

FREE



 **RE-CO-CO**
RECOVERY COLLEGE COLLECTIVE

IN THE PROSPECTUS ARE DETAILS OF COURSES/WORKSHOPS, AND OF GROUPS.
YOU HAVE TO ENROL BEFORE DOING COURSES OR ATTENDING GROUPS.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A COURSE AND A GROUP IS THAT
A COURSE RUNS FOR A SET NUMBER OF WEEKS, AND THEN COMES TO AN END.
WE HOPE THAT STUDENTS WILL, AS FAR AS IS POSSIBLE, ATTEND EACH SESSION
OF A COURSE FOR WHICH THEY'VE SIGNED UP.

GROUPS ON THE OTHER HAND, ARE MORE OPEN-ENDED,
AND RUN WEEKLY/FORTNIGHTLY/MONTHLY
AND YOU CAN COME TO A GROUP FOR A WHILE,
NOT COME FOR HOWEVER LONG AND THEN SIMPLY RETURN.
YOU COME TO GROUPS AS AND WHEN YOU CAN.

THE PROSPECTUS ALSO CONTAINS ARTICLES, INFORMATION AND ARTWORK.
THE ARTICLES ARE FOR READING, THE INFORMATION FOR DIGESTING,
AND THE ARTWORK FOR ADMIRING.

CONTACT DETAILS:



 0191 261 0948

 info@recoverycoco.com

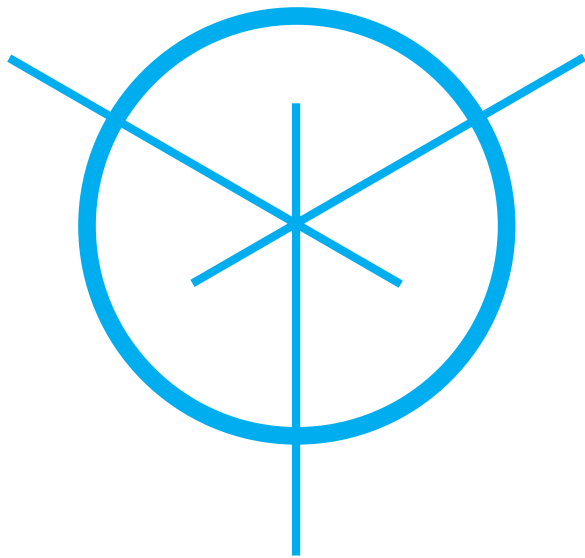
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PAST FUTURES

By the time you get to read this, 2023 will be beginning to draw to its end, or perhaps you'll already be ankle-deep in the waters of 2024. How are things doing in the land of time to come?

On my desk lies a book bought on a whim, an actual paper and board book, with a hard cover. It's a reprint, or more properly a facsimile of a publication that fascinated me as a naïve pre-teen, one which I borrowed endlessly from the library to look upon its vibrant pages and wonder. The Usborne Book of The Future was first published in 1979, and it was a thing of beauty and promise, of potential and dreams. Now, in theory, we should be living through the exciting, glossy, life depicted:



Okay, so maybe not quite...Well, at the very least we managed to avoid the worst case, disaster scenarios that we were warned of, surely?

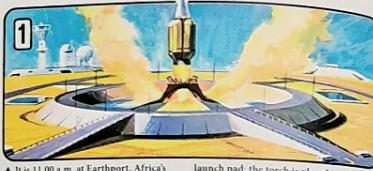
Perhaps not. We would have appeared to have constructed a present day that veers somewhat closer to the Polluted City of a Dying World, than the Garden City on a Cared-for Planet, but neither really hits the nail squarely on the head.

Now, previous articles in the prospectus may rightly have been gloom-laden, positively apocalyptic in tone when we've considered the future, what's been going on of late, and what may lie just around the corner. Goodness knows, between pandemics, endless austerity, natural disasters, entrenched inequality and exploitation, warfare, and very evident and widespread human suffering it's a wholly rational tone to strike. However, if past representations of the future are anything to go by, if we can learn anything through retro-futurism, it is that our predictions and prognostications are calculated speculation (at best), and cannot, will not, be completely accurate (if at all). The future is probabilistic, not deterministic. We have agency, can alter, change, influence outcomes, and it is precisely because we can't truly know what is to come that we can keep a flicker of hope going in our hearts. Don't give up: you don't "know" what your fate is. The future is always unwritten. Long may it remain so.

NEW WORLDS THE OLYMPIC GAMES, YEAR 2020

If Armstrong, or a base like it, is a success, then after 20 years or so it ought to be much bigger – a true Moon city. Whole families could be living on the Moon. The children would regard it as home and perhaps puzzle over the pictures of Earth's green fields their homelike parents hang on the walls of their living module.

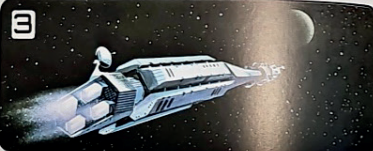
The 'Moonies' (as they might be called) might want the prestige of holding a major world event. The best thing might well be the First Interplanetary Olympics. On these pages you can read the story of the Games of 2020 as they just might happen...



1 It is 11.00 a.m. at Earthport, Africa's main spacebase. A few minutes before, an athlete, Yuri Umtali, completed his journey from Athens in Greece, carrying the Olympic Flame. All is ready as he boards the shuttle-craft waiting for him on the launch pad: the torch is placed in a special clamp and Yuri is strapped into his acceleration couch by a stewardess. As the countdown reaches zero, the shuttle's motors fire, and, slowly at first, the ship lifts off the launch pad.



2 Less than 30 minutes later the shuttle is approaching a giant wheel-shaped space station orbiting the Earth. For the shuttle, the journey is over as it noses gently into the station's main space dock. For Yuri, the journey has barely begun.



3 The next stage is the long three-day journey from Earth orbit to Lunar orbit. The craft is a comfy spaceliner on which (reporters and video cameras permitting) Yuri can relax. The craft to be used for the actual landing at Armstrong is a replica of the 'Eagle' module, the first craft to land on the Moon over half a century before. The craft looks the same, but its 'primitive' power, guidance and life-support systems have been replaced by newer robot-controlled ones.



4 The Moon landing was uneventful and here Yuri pauses for the video-recorders as he jogs towards the newly built stadium. The Flame is in a special globular container. In its handle is an oxygen cylinder, in its top is a fan to provide a draught. Without this, the flame would go out – there is no air on the Moon. Hidden from view behind Yuri is a newly erected statue of a spacesuited golfer – the first 'sportsman' on the Moon, Alan Shepard Jr, who practiced drives when he went to the Moon in 1971. In a few minutes, the Olympic Games of the year 2020 will start. The stadium is covered with a huge pleiglass dome – the visitors from Earth will have a fine view of their home world through it.



The Lunar high jump – 14 metres up

Yuri Umtali has lit the sacred flame and the Games have started. One of the most extraordinary things about the Lunar Olympics is the effect the Moon's low gravity – has on the sports. A grown man only weighs about 11 kilogrammes there and it ought to be possible to jump up to 14 metres high. As this picture shows, special equipment is needed to replace the bar.

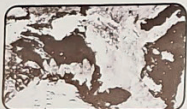
The thousands of Moonies in the crowd will feel proud of the new records being set, even though they know that many of them will have to be handicapped to make a fair comparison with existing Earth records.

It is unlikely that native Moonies will set any interplanetary records, as their muscles, used to the tiny pull of the Moon's gravity, will be no match for the tough muscles of the Earth athletes. Perhaps a handicapping system will be devised to take that into account too.

HOUSES AND ENVIRONMENT TWO TRIPS TO THE 21ST CENTURY

On these pages, you can see two sorts of city. The top one, a polluted pest-hole, already exists in at least one respect – traffic cops in the Tokyo of today have to wear smog masks. The bottom picture, a fairly clean, moderately attractive place, is possible if planners and people strive to make it so.

Some help is already at hand. People are at least aware of many of the problems of city life and are trying to solve them; and space satellites can be used for pollution control. The picture below showing northern Europe and its weather is a typical example of the clear pictures possible using 'sky-spies'.



Garden city on a cared-for planet

This scene, though not pretending to show that a perfect world is possible, nevertheless indicates that tomorrow's towns could be pleasant places to live, work and play in.

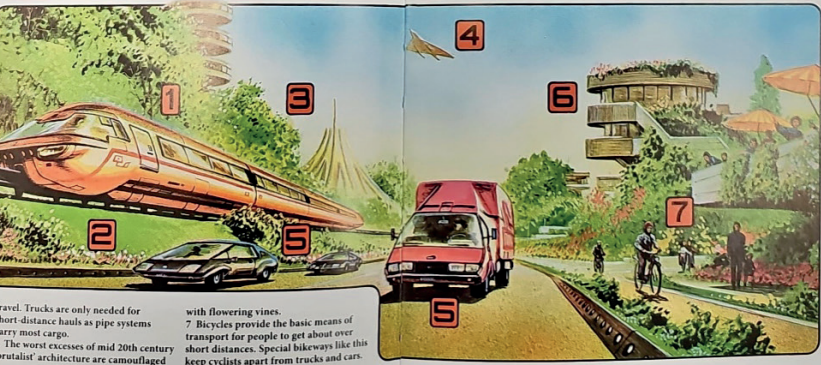
- 1 Electric monorail train provides an effective though not especially elegant solution to the problem of high speed travel.
- 2 Below the line runs a pipe network through which most bulk cargo (such as fuel, water, grain) is pumped, silently and efficiently.
- 3 The city is green all over, the result of a massive world-wide tree-planting scheme started in the 1980s. It is estimated by present-day researchers that every man, woman and child on Earth needs to plant a tree a day in order to keep a balance with those that are removed or killed. The world's main oxygen-producing area is, at present, the Brazilian rain-forest. This is being chopped down, slowly but surely. A balance must be kept.
- 4 Non-polluting jet, powered by hydrogen fuel (whose waste is water) flies quietly across the sky.
- 5 Flameless electric vehicles used for local travel. Trucks are only needed for short-distance hauls as pipe systems carry most cargo.
- 6 The worst excesses of mid 20th century 'brutalist' architecture are camouflaged with flowering vines.
- 7 Bicycles provide the basic means of transport for people to get about over short distances. Special bikeways like this keep cyclists apart from trucks and cars.



Polluted city of a dying world

If drastic steps are not taken to control pollution and to try and achieve some sort of ecological balance in the world, the picture on the left is likely to be typical of a city of the early 21st century. Its unpleasant features include:

- 1 Line of stunted, dying trees. At least these are still alive. In some present-day cities, planners have included plastic ones as bright, colourful, easy-clean alternatives to the real, oxygen-producing, thing.
- 2 Smog-laden sky. Visibility is limited and rain washes acids down from the sky. A jet trails a plume of filth.
- 3 Heavy trucks thunder along the pitted roadway while cars battle their way through the traffic jams. Vehicles are running on petrol fuel, a rare but valuable item in this future world. Alternatives to petrol, such as solar or nuclear fusion power, have not been pursued, so there is nothing to replace the oil when it runs out.
- 4 Huge, ugly, apartment blocks are thrown up to keep pace with the rapidly increasing population of the city. Birth control measures have failed and most people are out of work and ill-fed.
- 5 Neglect and decay result in city systems – such as lighting – breaking down.



