

Festive Greetings!



As the holiday season approaches, we at the Recovery & Wellbeing College want to extend our warmest wishes to each and every one of you. This time of year is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the journey we've shared and to celebrate the progress and resilience of our incredible community.

Christmas is a season of joy, togetherness, and hope. Whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or simply enjoy the festive spirit, this is a time to cherish the moments with loved ones and to find peace and happiness in the little things. We understand that the holidays can also bring challenges, and we want you to know that there is lots of support available if you are in need. Details of organisations that can help are on our website.

Our College is more than just a place of learning; it is a community where everyone is valued and supported. We are grateful for the strength and courage you show every day, and we are honoured to be part of your recovery journey.

May this festive season bring you comfort, joy, and a renewed sense of hope. Let's look forward to the new year with optimism and determination, knowing that together, we can achieve great things. Happy Holidays and a wonderful New Year from all of us!

Please note the College will be closed from Friday 20 December to Thursday 2 January

Spotlight On.. Individual Placement & Support (IPS) Employment Service

The IPS service helps individuals significantly impacted by mental health challenges to find and sustain paid employment. They believe that anyone can work if the right job and environment are found, and the right support is provided. Their evidence-based employment support model is globally recognized as the most effective approach for helping individuals move into employment.

In Calderdale and Kirklees, their Employment Specialists are integrated into Community Mental Health Teams, supporting individuals under their care. They are currently expanding their service, developing support within some GP surgeries in Calderdale, with plans to extend this to GP surgeries in Kirklees.

Research shows that returning to employment can be crucial in the recovery journey, providing purpose, structure, social networks, improved mental wellbeing, self-esteem, and financial independence. IPS aims to match people to careers that reflect their aspirations, interests, and skills. It creates extensive support around the individual, including natural supports in the workplace, and support from health professionals, family, carers, and friends. Their support is fantastic, but don't just take our word for it! Click the link to hear what service users say about the service: [The individual placement and support service - what service users say](#)

For more information about the service and how to access it, visit:

[Calderdale individual placement and support \(IPS\) employment service - South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust](#)

[Kirklees individual placement and support \(IPS\) employment service - South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust](#)

Someone Like Me

Learner and retiree, Marilyn tells us how our 'Plan for Living Well' course has given her the gift of acceptance

I am writing this for anyone who may be considering enrolling on the 'Plan for Living Well' course - DON'T HESITATE, you will be giving yourself a wonderful gift.

I was devastated when I had to retire because of ill health. Most people imagine retirement is something to look forward to, but I struggled without the routine of a working week. Despondency set in and I felt completely lost. I found this course on the Recovery College weekly update. Reading the introduction, I just felt that this could be the help I needed to get myself back on track. With ten weekly sessions, it was a big commitment, but I figured no pain, no gain.

The course facilitated by Nicky, Karen and Tina covered many aspects; from being aware of your mental health to early warning signs, wellness tools and much more. You could interact as much or as little as you wanted to, it was very comfortable and respectful. The workbook provided covered a different topic each week and will be a fabulous resource if ever needed in the future.

Everyone in the group each had their own reasons for attending. As the weeks went by, I found that I looked forward to seeing them and sharing in their individual journeys, and I can honestly say that they were an integral part of my journey to an acceptance of retirement and of myself. Thank you Recovery College for a wonderful course!

Our next 'Plan for Living Well' course starts in January and places are already filling up, but don't despair if you miss out. We plan to deliver this course every term so keep your eyes peeled!

Let's Get Physical: The Great North Run

Recovery Coach, Nicky tells us why she was inspired to get off the sofa, put on her trainers and start running!

Motor Neurone Disease (MND) is a cause close to my heart, being a condition my mum lived with for 10 years. To honour what would have been her 70th birthday in September, I decided to raise funds for others living with MND by taking on the Great North Run, a half marathon from Newcastle to South Shields. With only 7 months to train, it was no easy challenge...I hadn't run properly since being in my 20's!

I began steadily with the Couch to 5k program before progressing to a 16 week half marathon training plan. Despite often feeling overwhelmed and finding the dodgy weather and my busy life as a working mum challenging, I persevered! Tracking my progress by crossing off each training session on a calendar, setting up a sponsor page, and receiving supportive messages, kept my motivation high. Getting out into the fresh air also helped lift my mood!

On race day, nerves and excitement kicked in. Despite the rain, the route was filled with enthusiastic supporters, cheering runners on with shouts of encouragement and offering us jelly babies. At mile 10, I hit "the wall," but hearing my mum's favourite song gave me the boost I needed. Crossing the finish line with legs of jelly, the elation of completing the race and raising over £1500 for MND filled me with pride and numbed any cramps!

From the experience, I've learned that starting small and staying consistent can lead to big achievements and if I can do it, so can you!

If you feel inspired by Nicky's story, then why not consider starting a Couch to 5K program yourself? You never know where it might lead or who you may help in the process!



Love to Learn: Simple Tips for a Restful Night

Sleep is essential for our overall health and wellbeing. It helps our bodies repair and recharge, supports brain function and boosts our immune system. Without enough sleep, we can feel tired, irritable, and have trouble concentrating. Unfortunately, long-term sleep deprivation can lead to more serious health issues, so read on and discover how to stop tossing and turning and get in those ZZZZZ's!

To get a good night's sleep, try these simple tips:



- Stick to a schedule: go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, this will help regulate your body's internal clock.
- Create a relaxing bedtime routine: engage in calming activities before bed, such as reading, taking a warm bath, or practicing meditation. Avoid screens, as the blue light can interfere with your sleep.
- Make your bedroom sleep-friendly: keep your room cool, dark and quiet.
- Avoid large meals, caffeine, and alcohol before bedtime.
- Stay active: regular physical activity can help you fall asleep faster and enjoy deeper sleep but best to avoid vigorous exercise close to bedtime.

So why not try out these tips to improve your sleep quality and overall health. Sweet dreams!

Want to learn more? Then book on our online 'Improve Your Sleep' course starting on Tuesday 14 January.

See our website for details.

Stay up to date, follow us on our socials



Cultures of Creative Health: Closing Exhibition

The Cultures of Creative Health is a year-long exhibition from the University of Huddersfield which explores the role of arts and humanities in creative health. If you've not got around to checking out the exhibition yet, then why not join them for their final month where they will showcase a wide variety of collaborative projects, including the work of our very own Peer Worker, Hannah-May.



Over the past 12 months, this innovative project has connected artists, researchers, health professionals and communities to explore how creative practices can positively impact health outcomes and help to build community resilience through art and creative approaches to health and wellbeing. Surely something to be celebrated!

You can keep up to date with their full programme on their social media channels:

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100088742073402>

or

https://www.instagram.com/culturesof_/

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