn't succeed so when you're in that black cloud and think what's the point, take a deep breath, think of what I have achieved and believe you can get well.

I have so anyone can. Back to my 50th year, that was just a practice run, a little taste of what could be. This past two years has topped that I am so enjoying and loving life. Yes, I still have my crap days. I come into ReCoCo where there's understanding, acceptance, love and masses of support.

I am so grateful for Re-Co-Co and everyone here.

Sue Barrow

# AS WE GROW

# WE LEARN



As we grow we learn that the one person that was never supposed to let us down probably will. You will have your heart broken more than once and it's harder every time. You will break hearts too.

You will fight with your best friend. You will blame a new love for things an old one did. You will cry because time is passing too fast and you will eventually lose someone you love.

So take too many pictures, laugh too much and love like you've never been hurt because every 60 seconds you spend upset is a minute of happiness you'll never get back.

The background is a solid bright blue. It is populated with numerous organic, flowing shapes in various colors: yellow, green, dark blue, magenta, purple, orange, and red. Some shapes are large and prominent, while others are small and scattered. The shapes overlap and create a sense of depth and movement.

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"I sat down on a couch and closed my eyes and pictured myself. I couldn't see anything clearly. Wonderful! That's how it should be!"

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"I am a blurry image constantly trying to come into focus, and just when, for an instant, I have myself in perfectly clarity, I appear as a figure in my own background, fuzzy as hair on a peach."





by Sue Barrow

I was born without a choice

I was born with a little voice  
I was battered bruised and hurt  
Until I felt like a piece of dirt.

I tried to tell what was happening to me  
The signs were there no one wanted to see  
From town to town we would roam  
Until I was put in a child's home.

It never stopped it was just the same  
I learned to live with the pain  
I learned Never ever trust  
To stay alive this was a must.

I survived and grew to be big  
The pain never went of being a kid  
Then they died, I thought I was free  
The sad thing was I couldn't find me.

My journey started the road to recover  
My days were hell all I did was cry  
My nights were terrifying I wanted to die  
All the time my question was why?  
No one could answer the question I asked  
Not even my psychotherapist.

I've had some help from every source  
Some not so good of course  
I knew the things that helped me feel good  
I tried to do them like anyone would  
I wasn't successful it's hard to explain  
Then WRAP training day came.

I walked in the door my nerves began  
I'm pleased to say I never ran  
I looked at the paper what we would do  
A wave of excitement a sigh of relief  
Something in front of me with loads of belief.

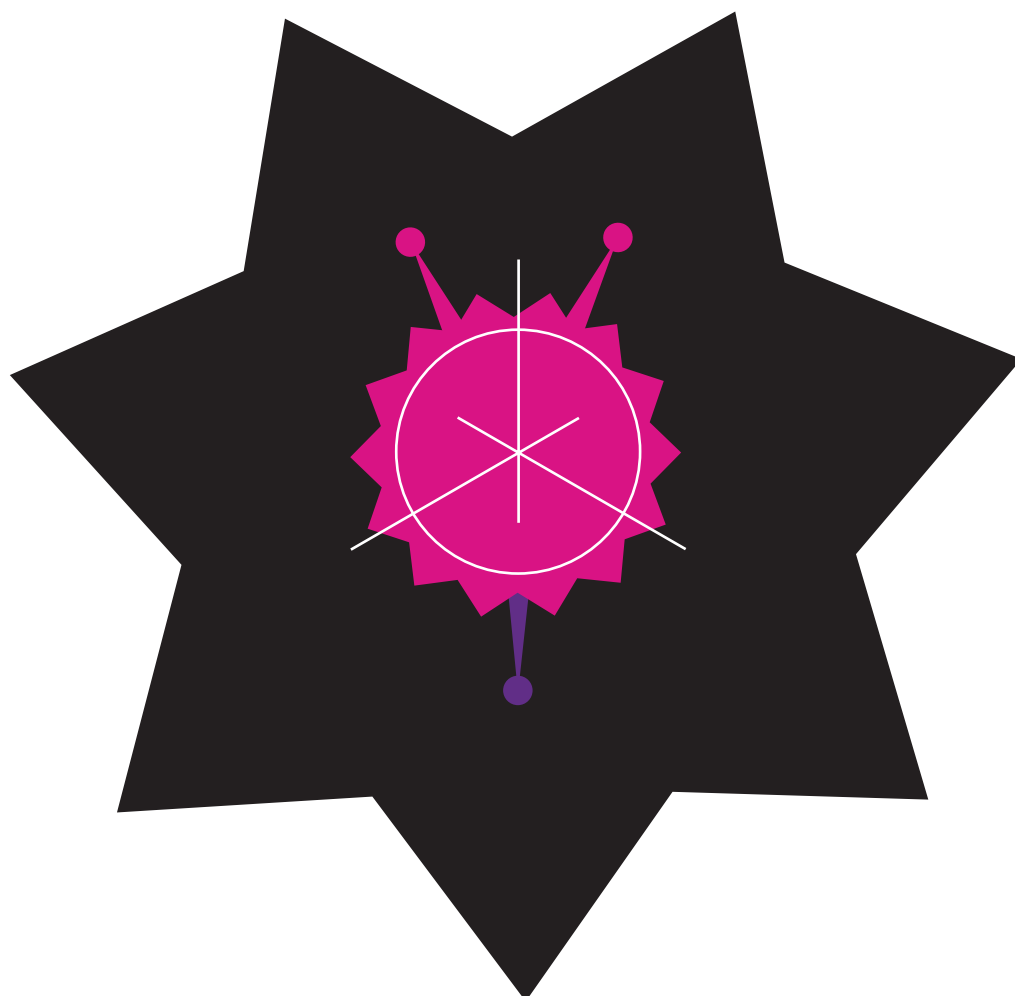
It's nothing new it's common-sense.  
It's something we do whenever we can  
It's down on paper but it's still the same  
The difference now, it's got a name WRAP

I once was wild but now I'm tame  
I plan my days and live a life  
I am happy I am free.  
YES I've found ME.

Yes I still have some days that's crap  
But that's ok I have my WRAP.

# FULLY LOADED WITH FEAR

by Michael Gibson



I entered ReCoCo feeling like a lamb sent to the wolves.