Power for tomorrow's towns

Present research in Europe, USA and the USSR indicates that the 'Tokamak' nuclear fusion reactor could provide much of the energy for the people of tomorrow's towns. A Tokamak generates an intense magnetic field in its doughnut-shaped reaction chamber to burn atoms of deuterium and tritium fuel. The result, like a controlled H-bomb, is heat and light. The heat can be used to generate electricity. Deuterium, which comes from seawater, is virtually limitless in supply. Tritium supplies will take 50,000 years to run out. One litre of the fuel is equivalent, in terms of energy, to about 300 litres of oil.

[Source: The Usborne Book of The Future]

EVERYTHING IS TRITE. OH, WHAT TO WRITE?

BY ANGELA

It's hard to think what might be remotely significant or meaningful when actual Hell on earth is apparent in Gaza. By the time you read this it'll be worse. Thousands of children dead.

What else really matters in dark times like this? How can we wriggle from underneath the oppressive knowledge of the extent of suffering, happening right now. Should we even try?

Things I've learnt this term:

1. Fanatism is repressed doubt.
2. Don't f**k with Zionists – they've obviously had to put up with too much, for too long ie Millennia. And are clearly no longer able to think straight.
3. Angels retire

I lived in Israel on various Kibbutzim in the North and the South of the country, some thirty years ago. The people I met were wonderful, real Socialists. Not like those plastic Tories we've got over here nowadays.

I can't comprehend how such gentle people were deemed deserving of slaughter and barbarism, of the worst kind. People who worked side by side with Palestinians in their endeavour to create egalitarian communities. Palestinians whose daily commute included long oppressive queues, out of and back to, Gaza.

I was friends with a Palestinian lad, whose family home had been bulldozed because his 13-year-old brother had thrown a stone at some soldiers. He was on the run; his heart was full of anger at the perpetual injustice served to his people. But despite that, he had hope for peace. That was at a time, between Intifadas, when peace seemed possible.

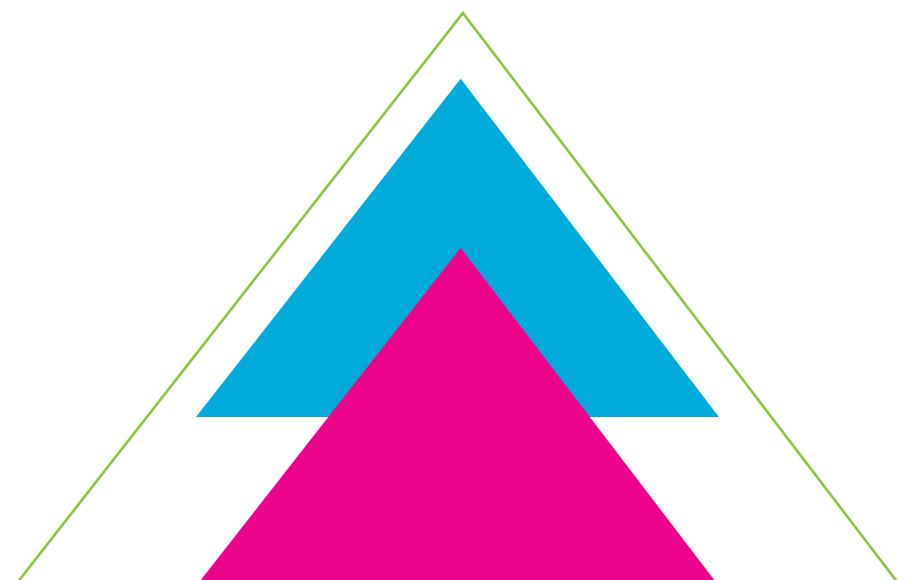
Now, it must seem, that the pain of oppression runs too deep. The trauma suffered by anyone left alive in Gaza will seep into the DNA of future generations, unable to comprehend, let alone, forgive.

I've been minded for a long time to establish a Kibbutz in Northumberland (though I probably won't call it that now – in order to minimise the chances of the Jihadists picking on us when they ultimately Rise). Zion, in our case, will probably be a brown site near the coast where we can erect a few poly tunnels and utilise seaweed as fertilizer. Gently in sync with nature. A therapeutic community of Warriors, grounded in equality.

Gawd, what to say as we fall further down this abyss of dark days? Well ill start with... 'I f**king told you so'. Me and all of the other hysterics, preppers, and crazies who were grown and fertilised by fear. Knowing that catastrophe was on horizon provides no satisfaction. There wasn't any point worrying twice. Maybe it's time to turn towards a higher power, if there is one.

Our Gemma, (the most spiritual member of the Team) has been tasked with going out and finding God, then bringing them back. There are a few things that need said/asked before they get themselves settled in: Why? Where have you been? Are these horrors part of your big plan? etc etc. And they needn't think they can come and start bossing us around, acting like God.

Because we are a pretty godless lot. Cynical about organised religion, let down, Realists.



But open minded enough to understand that faith is becoming more important to folk when nothing makes sense. When all that seems left to do is pray.

Humanity seems lost. If there is a higher power then they must look at us as the great human experiment. The outcome so far being Fail. In the 5 minutes we've been around we've managed to mess everything on the planet up.

Like an ar**hole of a guest to a party that brings nowt, walks dog shit through the house, steals your things, grabs your wife, breaks your stuff, drinks all of your drink, takes all of your drugs, offends everyone, then leaves with your cat (cats are fickle).

But know that Earth will replenish. The thousands of years it will take to degrade the detritus we've made, is a mere minute for her. Don't worry about whether your mental health is suffering. Of course it is.

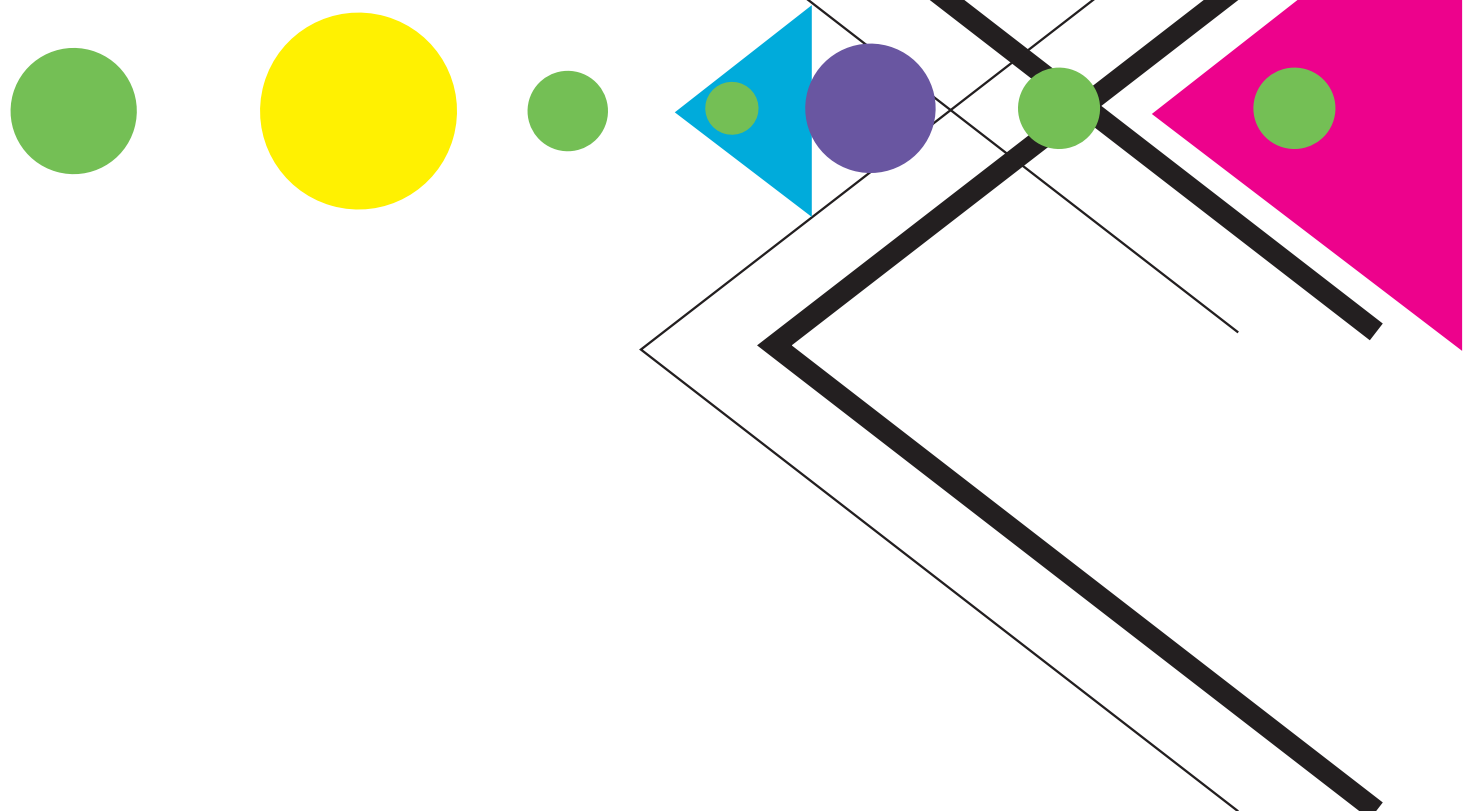
There's something wrong with you if you haven't got a mental health struggle at the moment. If you aren't feeling spiritually vacuous. If your soul isn't tarnished and tired from the images you can't unsee.

Find what matters to you. Find what binds us, and not what separates us.

Just help and be as awake as you dare.

Obligatory advert.... Find a purpose amongst all of this. If you've nowhere else to belong to then belong here at ReCoCo. Come and join us. Bring your skills and your willingness to help. We intend to dance through it. Which reminds me... Dinnertime Donk is back. Thursdays at 12.15pm on the 4th floor. 3 song Rave. Let's see if we can muster some good vibes, even Joy, maybe.

Angela



MY JOURNEY WITH RECOCO: RESEARCH AND BEYOND...

My journey with ReCoCo started two years ago with my work at the University. I am a design researcher working on health and wellbeing-related projects at Open Lab, a multi-disciplinary lab in Newcastle University (www.openlab.ncl.ac.uk). In my work, I am interested in how we can use participatory and creative methods for defining complex problem spaces and opportunities for design. This often includes the design of interactive systems, tools or experiences in collaboration with community members, where the purpose is to co-envision and co-design alternative systems, tools and services, which could promote more inclusive and bottom-up approaches within health and social care.

Starting as a volunteer in 2021 I learned about ReCoCo's unique approach to peer support and mental health recovery. I enjoyed taking part in the courses and drop-in sessions including 'Creative Wellness' and the 'Dialectical Behavioural Therapy' (DBT) course. It was also a great opportunity to get to know students and staff and learn how everyone likes their cuppa! Through volunteering, I was able to experience the 'ReCoCo Effect', a term coined by a student and current volunteer at the college who described it to me as follows; "even if you wake up with a sore head, as soon as you come through the doors, people just help you calm right down... the place is almost zen-like, it's so compassionate".

