ANNUAL REPORT - YOGA ON SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION IN DALKEITH – AUGUST 2024

Since April 2024 we have been running a chair-based yoga class for people in recovery and experiencing mental health issues and a women's mat-based yoga class for survivors of gender-based violence.

In the past 6 months we have received 46 referrals across both classes resulting in 35 separate attendees. (22 for the women's class and 13 for the chair class). This has resulted in an average of 6 attendees per class per week.

The primary reason for referrals across the two classes were -

- mental health issues including CPTSD (26)
- physical health issues (8)
- previous substance use (drugs) (4)
- previous substance use (alcohol) (5)
- affected by a family members substance use (3)

80% of those who have completed a feedback form said they had never tried yoga before.
80% reported an improvement in mood, confidence, and sense of self.
60% improved emotional stability.
50% improved quality of life.
80% reduced isolation or loneliness.
80% improved mental health.
40% improved physical health or reduced pain.
80% learned useful skills for managing stress outside of the yoga class.

Themes in the feedback from participants are:

Improved self-compassion and ability or desire to self-care.
"I am learning to self-care for me. I have learned belly breathing when I panic. Chatting with people i feel care. I enjoy the guided meditation. Helps me relaxation tools."

"Im learning to like myself and appreciate kindness to me. Self-care, enjoy myself. Breathing helps me relax."

Improved mood
"My mood is better when I leave, I am much calmer. Thinking, overthinking much calmer. I have learned to BREATHE through my stress. Sometimes I feel happier, mentally when I leave. I feel supported, and people do care."

The importance and healing nature of relaxation
"I really enjoy the CALM atmosphere in the yoga life. This helps me so much to calm and get through my weeks."

"I think the relaxation was important. I felt relaxed and blessed. It was nice to end with positivity and I found it healing."

Feeling cared for and a sense of community and support

"This class has been amazing. I suffer from rheumatoid and osteoarthritis, also depression and anxiety. I have been able to feel more calm and a bit more flexible also I feel more stable and included. Ali and Lucy are amazing. Very approachable friendly and easy to talk to - just lovely human beings."

"We can have a chat and a cuppa, restoring my hope in life again. Feel comfortable to chat."

"Hannah and Vanessa are very friendly and kind, nice to work with."

Reduced mental health symptoms.
"I feel full of anxiety and nerves and my whole body is tense, but as soon as the class gets going, all these things leave my body and I relax. Very very grateful."

Using relaxation skills outside of the yoga class
"Helps me with overthinking. I can use the breathing tools to bring me back to my space. Helps with my anxiety and panic attacks. I can breathe, use movement and hand placements to bring me to my heartbeat where I can think again."

"I am feeling good about continuing with yoga, using resources at home and attending regularly to classes. Thank you :) <3"

Feedback from some of our referrers:
"I am grateful to have a service to support patients with trauma, both physically and mentally, as the benefits of movement and meditation are profound. I particularly like that they will be able to engage with other patients who have experienced trauma and may find some solace in one another alongside the support they are getting from Edinburgh Community Yoga. I intend to continue referring patients to this excellent community resource."
GP at Newbattle Medical Practice

"From a recovery worker perspective, I find the yoga classes a useful resource to refer people to, especially the Trauma informed classes for women, as the trauma counselling has a long waiting list, and this is a great step in-between. It's good to have a variety of classes for people to do, especially ones that don't require much physical fitness but get people moving. Great to have a choice of weekly or monthly, or to do both, to help people keeping busy while trying to maintain their abstinence."
Recovery worker – MELD

As an independent social worker working with communities, I am pleased to endorse the work that ECY does. I have collaborated with them since 2015, during which time we have supported many women in their recovery from trauma, domestic abuse, and addictions by providing a safe space to practice yoga. Many women I know who have attended their yoga classes have expressed that it allowed them to engage in yoga in an inclusive environment, free from the feeling of exclusion often experienced in regular classes. I have also supported ECY with their Embodied Programme and the Action Social Project, focusing on women in recovery from trauma in Edinburgh. ECY is a unique charity that reaches out to women who are normally excluded.
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