**How wrong I was.** I was recommended to go by my psychiatrist as I was on the start of my journey of recovery after many years battling with my fears, demons and shadows of my past. My first port of call after my enrolment was an afternoon drop-in fully loaded with fear of the unknown and a cup of max strength anxiety to wash it down. I was hoping for a chance to pull up a chair and take in my surroundings. I was met by Simone who told me the anxieties I was feeling were natural, and it was ok to feel that way and put a spell of calmness around me. **I thought, wow, how great would that be to be able to talk to a stranger about emotions and share stuff about me.** Wow, how awesome that would be. Simone turned out to be a huge inspiration and kickstarted my journey to get better. With this extra confidence I began talking to others in the drop-ins. Not massive chats - walk before you run" - but that was only around the corner, it wasn't long before I was sharing myself and it felt amazing. I wasn't alone in this madness, there was hope. Soon I started taking courses and got involved with Steve and Time To Change. I was feeding on knowledge, on self-help and recovery. It felt amazing and I couldn't get enough of it... this was a new world and I now could identify with who I was and what I wanted to do. With hard work and encouragement from Angela, Denise and the

gang I began to go for what I wanted out of life and for the first time in many years had the self-belief to do so, and a gentle nudge from Sandra gave me a "you know, just maybes I could do this" thought. I am now so pleased to be able to say I have been offered the position of a peer support worker with NTW where I hope to help others struggling with self-belief like I do, and show recovery is not a dream. With help, hard work and the right support, it is a reality.

**ReCoCo is a vital beacon of hope to us who struggle getting better. A true safe place with awesome students and peers playing on an even field. ReCoCo has lit the spark that started the fire inside me to make my life my life again.**

**I will be forever grateful to all the amazing people involved in this priceless place.**

Michael Gibson

# #NOTALLMENTALHEALTHPROFESSIONALS

By Pippi Eliot, Ria Dylan, @52OUTSIDES and Rachel Rowan Olive

*The authors penned this for Asylum magazine (www.asylummagazine.org). Asylum Magazine for Democratic Psychiatry has been running for 30 years, acting as a platform to voice and discuss all perspectives on mental health. Check it out, as it's well worth a read. We have been given kind permission by the authors (because they quite like us, birds of a feather and all that) to reprint it here, and we're doing so because it is both very funny and very accurate.*

Reflecting on the clustering system for mental health patients, we felt it might be useful to instigate a similar system for the mental health professionals in our lives. This will provide a handy guide for recognising and knowing how to respond to the people who may come our way. Please note, the clustering approach is merely supposed to be useful shorthand to describe commonly grouped characteristics. All professionals are of course individuals and should be treated as such.

## Cluster 1: A&E Doctor.

No sense of personal space. Asks questions about living arrangements, employment and other statistical risk factors. Does not make eye contact. Has delusions of curtains being soundproof. Moves swiftly on to more worthy patients.

## Cluster 2: Trainee Mental Health Nurse.

Enthusiastic. Pees pants in attempt to get you onside. Mum had depression. Wants to change the world.

Cluster 3: Researcher. Earnestly believes

they are finding out how to fix these strange people's brains.

Cluster 4: Psychotherapist. Likes scarves and crystals. Boundaries of steel. Can say 'mmmm' in seven different tones.

## Cluster 5: Recovery Worker.

Good at giving choices such as doing a course on mindful colouring at Recovery College or voluntary work telling your recovery story. Key words: Hope, Empowerment.

## Cluster 6: Middle Aged Mental Health Nurse.

Only seen out of the office when there is an opportunity to jump on someone. Enjoys the power.

## Cluster 7: PD Expert. Deceptive.

Nice manner, sympathetic head tilt, well timed nods. Swoops in at opportune moments – usually after disclosure of trauma – to talk about emotional regulation and inappropriate anger.

## Cluster 8: Crisis Team Worker.

Hates you.

## Cluster 9: CBT Therapist.

Does not know you cannot be fixed in 6 sessions.

## Cluster 10: Mental Health Social Worker

(not currently available due to funding cuts). Promise of something valuable that might address person's actual needs.

## Cluster 11: Peer Support Worker.

Considerable, extensive and rich expertise. Undertakes massive emotional labour. Cannot progress beyond band 4. Expertise evaporates on contact with ears of other professionals. This cluster is also known as:

Schrodinger's Service User, appearing to

professionals as

simultaneously

'a service user'

and 'not a

service user',

until it is clear

which role

would enable

opinions to be

their ignored most easily.

## Cluster 12: CAT Psychologist.

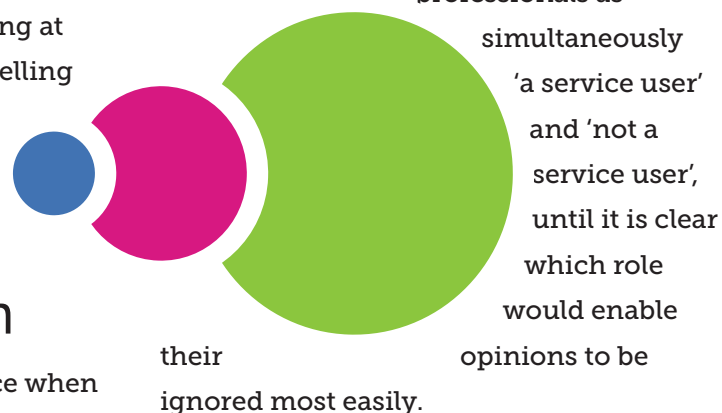
Very bright. Neat handwriting and good at drawing circles on whiteboard. Very interested in you in the way a microbiologist loves bacteria. Try and engage in chit chat about holidays and head will spontaneously combust.

## Cluster 13: Worker With 'Critical' Views.

Demonstrates endless compassion and empathy by shouting at anyone who doesn't agree with them. Emancipatory practice includes calling people stupid for not sharing their views.

## Cluster 14: Junior Psychiatrist.

Makes best of their lot after many years of medical training and subsequently being rejected from all other specialities.



## Cluster 15: Consultant Psychiatrist.

Sense of humour surgically removed and replaced by POWER LIKE NEVER BEFORE. Basic listening skills are beneath them, who needs to listen when a swish of your pen determines another's freedom and autonomy. Holds court in ward round like a medieval lord. Cannot compute why serf-patients are not grateful.