The insights I gained by volunteering at the college inspired my research work at the University. Working together with Angela and Alisdair, me and my team at the University developed research questions and activities, which would allow us to evidence the power of peer support communities and place making. For instance, we interviewed students to learn more about their journey with ReCoCo and hear their perspective on peer support for mental health recovery. We also conducted creative workshops where participants created collages of their personal journey and designed their own peer support information resources. These engagements helped us define a design space for supporting

peer support service delivery, which we continue to explore with ReCoCo. Most recently, we've done more research with both staff and students to critically explore the potential of data for securing and improving service delivery. This generated a lot of insights and ideas, which we are keen to explore further. So, there is still a lot going on and I am extremely grateful to be working with ReCoCo and with so many of you who have shared parts of your stories in such powerful ways. It has been a real privilege listening and learning from all your experiences.

This year, I've joined the team as a trustee. I am still getting familiar with the role, but I've really enjoyed taking part in meetings so far. Part of the role includes reviewing policy documents and also discussing ideas for overcoming various challenges. This has given me a whole new perspective on the organisation, which I find fascinating.

Overall, my journey with ReCoCo is ongoing and it has been an enriching experience; I've learned so much from being there including some good self-care strategies, and I am so grateful for being able to keep our research going, which continues to develop. In the meantime, I'll continue to experience the 'ReCoCo Effect' every time I drop by.

Caro Claisse

Please don't hesitate to contact me:
caroline.claisse@newcastle.ac.uk



Caro during workshop - photo by Daniel Parry



Figure 1 Creative workshop where participants created collages of their journey with ReCoCo.



Figure 2 We organised a screening at ReCoCo with participants to reflect on what they shared in the interviews about their personal journey and views on peer support for mental health recovery.



RECORDINGS / REFLECTIONS

The therapeutic benefits of music has often been stated. Playing music alone or with others has forever been (correctly) identified as one of the purest forms of expression and communication. I myself have written in a previous prospectus about how access to music and related creative practices changed my life for the better; gave me direction, purpose and a greater understanding of myself and my mental health needs. But that's not quite the whole story. I briefly touched on the way that it was not solely through music in general, but also through the recording process in particular, that I found the focus and catharsis that I had been looking for. In many ways it was the studio itself that became my primary instrument and the process of not only creating but also capturing, editing and transforming sound into pieces of sonic art, separate and apart from myself, that led me down the path that would greatly improve and completely change the direction of my life forever.

There are countless reasons why a person might pick up an instrument, join a choir or form a band. Like most (if not all) art, music is a communication and we are a social animal. We need to talk, to express. We need to hear and to understand. We have always been this way and every human culture can trace its own musical traditions back to a time before records (pun intended) began. Underlying these traditions and practices were the therapeutic and cathartic benefits of music, creation, collaboration and social activity. These benefits have been recognised by all peoples and are reflected in diverse cultural phenomena from the hymns and sacred chants of world religions to the influence music has on the attitudes and styles of many youth- and sub-cultures we find around the world.


I believe that at least part of the appeal of music (and indeed of all the arts) is the externalisation of our inner voice via the creation of a piece of music that, once made, leaves us and becomes part of the outside world. We are often told to "get things off our chests" and that sharing our feelings, being open and giving voice to our thoughts, to not "bottle things up", is essential to good mental health. This would seem to be one of the reasons that music and creativity are held in such high esteem by human societies. They are abstract ways of getting things off our chests; of letting go, sharing, communicating, externalising and understanding.

Gathering in groups and playing music with and for one another has been around as long as people have and these shared, communal experiences have evolved to take myriad forms from simple gatherings of family and friends to the complex rituals of organised religion.

We have used words and song to make the ghosts of our own subconscious; ethereal whispers, deep and personal thoughts that linger in the backs of our minds, often tormenting and harming us, into something we can grasp and study at least somewhat objectively. We take the abstract and the hidden within us and use art, music and song to make a separate entity out of it. We bring it into the light, give it form, edges, limits. We make it something. Other than ourselves. Not only do we benefit from the support gained by sharing the experience but, through the distance we have created between it and ourselves, we have earned the opportunity to see our relationship with whatever thought or feeling inspired our music in a different light. This new-found perspective and distance can help to pull ourselves away from the pain and difficulties that we may have felt too closely connected to in the past to ever be able to overcome or escape.

In the case of music and other sonic arts, the act of recording takes this othering and distancing to another level entirely by taking the initial moment of catharsis and separation and projecting it wholesale into the world as a physical being in and of itself. Once recorded the song (and what it embodies) has not only been temporarily expressed as another but it has a form of its own, taking another step away from the abstract into the world as a measurable, repeatable being whether as a line of 0's and 1's on a hard drive or captured on disc, tape or vinyl.

This new existence, this new being, can then be studied as one would study any other being separate to ourselves. It can be turned over and inspected from different perspectives and at a safe distance rather than trying to understand its form from the inside as we often do, finding ourselves struggling with issues that we can only see whilst lost and overwhelmed in the midst of them.



Many musicians and artists, when asked, will confess that they “don’t know” what a given piece is really “about” until it is finished. In other words, until it has an existence outside of themselves. This is because they cannot engage with it externally and at a distance until they are done with it and they’ve breathed life into a completely separate being. At every step along the path towards a finished piece the process itself speaks to its creator, and slowly but surely externalises itself. It becomes a partnership or a conversation between the created and the creator, with each informing the other until the piece is finished and the two can part ways as separate beings.

The process of recording has demonstrated this to me over the years as I have seen abstract and difficult emotions filtered through words, notes, sounds and melodies via instruments and studio equipment into the concrete reality of songs and albums; constant beings in their own right wholly independent of myself.

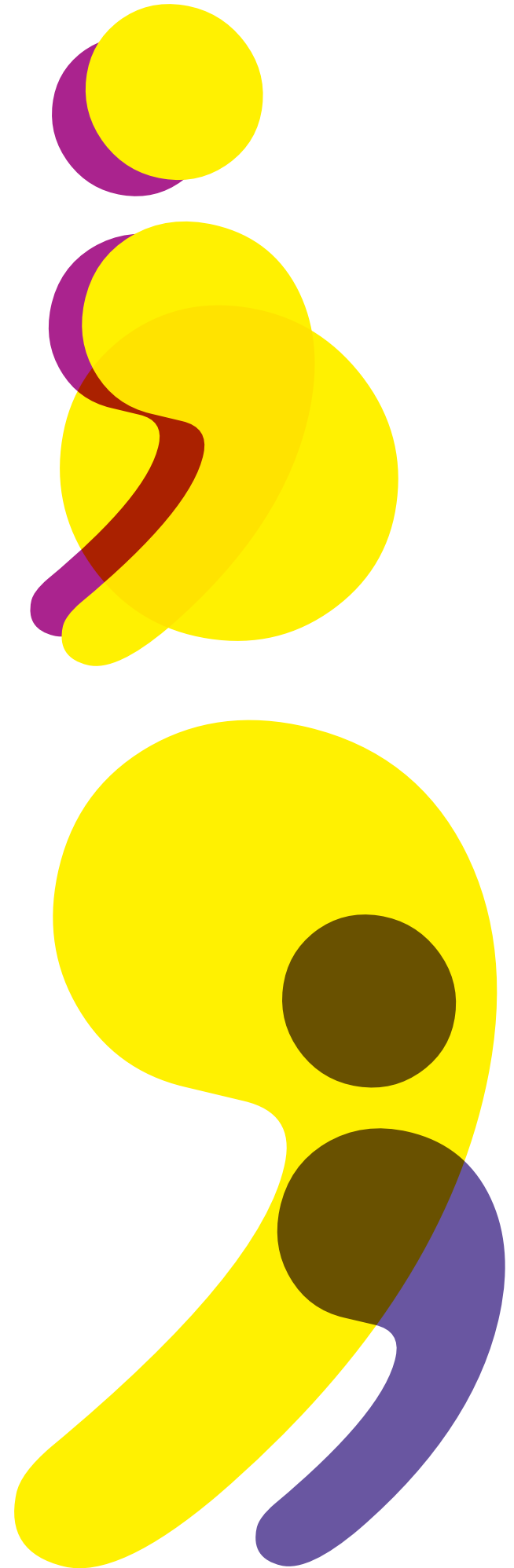
Personally, I believe it is because of a combination of the catharsis of using a practice that I enjoy (playing music) to vent internal turmoil; the fellowship found in playing music with others and the perspective gained by using the recording process to create a distance between such difficult feelings and myself that I have been able to find peace and understanding within myself after many years of feeling lost inside my own swirling thoughts, fears and hard to pin down emotions.

With a lot of exciting new developments coming to Studio 13 in the near future, I look forward to helping others to find the same joy and benefits that I have experienced myself by working together on musical projects and exploring creativity and self-expression in a studio setting.

Until then I can be reached at mark@recoverycoco.com or if you would like to book an independent session in the studio at a reduced rate for ReCoCo students email me at whitenoisewords@yahoo.co.uk

Cheers,

Mark



THE BENEFITS OF ACUPUNCTURE — MY EXPERIENCE

BY FIONA

I had always been a bit wary of Acupuncture due to all the needles. Why would I want to be a human pincushion, through choice? The attraction evaded me. Yet I was still intrigued.