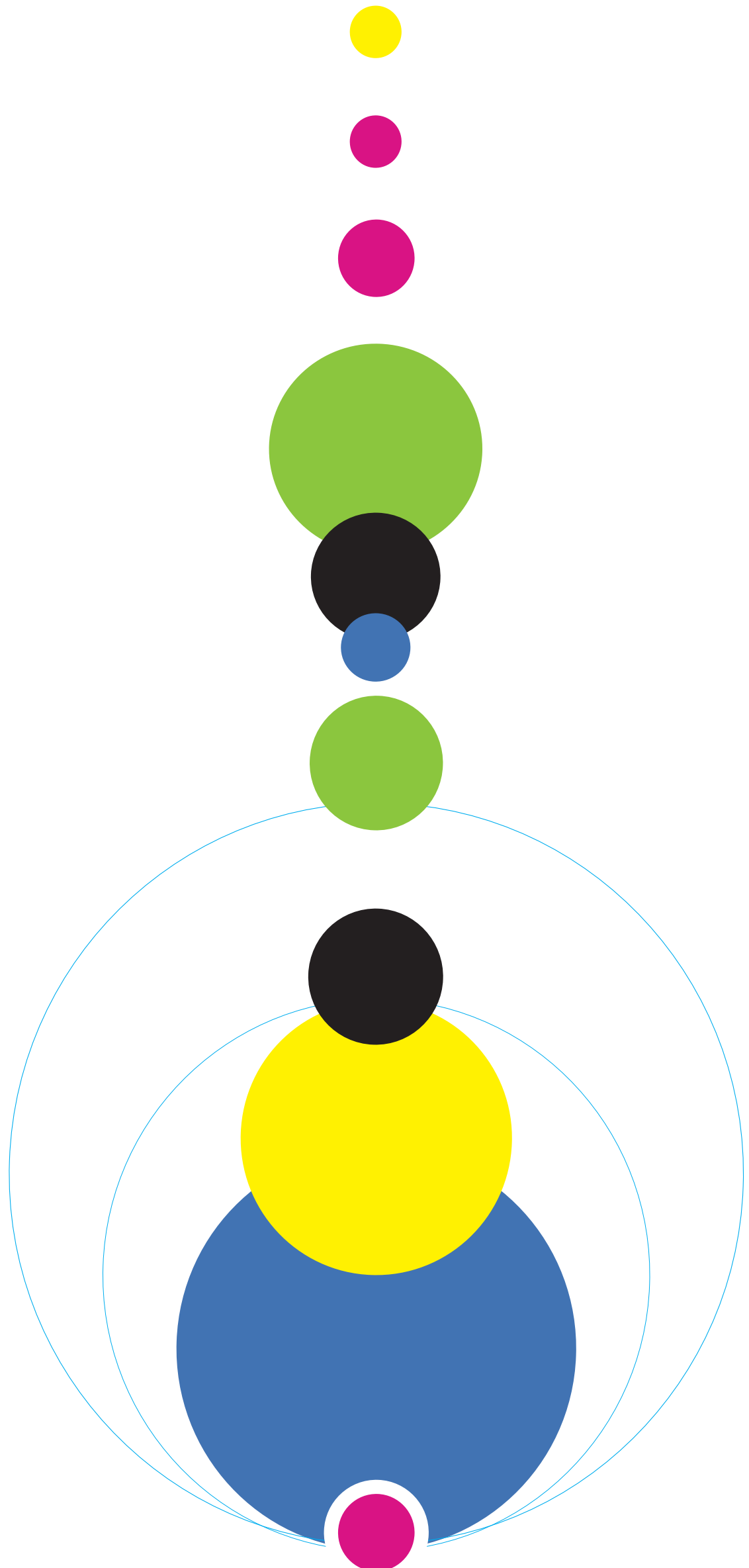
**Cluster 16: OT.** Believes with all their huge heart there is nothing that wrapping papier-mâché round boiled eggs won't fix.

**Cluster 17: GP's.** The hub of the clustering system. Sees your suffering and does all they can in a crumbling system to get you the support you need. A bit scared of you.

**Cluster 18: Psych Pharmacist.** Rare. Helpfully guides you to choose between massive weight gain and sexual dysfunction.

**Cluster 19: AMHP.** We cannot confirm the existence of this cluster, possibly the stuff of myth and legend. AMHP's claim to hang out at MHA assessments. Service users confirm much time is spent in captivity awaiting this mythical creature, however, given the frightening nature and implications of these assessments none of us can recall any details, or in fact the existence, of such creatures.

**Cluster 20: Receptionist/Cleaner/Cook.** Kind. Smiles. Compassionate. Remembers your name. Asks about you. Minimum wage. No experience or expertise in mental health.





N

R

A

E

Y

Why does it return, I've been to the burn

Why does it return why do I yearn.

I yearn to be happy I yearn to be free

I just yearn I want to be me.

The pain the fright I don't feel alright

I'm frightened of this I'm frightened of that

I'm frightened of everything even a cat.

I see the shadows I know they are there

All I do is stand and stare

I'm unable to move I'm unable to shout

I'm not ok there's no doubt.

I'm off to bed I'll take a pill they've won again

I feel ill I'm off to bed in the middle of day

Please God when I wake they've gone away.

by Sue Barrow

# HOW TO BATH A DRAGON

by Lorraine Morton

Once again Simone and her intrepid band of followers set off on our Drop By day out.

This time we were going to Bill Quay Community Farm where Simone also volunteers. We travelled by metro which was another first for one of our group, just thought I`d mention it to show just how intrepid we really are.

On arriving we were met by the lovely Corrie, who ushered us inside for a sit down and a cuppa with choccy biscuits, as we are obviously VIPs. As we sat chatting we were told we were going to meet what was referred to as smalls, now I refer to my knickers as smalls so at this time I was asking myself do I really want to be here. However, smalls are what I call fur babies, in this case bunnies. We were given a demonstration on how to give a bunny a health check. Did you know smelling their ears can indicate problems within the ear, saves you poking around, which is good news as I was following Corrie`s instructions health checking Olaf who I was informed, a little late I might add, was a nibbler.

What about the dragon I hear you cry.

The dragon in question is named Dave and is in the process of shedding. Dave`s tail looked decidedly scruffy, so as peeling a dragon is not allowed a bath was called for. So, to bath a dragon you need a washing up bowl and water the same temperature you would use for a baby`s bath. Oh, did I mention Dave is an extremely friendly bearded dragon. I swear I heard Dave sigh as he was placed in the warm water. He seemed content to have the water splashed over his back, and even let us see him change

colour. Dave is also a very talented dragon. One of his main interests seems to be the fashion industry; he makes a very convincing hat or scarf and for the more avant-garde, a large lapel pin.

Bill Quay farm has loads more animals to meet some rare breeds, and some rescues. I know our visit was extra special as Corrie and Simone obviously cared deeply for the animals and had little stories about all of them.

I would encourage anyone to visit and to donate. The people who work there are amazing and only too happy to help, be it information about the animals themselves, or the more practical care involved keeping the residents healthy and happy.