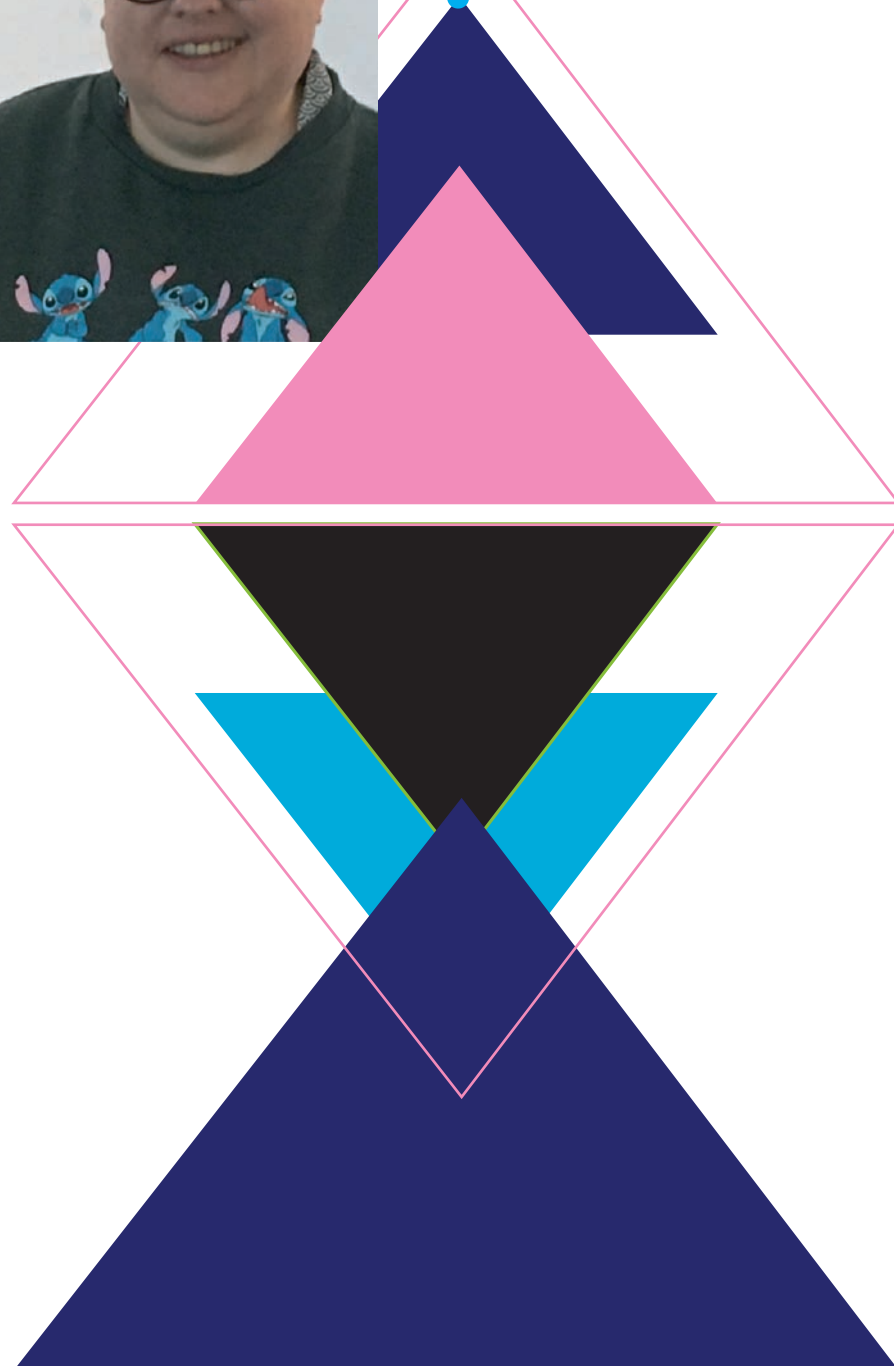
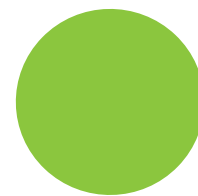
Working in reception, I get the chance to chat to people as they move through the reception area, so I began to hear good things from folk after their experiences. That coupled with talking to Jane who runs the Acupuncture drop in (and promising each week, that I'd come to the next session for a treatment) I eventually gave it a go.

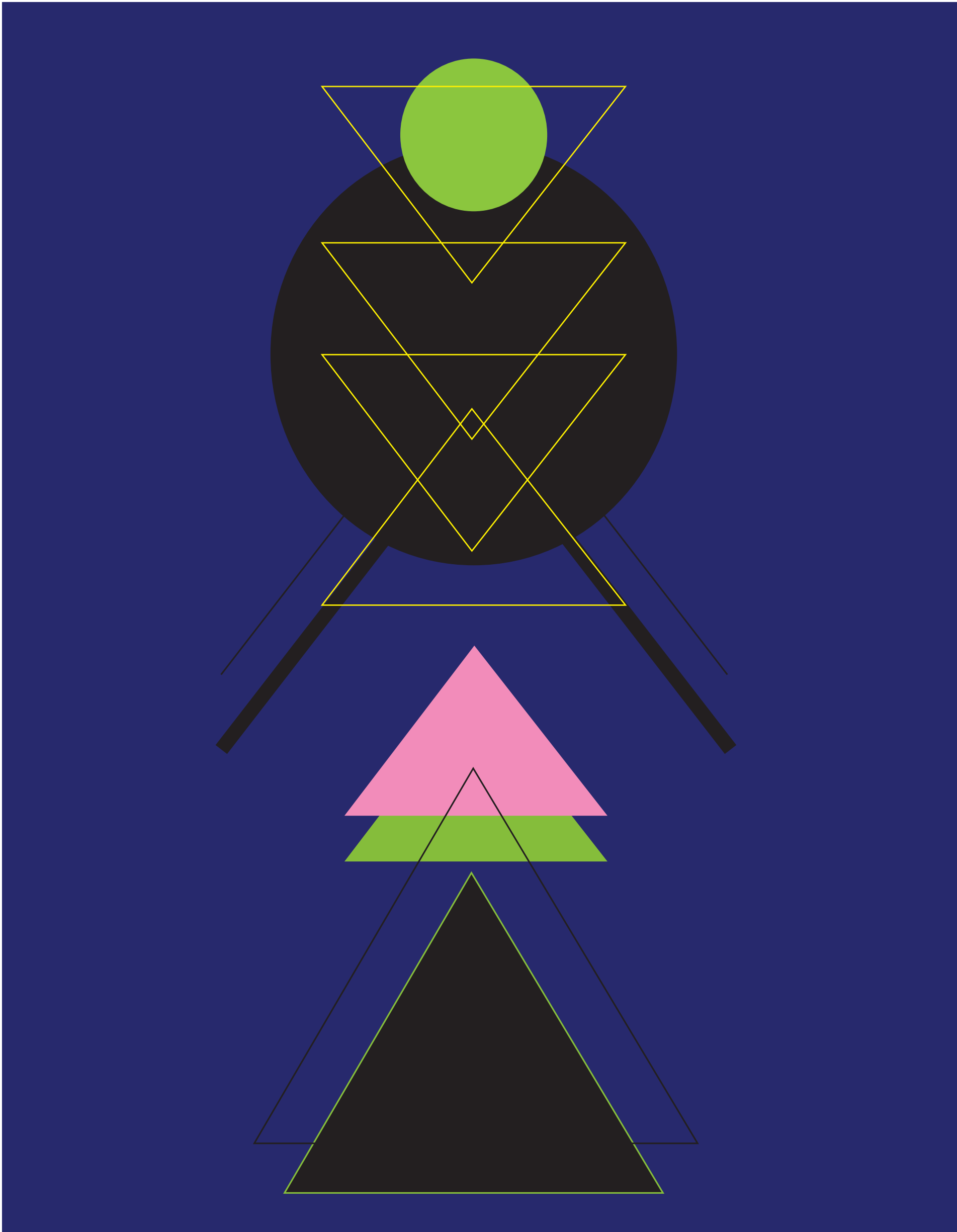
No pain, no gain I was guessing. To my surprise it was pleasurable and not painful at all!

I left feeling so lovely and relaxed after and caught a bit of a bug for it! You'll sometimes see me either in Reception or wandering through the building with orange needles in my ears, or sitting in the Acupuncture Drop in. I've also given the longer private sessions a go. At a session Jane will ask me what we are going to work on. It's been a sore ankle after I fell over (and I did notice a difference) or most recently, I asked her to look at increasing my energy levels. Later that day I was amazed as I did indeed have more energy and managed to get a few jobs done around the house after work. Something that is usually rare. My increased energy lasted longer than I expected too.

I'm reaping the benefits of this ancient art form and other people are beginning to notice a change in me too. My friends and family have commented that I'm much more relaxed since I started doing Acupuncture (well, that's the polite version) and I must agree with them. So, if you are debating in your head whether to try it or not, come along to the drop in and have a go, you might just see me there!

Fiona





INTRODUCTION TO PEER SKILLS AND VALUES

This is an 8-week course, providing students who are interested in developing peer skills and knowledge who either work in a voluntary role or those hoping to move into a paid peer role within a health and social care setting, or community work. It would benefit those students who seek to provide values based, peer led support and recovery focussed approaches, to people with similar health and social challenges.

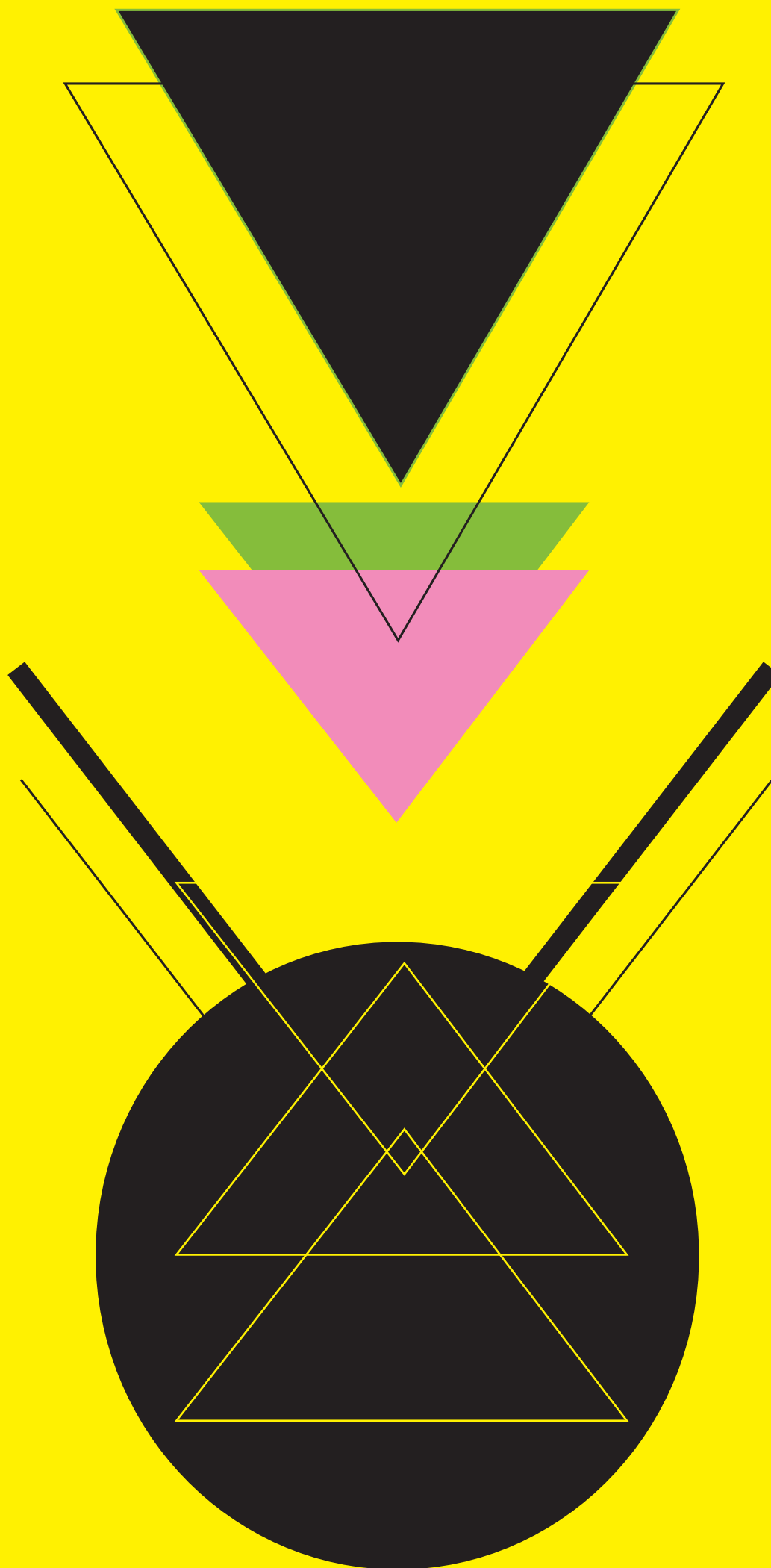
Students will gain an understanding of the core principles of peer support and learn valuable tools and skills.

During this course students will:

- Learn the core principles and values of peer support.
- Understand strengths-based approach.
- Explore listening differently with compassion and care.
- Experience a shared journey of learning and growing together.
- Learn how to run groups that are safe for everyone.
- Have a deeper understanding of our own personal well-being.
- Understand how to share your story in a safe and appropriate way.
- Gain an understanding of Trauma Informed Peer Support

This course runs for 8 weeks, with each training session consisting of 3 hrs face to face training. Each student is expected to attend all sessions, be present and engage in the training.

If you are interested in finding out further information, please speak to member of ReCoCo staff.



RECOCO CYCLING CLUB IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CYCLING UK

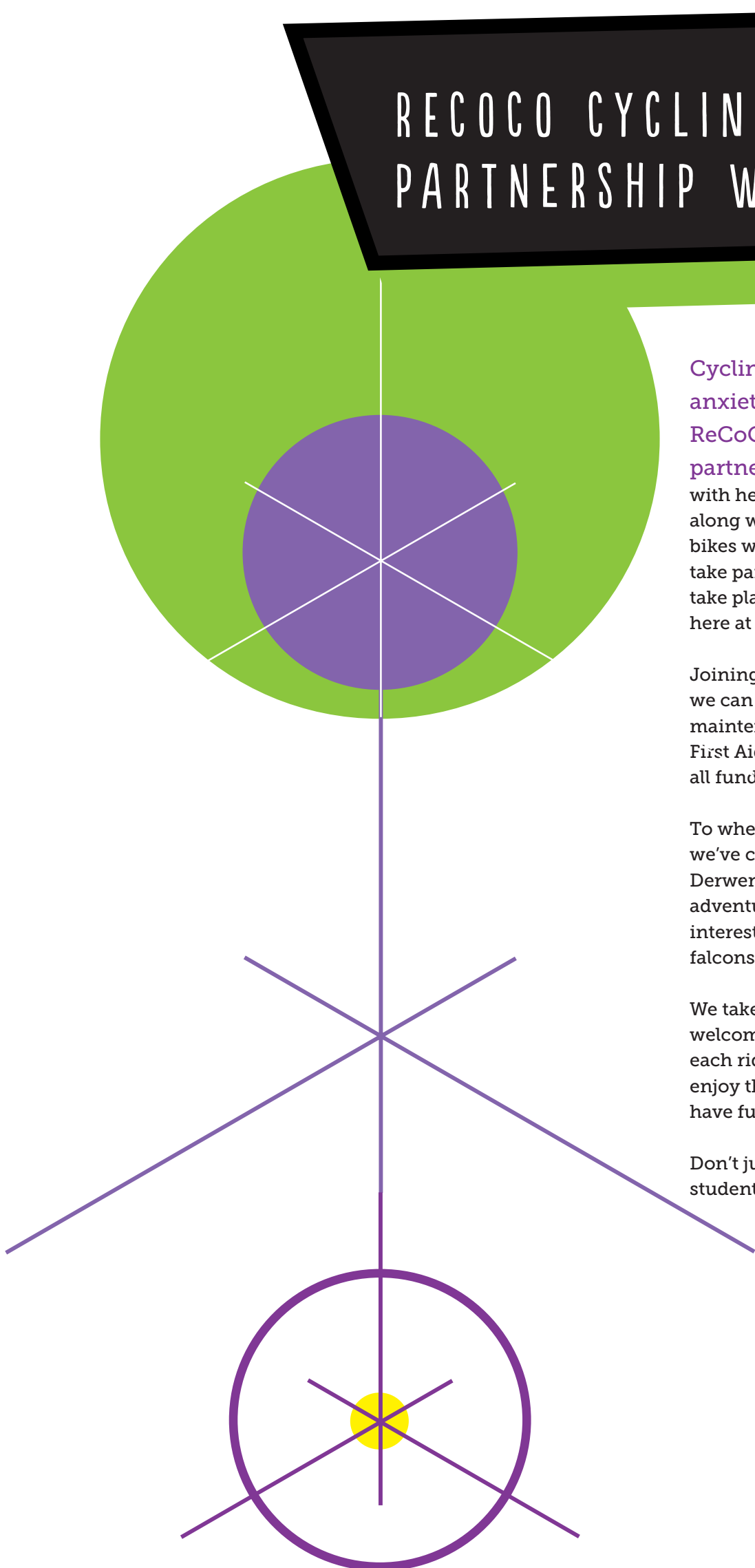
Cycling is a great way of reducing stress and anxiety it also has physical and therapeutic benefits. ReCoCo cycle club is for ReCoCo students set up in partnership with Cycling UK. We offer a well-run group with help and support to put you at your ease. You can come along with your own bike and headgear or book one of our four bikes with helmets so, if you don't have your own you can still take part, just contact us in advance to book one out. Our rides take place on a Monday starting at 11 am, leaving from ReCoCo here at 1 Carliol Square.

Joining the club offers additional benefits. As well as bike rides, we can help you keep your bike in tip top condition with a bike maintenance course. There's also the chance to take part in First Aid training and the opportunity to become a team leader all funded by Cycling UK.

To whet your appetite, here's a selection of some of the places we've cycled to recently: Exhibition Park, Quayside, Wylam, Derwent walk, Tynemouth, Ponteland. We've also had great adventures at Hamsterley and Kielder Forest and always meet interesting people on our routes from Centurions to rare falcons.

We take it at an easy pace, no matter what your ability you are welcome to come and join us. The club researches the route for each ride and always cycles in traffic-free areas. The aim is to enjoy the great outdoors with like-minded folk, see nature, have fun, reap the benefits both physically and mentally.

Don't just take our word for it ... here's what our participating students have to say...



Student quotes:

"I really enjoyed joining the cycle club at ReCoCo. Usually I cycle alone, but it was so much more fun with the group. There were people on the cycle trip of all different abilities and cycle experience, it felt like a safe and supportive environment for everyone. Bikes and helmets were provided for those who did not have their own, and there was an expert on hand at the college to check our bikes before we left".

"We followed the cycle paths through the city centre to Exhibition Park, then over the Town Moor, through Leazes Park and back to the college. We stopped in different places to take in and appreciate the beautiful nature. It felt so great to be out in the fresh air, with a group of lovely people. We laughed and smiled so much! By the time we got back my face was aching from smiling and I felt a lot calmer too. This calm feeling actually lasted a few days, and so I really stand by the value of this cycle club led by a brilliant team lead who is a ReCoCo volunteer. It's a wonderful idea and definitely has positive benefits for mental health. Community, fun, nature, and physical activity. Beautiful. Thank you!"

Amy



"The group leader made me feel safe and welcome and I loved being out in the countryside and being a part of a team where everybody looks out for each other with no pressure whatsoever. It's great to have the opportunity to go to places like Hamsterley and Kielder. It's good for my mental health".

Alan

"Thanks to an email from ReCoCo I decided the time was right to get involved and it's been a life changing experience. I'm now the mechanic of the ReCoCo cycle club"

Stephen

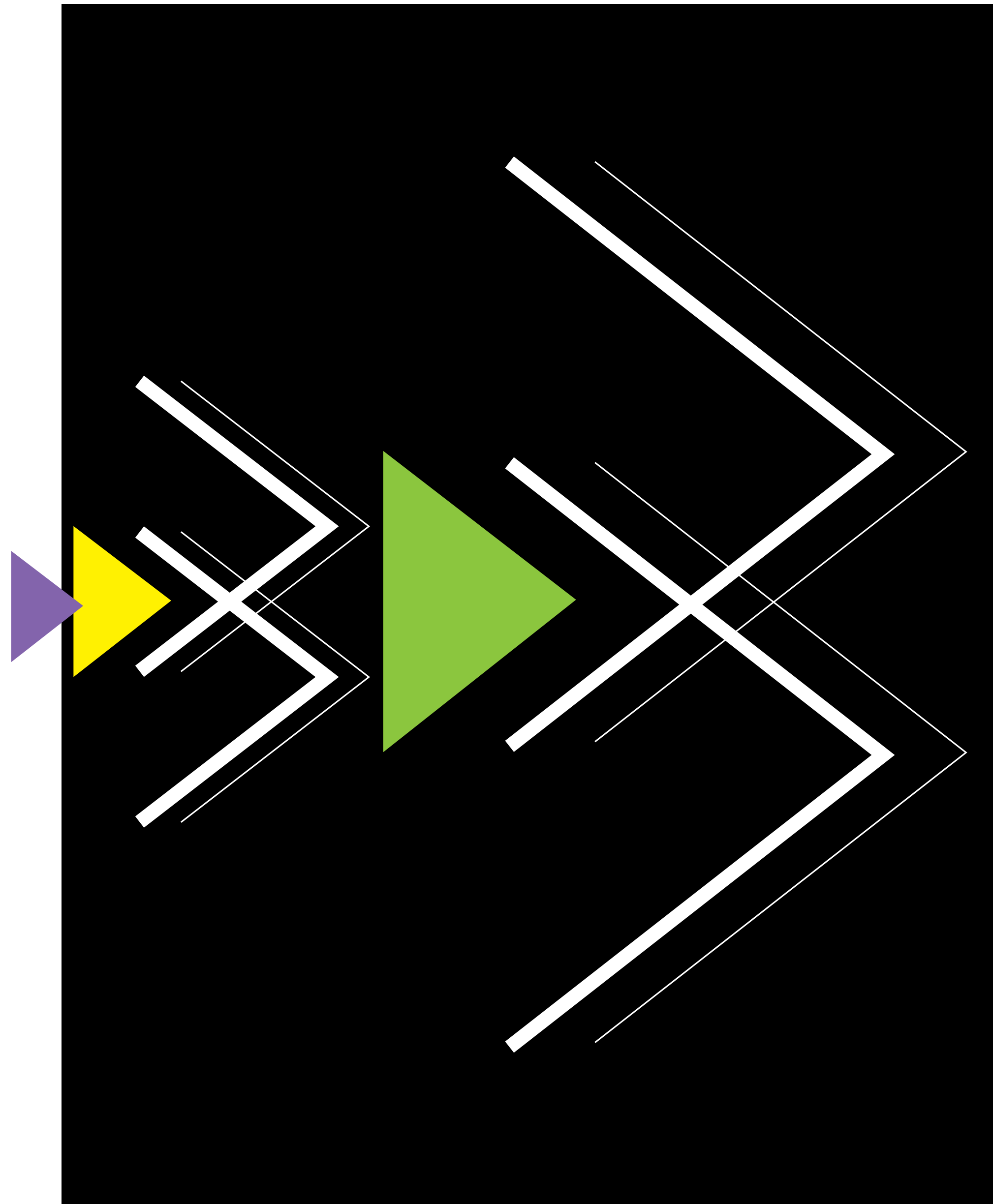
The cycle club has been really beneficial & valuable to me. It's opened up my "small world" & I'm able to cycle into the countryside in the security of the group - and feel the serenity & beauty of the surrounding country that's only a short distance from the city.