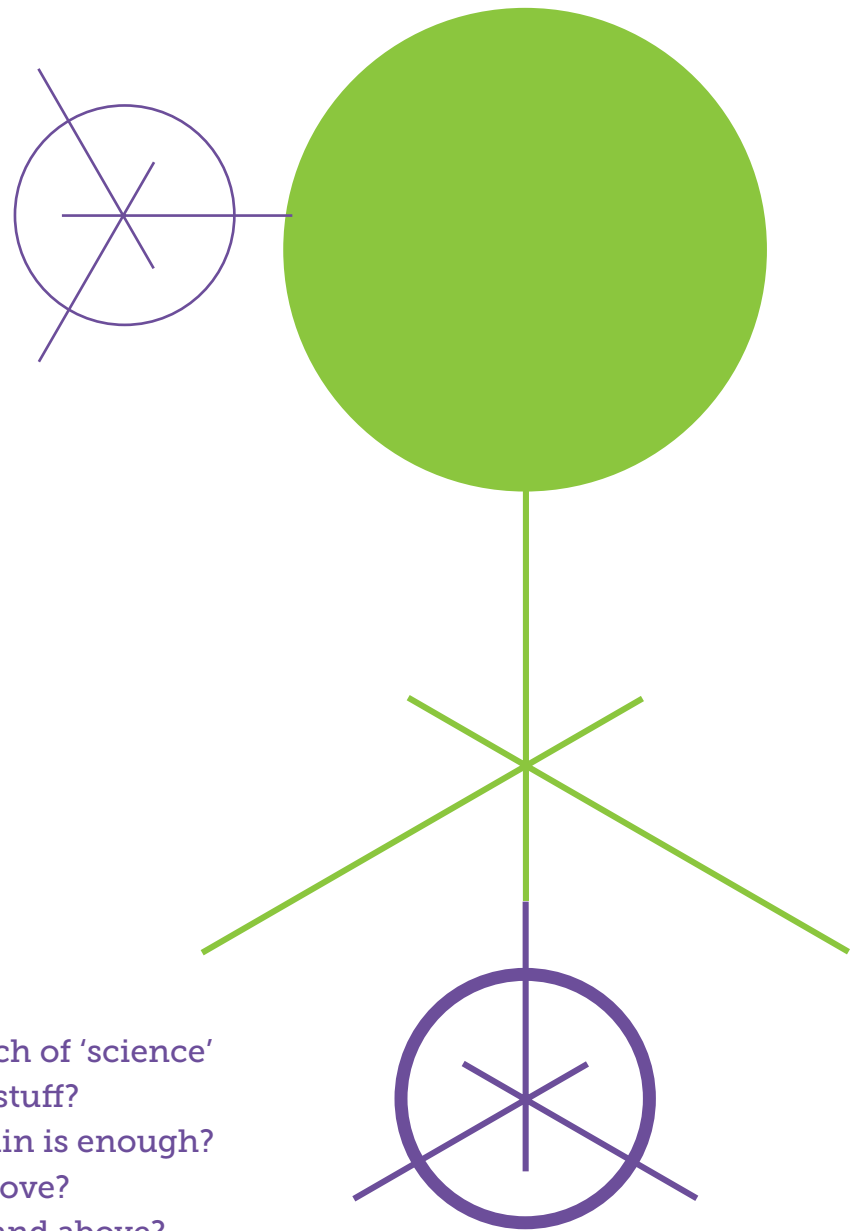
“ I have found I am more relaxed here and everything has been informal. I don't feel alone here.”

# WHAT IS SELF?

## POETIC EXPLORATION INTO IDENTITY

Me, myself, I and you  
Who are these things in us two?  
Listener, speaker, voice in silence  
Whispering stillness, beyond the reach of 'science'  
Is self attachment, or the dreams of stuff?  
Is it beyond this realm – like our brain is enough?  
Is it a fabric of minds in everlasting love?  
Is self the breath, a doorway within and above?  
Are selves people, rainbows, stars, and trees?  
Oceans, and galaxies, flowers and bees?  
Is the self part of this external dance?  
Within myself, is it time to self romance?  
Is self the all, which words always reduce?  
Quantum colours, for the soul to seduce?  
Chaos and order, ourselves here and gone?  
The infinite moment, pure consciousness at one?  
Is self part of a cell as it works on our selves?  
Can we follow our awareness as it dares and it delves  
Within the within and across dimensions without  
Beyond all we know, beyond any doubt?

Is this the self or is it just me?  
I think we are blinded by our subjectivity  
If self is physical and somewhere under our skin  
Then there is no room for imagination to begin  
Maybe self and I just parts of your identity?  
Perhaps we are stardust, mind and that mystery  
Maybe we are the awareness that has always played a part  
And our selves lives in the middle of the joy inside our heart.



This article contains 'choice language' (as the DWP manager called it when he recently recalled the last prospectus email from all of his staff). If swear words offend you then it's probably best to not read it.

# LIFE — THE IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE

by Angela Glascott

**My wife's nana, Margy, was a fabulous woman. Steadfast and strong like any canny Geordie**

**nana.** She said it like it was. She had the usual abundance of photographs all over her living room. Showing off the products of her life endeavour. When you went for a visit, you were comforted by bowl head haircuts and toothy grins smiling out at you knowing, they that were put there with love and pride.

My Michelle didn't like her photo.

"Nana, of all the photos that you have of me, why do you keep that one up?"

"It's how you look".

Fast forward to the age of enhancement, where filters on phones are the norm. Filters to reduce your lines and wrinkles, smooth your skin, and widen your eyes to the size of a manga character. Arming teenagers with the software they need to mask their perceived flaws, and what teenager doesn't have them in abundance? Sitting at home, worried about leaving the house in case someone utters 'you don't look like your photo'.

**At an interview recently, one young lass cracked a joke that she used filters that often, the police wouldn't have a clue what she looked like if she was abducted.** That the image projected behind her desperate parents on Look North would at the very least be surrounded by butterflies or hearts. Like a eulogy before the terrible event.

Natural beauty, it seems, is being demeaned. Your sparkly eyes just aren't sparkly enough. In fact, you're probably just not happy enough. You need to enhance.

The desire for and expectation to be happy is easily exploited by the pedlars of individualism and consumerism. Do happy people even know that they are happy anymore? They are just what they are. Could it be that it's only possible to feel genuinely happy, when you have a miserable comparison? Like a pendulum of possibilities, perhaps the most joy any of us can attain is in direct contradiction to the utter misery that we've experienced. That must surely give us damaged folk the advantage.