Meetings have given me an alternative focus, where, for a few hours I can feel untroubled & enjoy the moment. I also feel that cycling has also improved my confidence thanks in part, to this very supportive group.

Finally, let's not forget, cycling is a great & enjoyable way to exercise, that doesn't feel demanding (I'd not been on a cycle for 20 years). I look forward to every meeting, I genuinely do feel an improvement in both my physical & inner self".

Paul







WinG Outdoor Activities work with ReCoCo to help people with their journey to better health by using outdoor activities and connecting with nature. We offer a range of outdoor activities such as canoeing experiences, outdoor rock climbing, bushcraft cooking and crafting, hill walks and map reading, mountain biking and cycling.

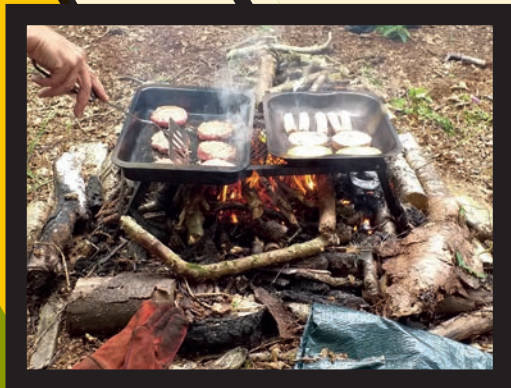
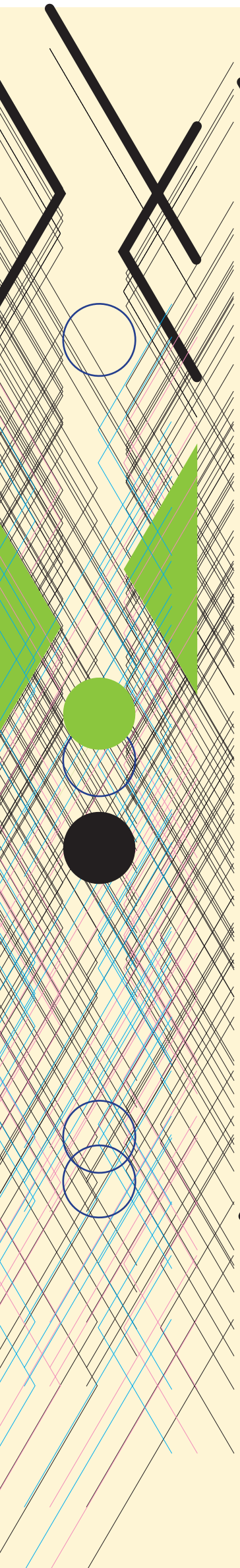
Our activities can be tailored to suit group needs and can range from gentle introductory sessions to more physically demanding activities. We can also arrange overnight trips that can involve outdoor camping or bunk bed type accommodation for longer stays whilst hiking, canoeing and cycling in the Lake District, Highlands of Scotland or North East England. Furthermore, should people wish to learn and gain recognition of their outdoor skills we can deliver officially recognised outdoor courses. We offer courses in canoeing, rock climbing and hill skills.

We provide all the necessary outdoor equipment and minibus transportation from ReCoCo and guidance from an outdoor education instructor with over 20 years' experience.

Our activities are designed to give people an enjoyable, social and stimulating outdoor experience. We support and share the ethos of ReCoCo supporting and empowering people to improve their well-being and recognise how connecting with nature can positively help people enhance their physical and emotional well-being. What WinG Outdoor Activities does, why and how, is based upon our lived experience. Recognising how our mental health can be fragile at times and need appropriate, helpful and positive interventions.

Come and join us for the day or longer and experience our wonderful landscape, active in nature, socially bonding and mentally joyful. Perhaps John Muir the Scottish Naturalist can put it better,

“Keep close to Nature’s heart and break clear away, once in a while, and climb a mountain or spend a week in the woods. Wash your spirit clean.”



POETS' CORNER

BY GEORGIA

MY BREAKTHROUGH

My journey is one with no final destination,
Steps forward, for sure, but no exit station.
I came to ReCoCo angry and scared,
Not sure I wanted help, not sure that I cared.
On day one I arrived, I felt quite out of place,
Soon I would realise, this was a safe space.
I learnt skills in coping, in helping myself,
Knowledge as a saviour, supporting my health.
Starting the tools, I struggled and tried,
Was this too good to be true, had they lied?
Eventually the pieces began to connect,
In time, I found, practice makes perfect.
Now when my brain starts to race,
My feelings, my anger grows at pace,
Now I know that when my fears run away,
I know what to do; I can have a say.
I took hope from the community, somewhere to belong,
It helped me to feel just human, not something wrong.
The skills I had learnt, gave me some hope,
I finished my degree, started working and coped.

The bad days did still come along,
Days when I would not, could not, be strong.
But I knew now that it would improve,
So long as I pushed forward and made my next move.
Fast forward to the future, I worked in a charity,
Helping people, who sought hope, desperate for clarity.
I wanted to give them what I had had,
Knowing it had worked for me, it wasn't a fad.
I looked to build links between the two places,
Afraid of being remembered, of the looks on their faces.
Yet when I told them I used to come here,
Their reactions were filled with warmth and with cheer.

A year on I saw a job advertised,
I put weeks into applying, I was excited; energised.
And now I sit here writing to you,
Working in the very place that I had my breakthrough.
To come full circle and be sitting in this place,
I feel quite breathless like I have ran a great race.
So, while my journey to wellness is never quite done,
I have completed many hurdles; this battle I have won.
Now my hope is to give it back to you all,
The hope that saved me from a longer downfall.

Welcome to ReCoCo, this is your place,
I look forward to meeting you, every single new face.

Georgia

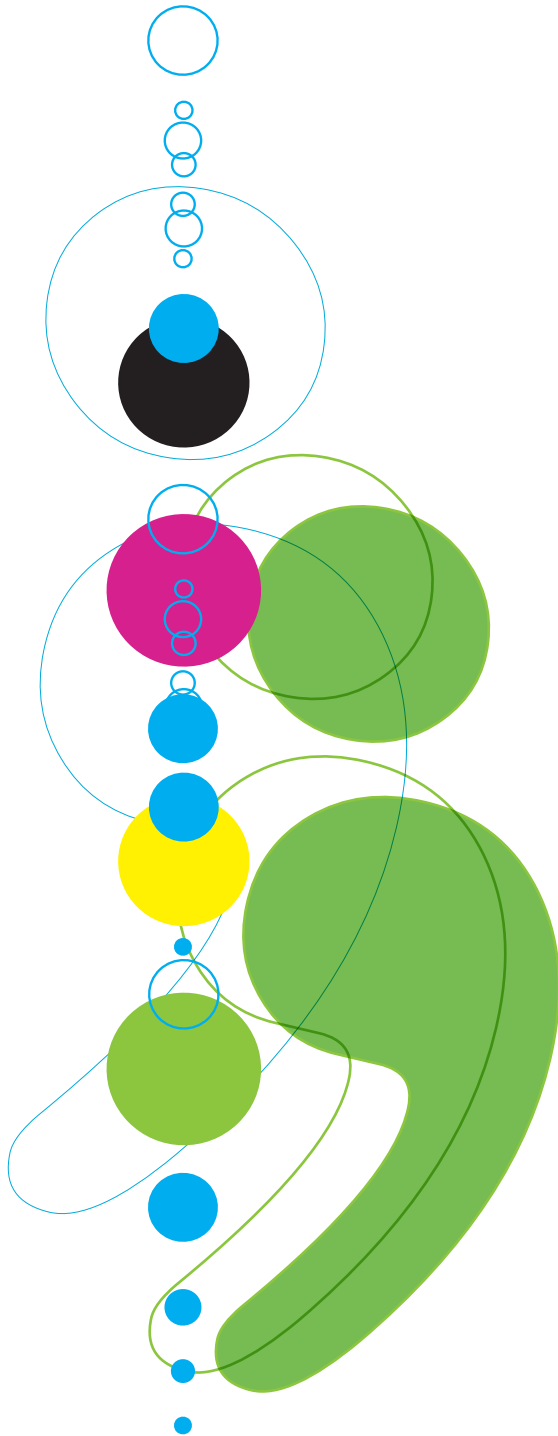
Taking a stroll along the beach, the calm of the waves with only the
seagulls breathing the silence of the day for there is no one here today.
I wonder why, for Covid has gone away hurray.

Taking a stroll down the beach wondering where all the people are, just
we used to greet. Covid has gone away, so where is everyone today?

As I stroll towards St Mary's lighthouse I am still wondering where
everyone has gone to after all it is only a quarter to two on a quite balmy
Sunday Afternoon. Where should I go tomorrow afternoon?

There's no time to lose so what do I choose on a Tuesday afternoon?
Go to ReCoCo this Wednesday I try to not be too thirsty this Thursday.
Have a lie in on Friday
Relax this Saturday and soon we are back to Sunday.

By David Laurence Kipping.



WHITTLEY BAY

BY DAVID LAURENCE KIPPING

BY DAWN SKELTON

CORE ROOTS

My wide eyes tell my story.
It is said I have a twinkle in my eyes.
I ask the young child and teenager in my inner world...

Who are you?
Who are we?

We are exploring...
We are bringing together an identity...

The vast depth of a forest of overgrown roots entwined.
At times battling through weeds that were interwoven.
The tangled mass of shading in tints, red, green and brown.
The pigments of colours in natural life.

The wildflowers have tried to survive but died, yet they are spreading seeds.
The seeds blow in a windswept gust into the corners of the surrounding landscape.
The wildness is seen as a nuisance, unsightly to see by some.
The seeds spread and scatter.
In society, efforts are made to eliminate untidy wildness.
The impact is deemed unappealing as the weeds come back in yearly seasons.
The frustration for the wild part to go away forever more.
The nettles give a nasty sting.
The image of creepy bugs in my mind, dormant demons in my dreams.

I am honest, being authentic with the truth.
I listen to my breath.
The search of finding peace.
I try to rise through the soil and the dirt.
The cracks that were keeping me trapped underneath the paving stones.
I arise slowly from my depression of the dark underground.

I start living away from mental instability.
The past alien life is making a mark; I am being heard.
I am succeeding and flourishing.
This unfamiliar part of a new existence.
The choices I make in healthy, realistic goals.
I am taking chances in finding the core root in the body and mind.
I find my inner wise soul.
I start to unfold positivity coming from my roots inside of me.

I explore a new unknown territory.
Unfamiliar terrain.
The space of land, the cosmic vastness, in my future capabilities.
The arrival with my feet on the solid earth.
The air in my lungs.

I witness my surroundings.
They were blurred in the obstacles of the underworld.
I see a glow of light in front of me.
I adapt and adjust in a hesitant amendment.
The brightness, a surprise, is bringing unexplained serenity, such calm.
I find unacquainted sensations in a bodily presence.
I am still trying to figure out how to react; I am familiarising myself with this changed period.
Letting go of destructive behaviours.