**And when we do feel it, that tentative temporary satisfaction. It's too quickly forgotten and here we are back at... It's shit, it's always been shit, it will always be SHIT.**

Recognising what we have within us and around us is absolutely necessary.



Incidentally - Gratitude is something that we want to explore more at Recoco. And Acceptance; (I'm imagining two warriors preparing for their next adventure. They are called 'thank fuck and 'it happened') probably because that's where a lot of us are at, at the moment. Happy to be honest that Recoco is cathartic for us, as well as altruistic. There's definitely something in it for workers and volunteers. That's what makes it sustainable.

The human form has always been captured through filters. Or Oliver Cromwell would not have needed to instruct the artist Sir Peter Lely to paint him 'warts and all'.

Lely's painting style was intended to flatter the sitter, as was usual for the time. Royalty in particular, where to look fanciful.

**So when our bairns grow up to be addicted to flattery ('likes') and looking fanciful (filters), then we can comfort ourselves knowing that we were the generation that shuttled our offspring along, at last, to partake in the panache and excesses of royalty. Result?**

Whilst I write this, the advert for BOSE headphones comes on the radio on my phone. It's telling me that if I want to feel, no... REALLY FEEL. Then I should buy their £200 earphones. That'll do it apparently. That'll make me really feel.

That's tempting. But then you remember that it's bullshit. I have spent most of my life swinging between feeling like my skin was on inside out (no enhancement required)... to feeling nothing. Waxing and waning. Grabbing at enablers to feeling at any opportunity I choose. Ones that I can take and feel as though I'm in control. Frightened to trust my own thermostatic gauge on emotion because it's demonstrated in the past to be quite broken. Feeling anything manageable is an achievement in itself.

Trying not to keep too tight a lid on joy, in case I get used to it... imagining that it'll be snatched away forever, the second I do. I should mention that the BOSE advert telling me that I'm not feeling enough, is a consequence of a conversation I had two weeks ago about having misplaced my earphones. Whilst I was in the kitchen. Next to my phone.

Next day, I pick up the phone and it's like... 'You want these don't you?'; and I'm like 'No', and it's like, 'I know you do, I fucking heard you', and I'm like 'they were in my other coat'. But they don't care. Actually that's not me. It's Sara who runs the self-esteem group. And it was flashy up adverts on Facebook – but she's convinced they're listening. If you know her, she'll have told you.

Buying enhancements and being enhanced brings opportunities for when they tell you that your life just isn't good enough, exciting enough, enough. Anyway, what's the point of enough, when you can have more?

**Your smile still isn't wide enough so try this... The immersive experience. You too can be in a zombie SWAT team, be at the centre of an immersive, interactive play, even have an immersive cocktail-making experience – I'm not sure if you become the cocktail or just get pissed as some sort of alter ego.**

Opportunities to step outside of your real existence in this age of anything and everything. Be who you want, do what you want – without consequence, well... none that you need think about. Be more, feel more. Wow. And when we disassociate its pathologised. Seems to me like survivors of human horrors might well have been streets ahead in the whole 'coping with life' contest all along. I'm judging it. I'm also loving it and hating it at the same time. I'm aware that it's a risk ridden horizon for a hedonist like me. 'This is mint! Once you've experienced this.... All those things you thought were good, will just be.... Meh'.

A life of largely unimpressed, How is that good?

If people looked up from their screens more and took their earphones out, then there it is. For free. Life. Unfiltered, with its horrors and its beauty and the best and worst aspects of humanity. It might look a bit tame, depending what game you've been playing. I'm yet to see cars running down street prostitutes in Whitley Bay but I'm sure it's coming. (I nearly said computer game, but what other games are there other than Christmas Day games nowadays?)

**And people love it. The escapism. Even the ones who seem to have nothing to escape from. Could it be that everybody finds life difficult and needs a helping hand from others like them?**

Except those fuckers at the top. They need to give back more and do more to help people, not take more. Greedy bastards. I wonder if they even know though. Do they really not give a shit about the horrible, degrading, poverty stricken lives that millions of people have to lead? Surely they can't all be dicks.

I think there's more in common with folk than there is not and that perhaps everyone's a bit nuts.

If there was a linear scale of sanity and everyone was on it, we would be down the 'creative' end. If creativity was honing fucking super powers in order to stay alive.

Somewhere between super narcissism and psychosis I sometimes believe that I am a celestial agent with a calling to help people. A fallen one. Having to make up for all the terrible things I've done. Then I get a good old nursy shake from the wife to stop me getting carried away with myself. What?... it's a motivational delusion.. Anyway, I'm not bothered. It's better than feeling depressed and contemptuous. For me.

There are a lot of people here who have spiritual beliefs that are wonderful alternatives to organised religion. We are all for it. In fact, I'm starting to think that they might be right. At the very least, the angels seem to keep sending me remarkable people with gentle souls who want to selflessly help.

I've had a bit of a read lately about how to increase the frequency of your lightbody for a higher spiritual experience. Higher? I'm up for that.

**And the suggestions they make don't seem very far from good advice to me. Be a veggie because stuff dying so that you can eat it creates negativity, be creative, take notice and learn from life's lessons, meditate and be out and around nature as much as you can. Who can argue with that?**

You're free to explore at Recoco because there is no dogma here. And when my own exploration takes me into realms that are a bit too far out there, then I'm reassured that I have community around me to ground me and teach me things I didn't know. Did you see all the community blizzard spirit when the snow brought the country to a standstill? Well that happens every day at Recoco. Every day. I kid you not, people are kind and people who have gone through, or are going through adversity identify with each other and help each other. It's lush.

**We create community at Recoco and embrace life as the ultimate immersive experience. But instead of faster, greater, more... we are opting for slower....look up...**

**breathe... This isn't a practise, this is life. The time is now.**

Try a sedate walk, try increasing your tolerance for boring. Sit with yourself and grow comfortable with who and why you are and see the tremendous gifts and assets that you bring. Accepting what was, and making the most out of what is and how you can use your innate, resilient expertise to help others. Without filters. Warts and all.

Like Margy would say 'That's how you look'. And it's beautiful enough for us.

[Angela Glascott](#)







## Join our Group

Our groups are for women 16 or over who have experienced any form of sexual violence or abuse at any time in their life.