The sentiment to start living...
I ponder in thought as I start to feel whole.
The surges of cautiousness and excitement merge into one.
The emotive overwhelm of a fusion of unity.

The jumping in emotions like the ever-changing weather.
 The ripples in the water.
 The moods of the sky.
 The translucent raindrop sits on the dew of the grass.
 The blowing of the leaves, a deep-rooted tree,
 The wonder and curiosity about the history of the earth.

The growth of a dainty flower appears from the undergrowth.
 My core roots are changing.
 I Smile beyond my worry and fears.
 I am continuously learning in developmental growth.
 I have hope and belief; I find my voice.
 Once heavy, I honour my core roots; they now have a lively, sprightly force.
 I am now more open, grasping opportunities.

The connection to nature keeps me grounded.
 The sky, the hues of the clouds, the sunrise, the sunset.
 Then an unexpected storm.
 I observe stillness and rapid energetic movement in nature's surroundings.
 The reminder that I am still part of this world.
 The quick change of the weather, its moody nature, in the gloomy season.

The roots, the wildness, the seed, the bloom of the dainty flower.
 They are all part of me!

The core roots and the dark undergrowth.
 My roots bring unpleasant imagery describing darker days in my journey.
 The wild part of me many do not see...

I continue to explore and find my identity.
 The roaming ramble, the struggle walking uphill.
 The gentle stroll as I walk in the nearby countryside.
 The thoughts in my mind drift.
 My head wanders to the clouds.
 I find increased silence in tranquillity, mindfully calm.
 I allow the depth of words to flow as I explore and let go.
 I am finding in my core the complexity, the fun part of me.
 The energy of words flows endlessly.
 This is my story of self-discovery; it is displayed with honesty.
 The haunting words in sadness.

In humorous states of happiness.
 In celebrated excitement.
 The depths of the core roots within me.

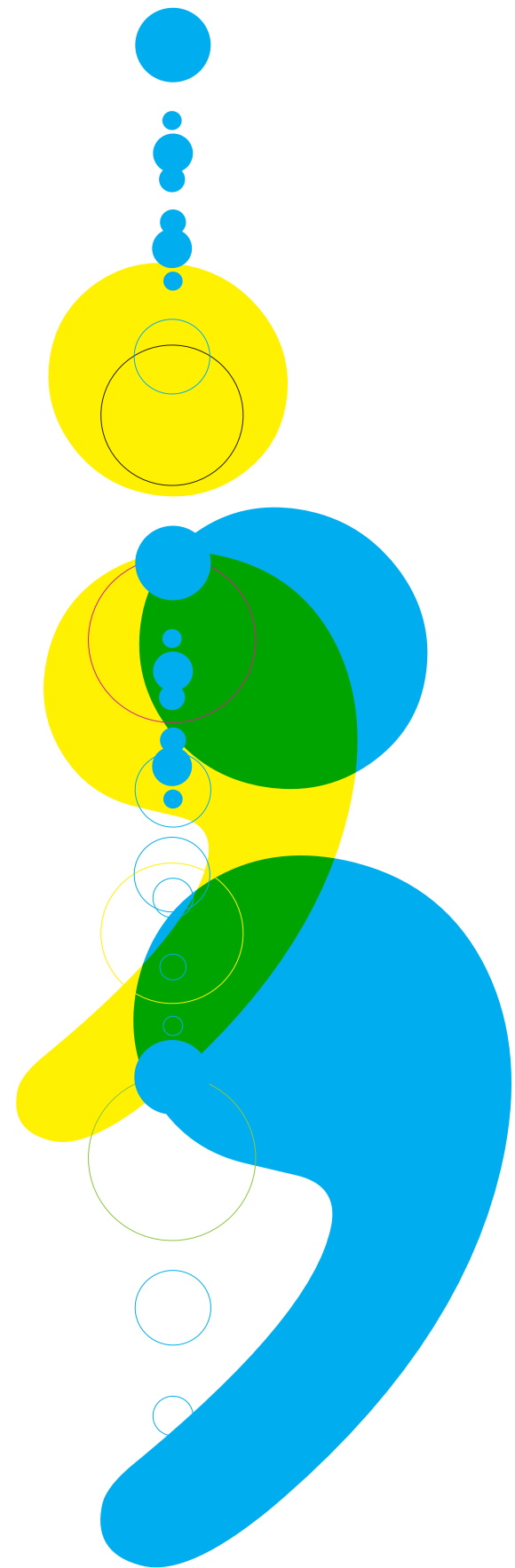
The make-up of the characteristics of my life.
 I continue to explore; I acknowledge my story.
 I find amazement in the person I am becoming; she is unrecognisable.
 I am no longer lost in the undergrowth of my wildness.
 I have a chance in the continuum in my life.
 The wealth in living.
 The destination at the finish line will change in the life choices I make.
 I aspire to have an assertively clear purpose,
 In my lifespan.
 In curiosity...

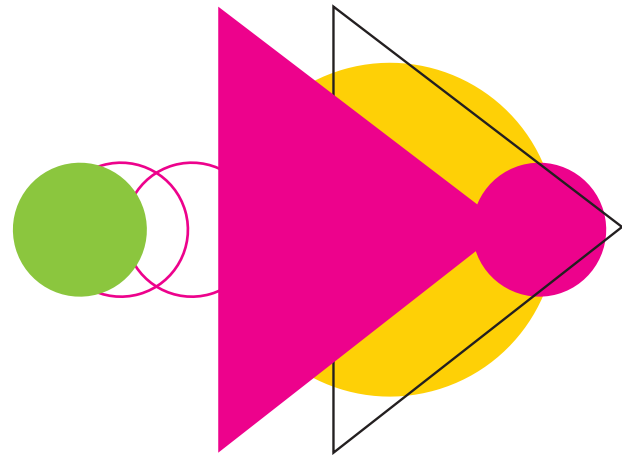
In my narrative, the story of my core root, this narrative is the truth of being part of mankind.

In being human...

The depths of my thoughts...

I thrive in excitement to explore... The fear, the dark times, remind me to rest, balance and recover.





There are things you can do to maintain your core body temperature without turning the central heating on.

Layers: Wearing lots of layers rather than one thick piece of clothing will help to trap your body heat and keep you warmer. Thermal underwear and clothing, and hot water bottles are an inexpensive way to stay warmer for longer. You can also keep your feet warm with thick socks and slippers.

Food and drink: Eat three meals a day if you can, preferable hot food such as soup, beans on toast, beans on toast etc and drink plenty of hot drinks throughout the day. Avoid alcohol - it prevents your blood vessels from constricting, and you'll begin to lose body heat.

Move around: It's also important to avoid sitting still for long periods of time - move around and keep as active as possible. This will help boost your circulation and keep you warm.

Heating one room during the day can keep the cost of your energy bill down. There are several ways to warm a room without putting the central heating on.

Curtains: Open your curtains during the day - the sun still provides warmth, even in the winter months. Make sure you close them as soon as the sun sets to keep the warm air in. Investing in thicker curtains, or thermal curtain liners, will help keep the cold air out and prevent heat loss.

Use a draught excluder: We tend to lose a lot of heat through gaps around windows and doors. Exclude draughts by lining your windows with rubber seals and use a homemade draught excluder by doors.

Move furniture away from external walls: Sitting with your back against an internal wall will instantly feel a lot warmer.

Insulate your floor with rugs: If you don't have carpets, put down plenty of rugs. Hardwood or laminate floors are a lot colder than carpeted areas and rugs will help to retain the heat in a room.

Avoid condensation on windows: With the windows closed, condensation can quickly build and can eventually turn to mould. This can be harmful to your lungs. Make sure you turn your extractor fans on in the bathroom and kitchen and wipe down your windows at regular intervals.

Staying warm at night

Temperatures really plummet at night, so try to keep your bedroom as warm as possible. When possible, exclude any draughts; close the windows when it's cold and put down rugs to insulate the floor.

Bedding: Use extra blankets or buy flannel or fleece bedding if you can. These materials trap body heat and are better insulators than cotton. Using thicker tog duvets will also provide warmth.

Electric or weighted blankets: An electric blanket is a lot cheaper to run than a heater and provides a constant source of heat throughout the night. Weighted blankets are also very comforting and don't let draughty air into the bed, make sure you buy the correct weighted blanket for your size/weight.

Toasty pyjamas: Wearing fleece or flannel pyjamas go a long way to keeping you warm as they trap the heat. Bed socks are also a great idea as you lose a lot of heat from your feet.

Hot water bottle: Cost effective and long lasting, a hot water bottle will provide a safe source of warmth throughout the night. Make sure you check your hot water bottle for signs of wear and tear before using.

Find a warm space

As temperatures plummet, many organisations such as ReCoCo are creating warm spaces. These spaces offer a hot drink, heating, and a place to meet others. Many local organisations such as churches, town halls, shops, pubs, and cafes are also offering warm hubs.

Get help with your energy bill

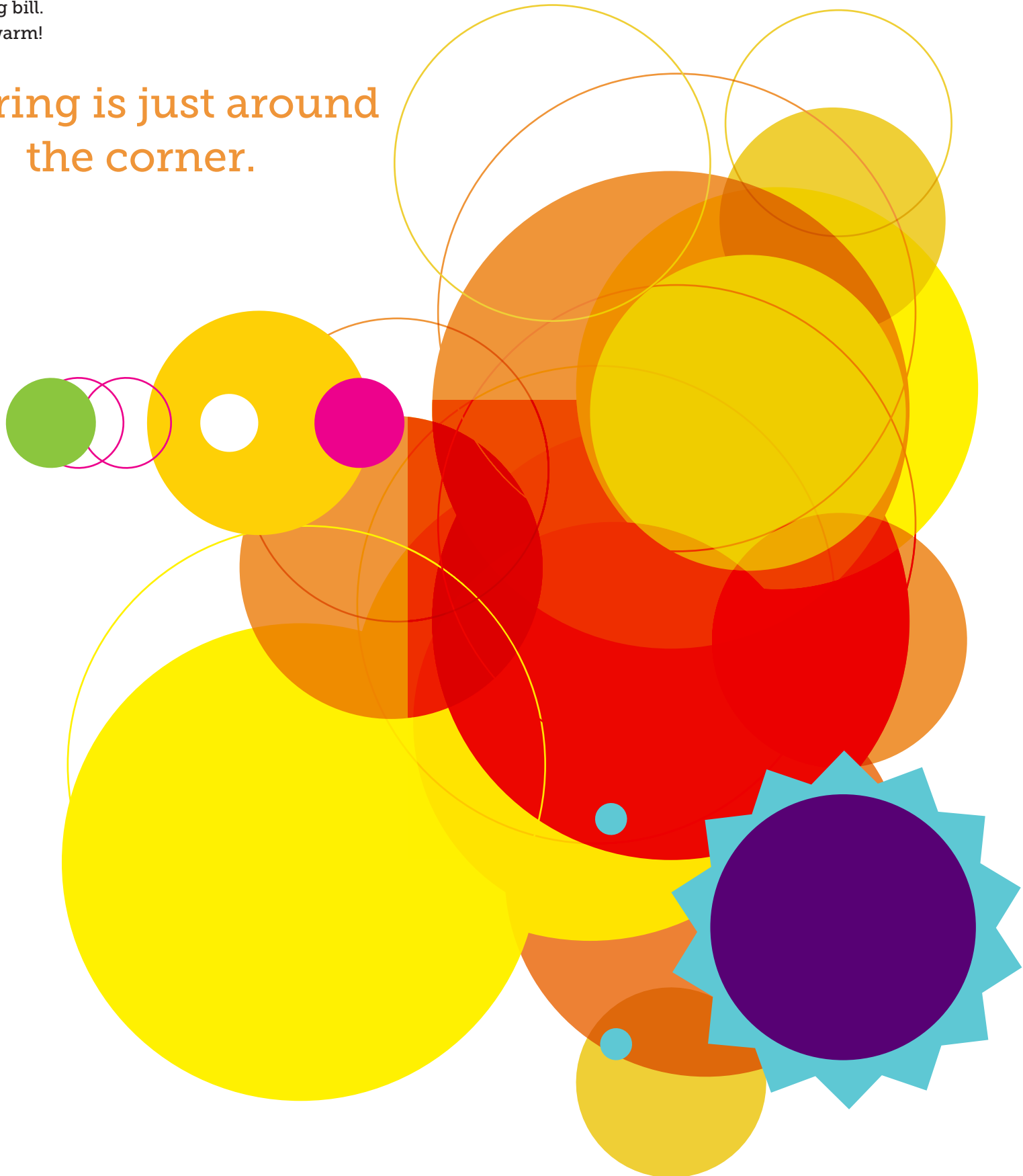
If you're claiming benefits such as Pension Credit, Disability Allowance, Income Support, Income-based Job Seekers' Allowance, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Universal Credit or Support for Mortgage Interest, you may be able to get help with your energy bill. Warm Home Discount scheme: The UK government run scheme is available to those receiving benefits or a low income, you can check if you're eligible on their website, Direct.gov.uk