*"I've not always been very good at self-care, and I am finding the way the group supports me in paying attention to that very helpful"*

*"The group has allowed me to share things I have previously kept secret"*

Contact us to find out more  
0191 222 0272  
enquiries@rctn.org.uk  
www.rctn.org.uk

 Rape Crisis  
Tyneside and Northumberland

 Charity no: 1138149  
Company no: 7285969



UNUSUAL EXPERIENCES GROUP

A fortnightly drop in peer support group based in Newcastle for those who have experienced any of:


- Hearing, seeing or sensing things others cannot;
- Unusual beliefs;
- Paranoia

Come together in a non-judgemental space to:  
Support one another;  
Talk about experiences;  
Share understanding and knowledge;  
Discuss approaches to living well.


1pm to 4pm every other Thursday

For more details, ring 0191 2330382 or email launchpadncl@aol.com



 WARNING: MAY CONTAIN TRACES OF PEER SUPPORT



# BEATS



An open, music-creation, jamming, writing, experimenting, having lots of fun session.  
Top floor Broadacre House

MONDAYS 3pm-6pm

0191 2330382 / launchpadncl@aol.com for details



At George St Social

Mondays 2pm-3pm

peer support group

# DUAL DIAGNOSIS

Jamie White  
07971473653

**DROP BY**

**Tues & Wed**

**1-3pm**

**INFORMAL PEER SUPPORT**

Come by and chat with folk from the Recovery College Collective



## Creative Writing

A free, relaxed and informal group, we meet every **Wednesday (11am-1pm)** to discuss and write about a wide range of topics. We all (including the tutor) have experience of mental illness and the group caters specifically for this. The atmosphere is friendly, guidelines are agreed, confidentiality is respected, and whilst everyone takes part, there is never any pressure to share your writing unless you want to. There's plenty of variety - something different every week - and since the group is ongoing you can attend on a regular basis or just drop in when you feel like it.



# GEEK GROUP



Computer games, comic books, tech, movies & TV, boardgames, sci-fi & fantasy, anime, & all that's geek cool.

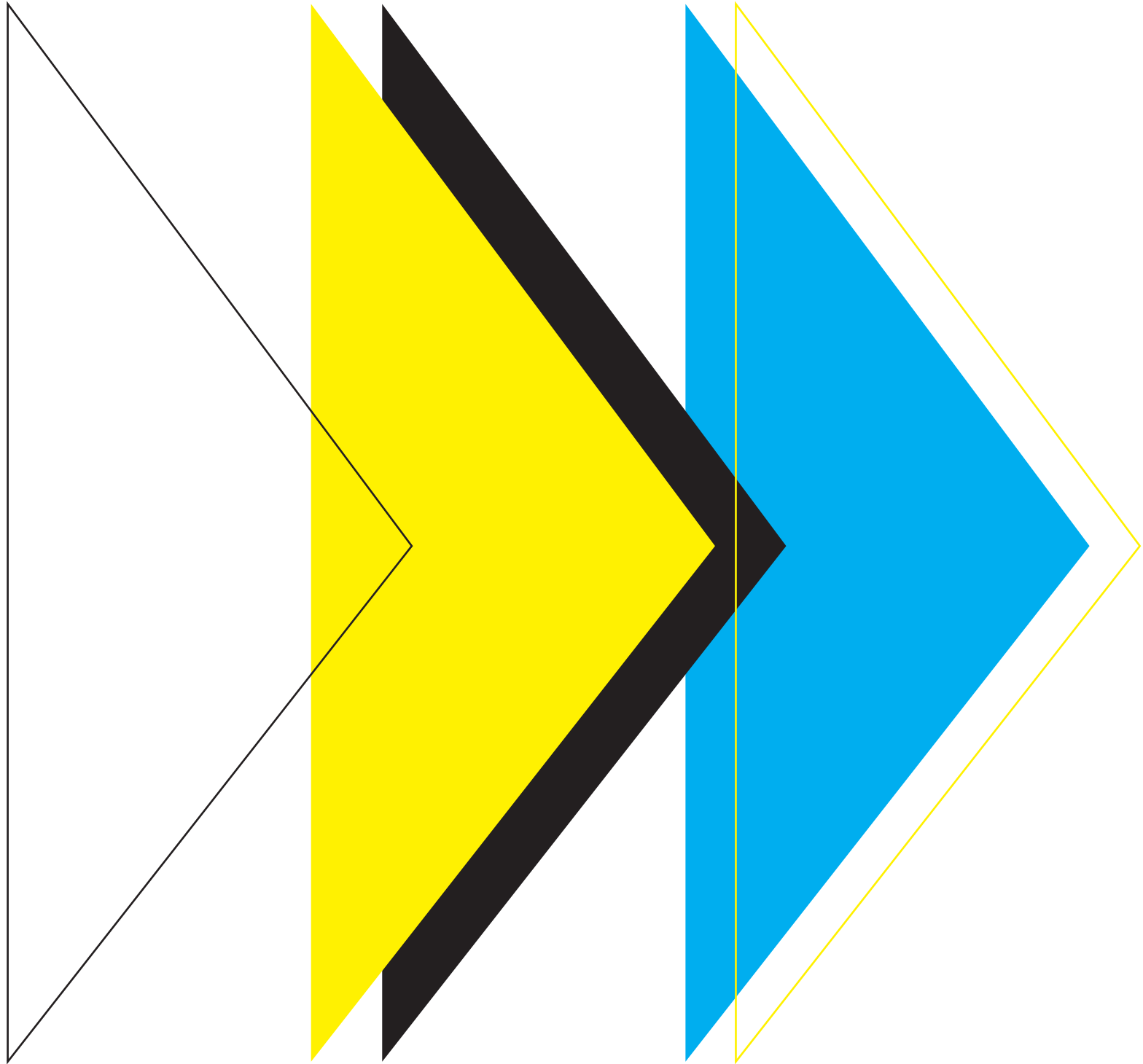
With real people.

2pm to 4pm every Thursday

launchpadncl@aol.com 0191 2330382







## Mental Health Mates Newcastle upon Tyne

Mental Health Mates was set up in 2016 by Bryony Gordon (author of Mad Girl) following her own struggles with OCD. What started out as a mad idea, is now an international network of Peer Support walking groups.

Our message is simple and we offer a place to walk and talk without fear of judgement. Helping you find your WE... because YOU are not alone.

My name is Natalie and I run the Newcastle meet-ups. I have lived experience of depression, anxiety and a panic disorder. I am a Time To Change and Blue Light champion and I'm passionate about ridding the stigma and discrimination around mental health.



We meet once a month (usually the last Saturday of the month) for a gentle walk and talk usually around Exhibition Park, Newcastle and then have a nice cuppa afterwards. You can talk as much or as little as you wish about mental health but know that you are not alone and we understand that it's perfectly normal to feel weird. If you'd like more information or would like to join us on a meet-up get in touch.

@MENTALHEALTHMATES  
@MHMnewNat & @findyourwe  
Mental Health Mates  
mentalhealthmatesnewcastle@gmail.com

[www.mentalhealthmates.co.uk](http://www.mentalhealthmates.co.uk)



## GROUP WORK FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

### Group 1#

Rape Crisis Tyneside and Northumberland will be running a group work programme in 2017. There will be one group in Gateshead and two groups in Newcastle. All groups are for women, aged 16 and over, who have experienced sexual violence at any time in their lives.

The groups offer you the opportunity to come together in a women-only safe space to:

- Explore how society's attitude towards sexual violence has affected you
- Learn and practise positive coping strategies
- Identify and develop positive future goals and steps towards these
- Increase your peer support network

### Group 3

Group Work for Women who live, work or study in Gateshead or Newcastle starting April 2017

Group Work for Women who live, work or study in Newcastle or Gateshead starting August 2017

To express an interest in either of these groups, please contact us: 0191 2220272 or email [pedwards@rctn.org.uk](mailto:pedwards@rctn.org.uk)



### Newcastle\* Bipolar Support group

\* and surrounding areas

Meetings: first Saturday of the month  
10.30am -1.00pm.

Quaker Meeting House, West Avenue,  
Gosforth, NE3 4ES

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

Helpline (Lynn) 0191 2670272

Emails

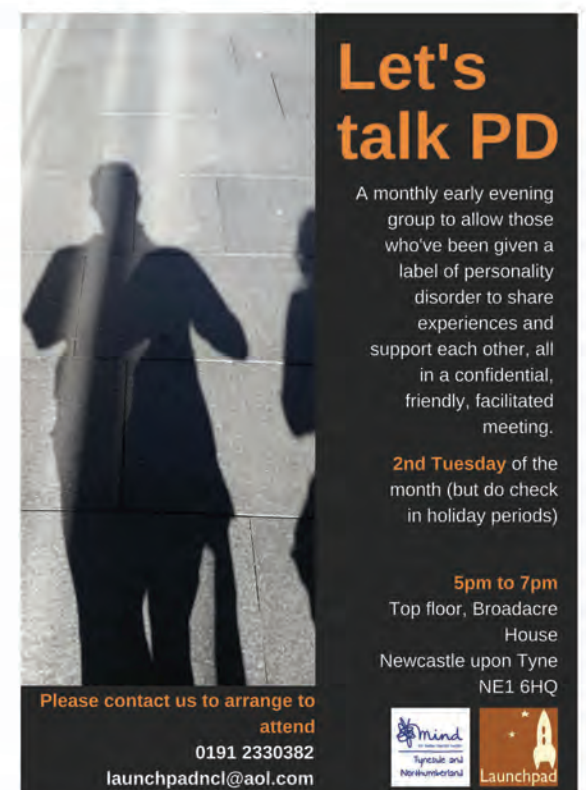
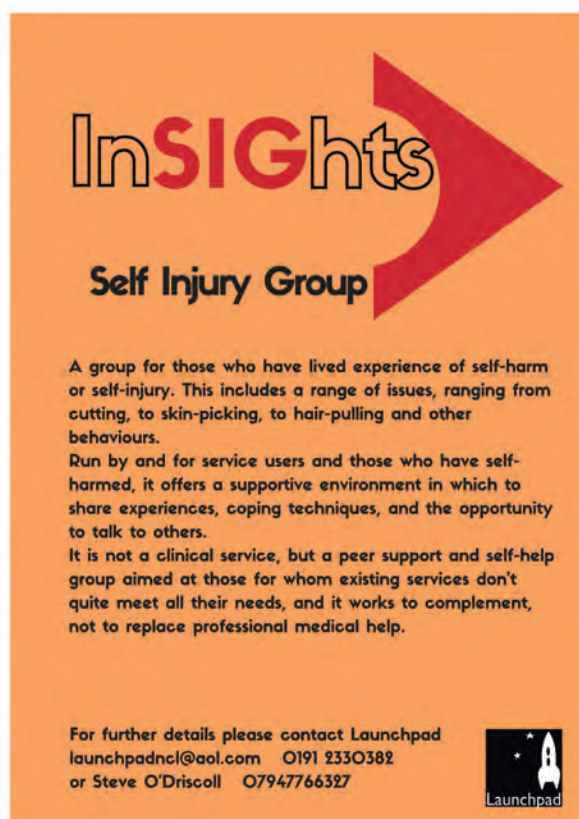
[abhattachadviser@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:abhattachadviser@yahoo.co.uk) (Anil)

(Co-secretary)

[mdfnewcastle@aol.com](mailto:mdfnewcastle@aol.com) (Phil)

Messages will be passed on if possible.







# EMPLOYABILITY THAT PACKS A PUNCH

Based at our Newcastle gym, you will learn what it takes to become a fitness professional

Bursary available  
Free gym pass

Contact us for more information

Fully funded for 15-25 year olds




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Our relaxed, no pressure learning environment gives you the key skills needed to progress in the fitness sector. Based in Newcastle, our course will teach you:

- How to be a good fitness professional -
- How to lead a successful fitness session -
- Different types of exercise -
- Nutrition and healthy lifestyles -
- Human anatomy -
- Sports injury -
- How to build a fitness business -

To apply or for further information, contact us today.



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Northumberland, Tyne and Wear **NHS**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Knitting

Mondays 10am - noon

Mondays 10am - noon


It's not a hobby  
It's a post-apocalyptic survival skill



# Unusual Experiences

Educational Support Group

Meet Every Other Thursday @  
Broadacre House Room 0.6  
1pm-4pm  
Ring 07551136227 to confirm a place.



Tuesday afternoons or Thursday afternoons  
1-1 or small group

# Guitar

lessons and sessions




# RESEARCH

By us  
About us  
For us

Peer Research Group gathering evidence to support and inform ReCoCo: get involved, all welcome.

Please email [info@recoverycoco.com](mailto:info@recoverycoco.com) or pop into the Office to be added to the interest list.





# SAFE SPACE

Would you like support for your mental health & wellbeing?

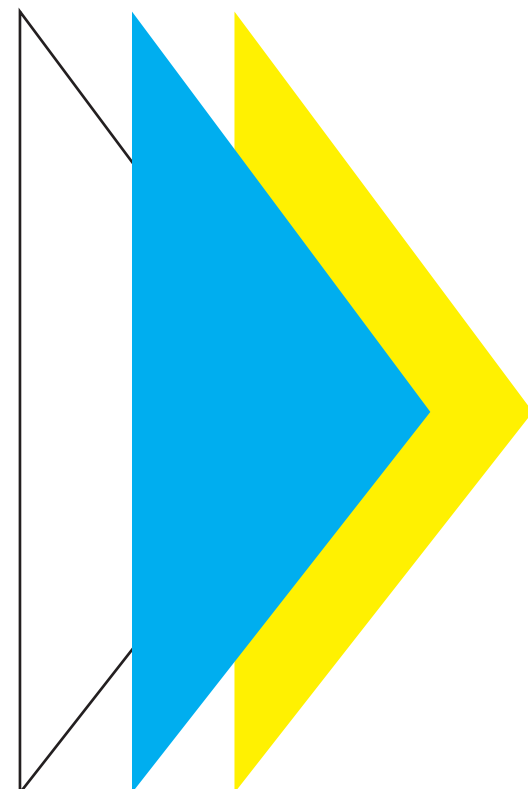
Safe Space can help by providing an informal and supportive group where you can meet others, reduce the time you spend alone and feel more confident in social situations. You can attend regularly, or just drop by for a cuppa when you feel the need.

For further information please contact us via:  
Telephone: 0191 477 4545  
Email: [admin@tynesidemind.org.uk](mailto:admin@tynesidemind.org.uk)  
Website: [www.tynesidemind.org.uk](http://www.tynesidemind.org.uk)

Registered Office Tyneside & Northumberland Mind, Wellbeing Centre, Dunsun Grove, Bensham, Gateshead NE8 4QL. Company Number: 7552434. Charity Number: 1148656.



Tyneside & Northumberland



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"I am moving forward with my life now and feel like I can take small steps to being my old self and also my new self."

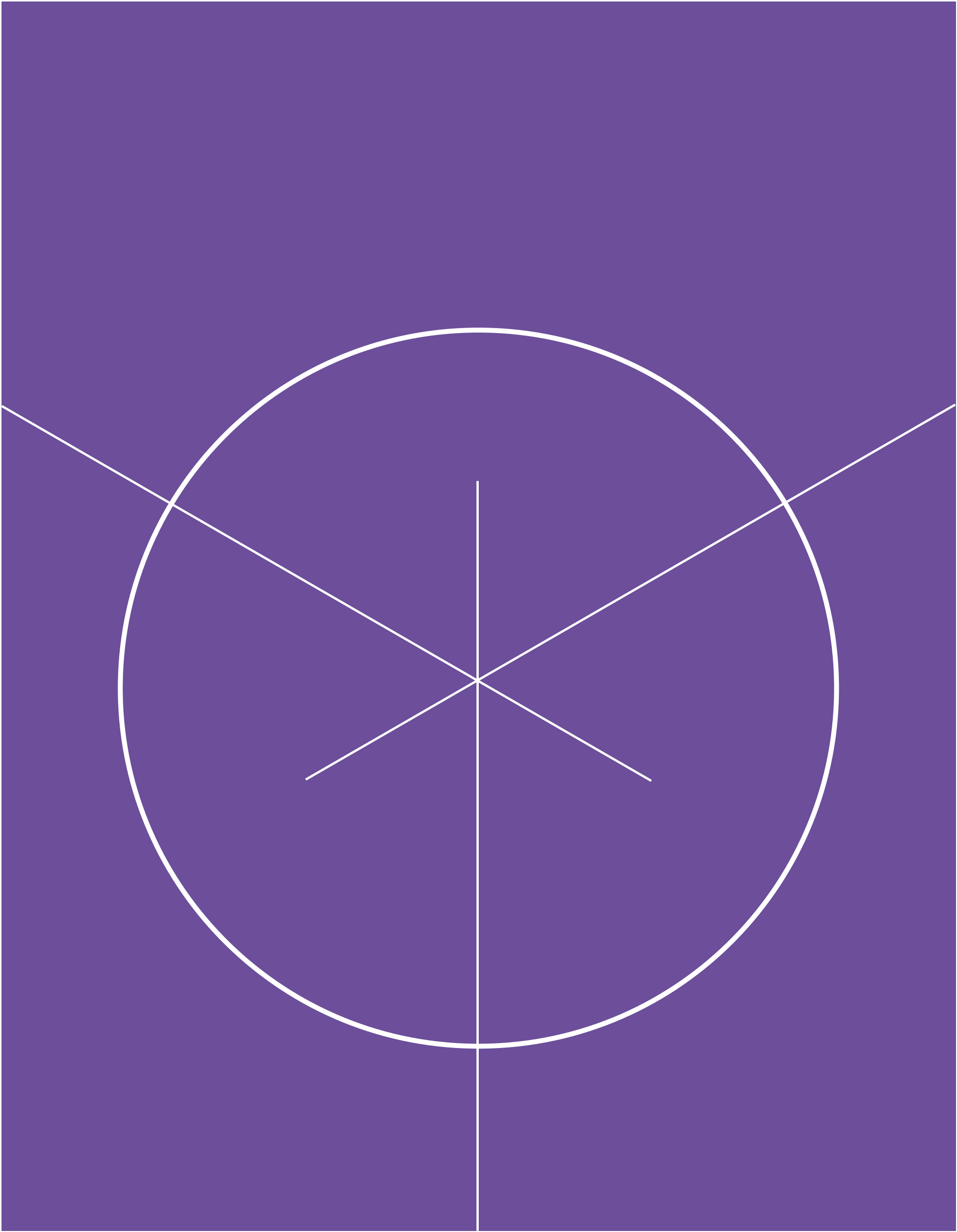
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"No one looks down at you. Everyone is treat the same".

//

"You are a breath of fresh air in mental health. It is a real life changing place. You're accepted where you are right now and that's a really nurturing feeling."







RECOVERY COLLEGE IS A JOINT ENTERPRISE WITH THE  
BACKING AND INPUT OF THE FOLLOWING:





#### HOW TO FIND US

##### BY BUS:

The bus stops on MARKET ST, BLACKETT ST and JOHN DOBSON ST are less than a 5 minute walk. Bus services include 1, 10, 12, 22, 38, 39, 49, 58, 62, 63, 100.

##### BY METRO:

MONUMENT; 5 minute walk, MANORS; 10 minute walk

##### BY BIKE:

Broadacre House has five parking spaces plus public bike parking at the City Library

##### BY CAR:

We can try and secure a space for you if you have access requirements, but we do need advance notice. There are public car parks nearby.



0191 261 0948



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