Cold Weather payment: These are given to people receiving benefits in England and Wales when there is an extended period of freezing weather.

Contact your gas or electricity supplier: Find out what support you could receive from your gas and electricity supplier by contacting them directly. Communication is important if you are unable to pay your utility bills.

Winter fuel payment: Those born before 26th September 1956 may be eligible to receive support to pay their heating bill.
Keep warm!

Spring is just around
the corner.



CLEAN SLATE FINANCIAL WELLBEING SERVICES CIO: EMPOWERING LIVES, ONE STEP AT A TIME

We are often asked why we don't boast more about the work we do, but that's not really our style. People say, "but if more people knew about you then you might get more funding to help others with our work"! Mmmm, well there might be something in that, so here goes.....only this once though.

In a world where financial troubles can weigh heavy on our shoulders, there's a special place known as Clean Slate Financial Wellbeing Services CIO that's been making a world of difference for the past 13 years. This unique charity has been quietly changing lives, especially for those in recovery from addiction. Clean Slate's story is a testament to the power of resilience, independence, and a user-led approach.

A User-Led Approach

We have always had our heart in the right place. Our user-led approach means that we put the people we serve at the centre of everything we do. We understand that financial struggles can be deeply personal and that to make a true impact, we need to work hand in hand with our clients.

Unclaimed Benefits: A Ray of Hope

One remarkable feat Clean Slate Financial Wellbeing Services has achieved is in identifying and successfully claiming over £200,000 in unclaimed benefits for our clients. These are funds that belong to the clients but often go unclaimed due to various hurdles. Clean Slate has a team that's dedicated to breaking down these barriers and ensuring that every individual receives what they rightly deserve.

Debt Relief: A Million Pound Miracle

When it comes to facing financial hardships, we don't shy away from challenges. Adding it all up our clients have the total weight of almost a £1,000,000 in debt hanging over them – a colossal sum for anyone, especially those in recovery. But we don't just offer sympathy; we offered solutions. Through tireless negotiations and careful financial planning, we have helped countless clients regain control of their finances and find their way out of debt.

Independence from External Interests

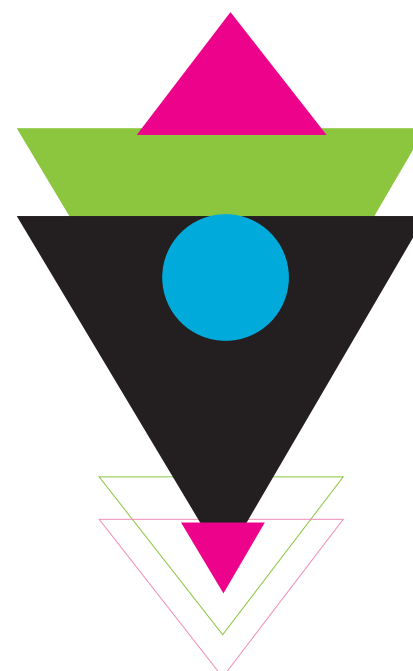
What sets us apart is our remarkable independence. Many organisations rely on funding from local authorities, banks, insurance companies, energy suppliers, or religious sources, each with its own set of values and priorities. We remain resolutely focused on serving our clients' best interests, free from external influence.

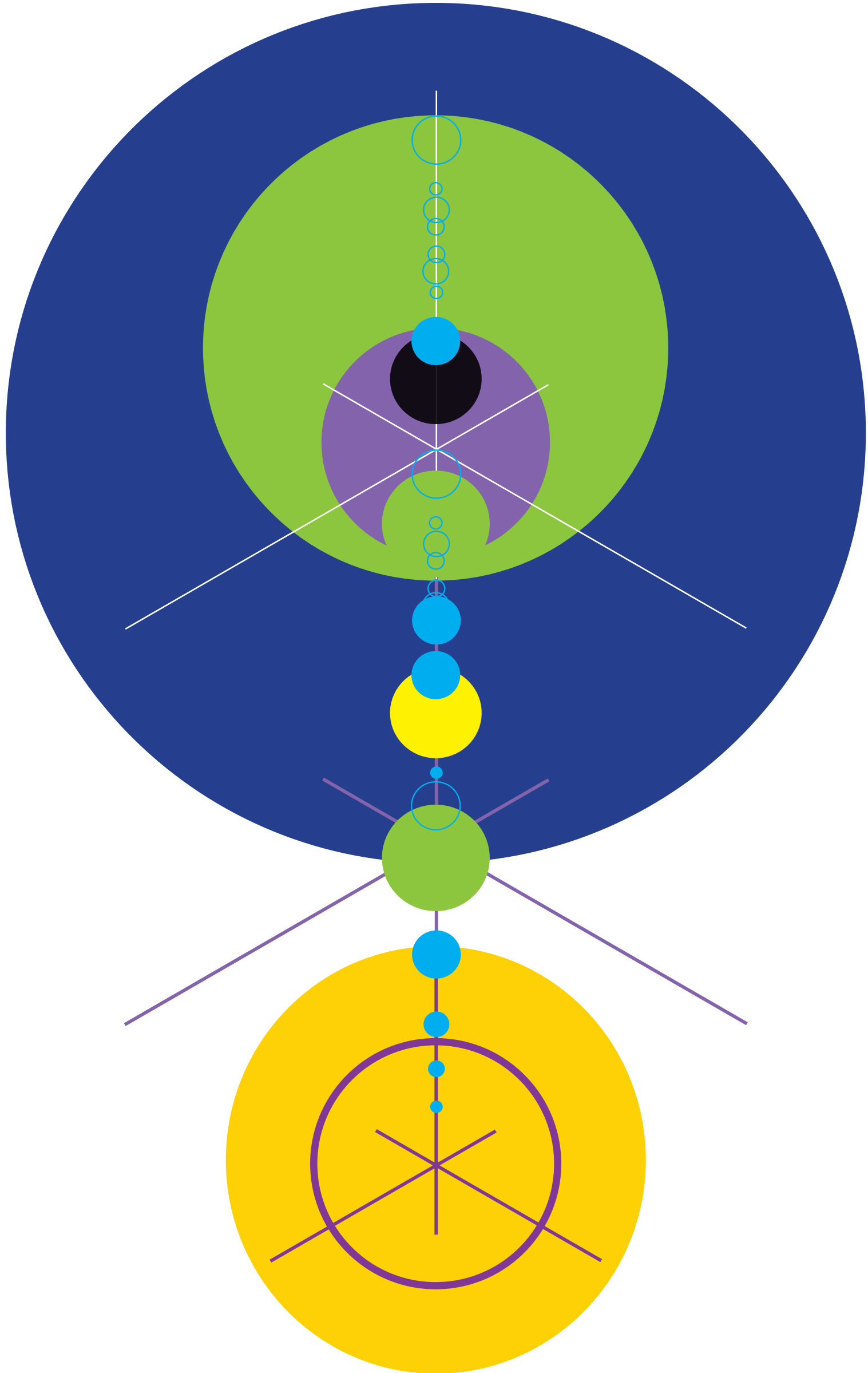
A Relentless Spirit

Clean Slate's spirit is one of unwavering dedication. As I mentioned earlier, we are often asked to prepare case studies to spread the word about the good work we do, but our focus remains on the people we serve. We want to embrace new situations and find resolutions rather than dwell on past successes. It's a testament to our commitment to our mission.

In Conclusion

So, if you find yourself struggling to make ends meet, you should know that Clean Slate Financial Wellbeing Services is here to help. Located on the first floor at ReCoCo, we are ready to lend a helping hand, without any strings attached. It's a free and confidential service. We think of ourselves as a shining example of what can be achieved when an organisation is led by the people we help. Our resilience, independence, and dedication have made a significant impact, offering a ray of hope to vulnerable young people on their journey to financial well-being.







OAKTREES - CHANGING LIVES

Oaktrees Newcastle, Changing Lives is a community rehab that supports those in Newcastle who are abstinent from drink and drugs. Our comprehensive 12-week treatment program is intricately woven around the profound principles of the 12-step peer-to-peer support programme of recovery but focuses on the first 3 steps. Clients are provided with one-to-one counselling and immersive group therapy sessions and workshops that help deepen their understanding of addiction and the process of recovery, as well as helping them develop life skills so that they can remain abstinent. We give them the tools and support to allow them to transition into life after Oaktrees.

Additionally, as an integral component of the program, we believe it is essential for clients to venture into the community and engage in the activities that Newcastle has to offer. This ranges from walks along the quayside to museum visits.

Oaktrees is based on 1st floor,
1 Carlol Square, Newcastle.
If you'd like to find out about
our service, please contact
07923210586
for further information.

Our attendees may embark on the course apprehensively, but once settled in their experience says it all ...

"I had a warm welcome to Oaktrees from both the staff and peers. Everyone has been supportive, and we are all pulling in the same direction."
(Day 1)

"Oaktrees has given me a routine and given me the support I need to live a sober journey. It comes with good days and bad days, but all in all it's a programme that needs to be done." (Week 3)

"Oaktrees has set me on the right path that points me in the right direction for life. It is a place to find oneself with friendly and knowledgeable staff - a safe place to get well." (Week 7)

"I came into Oaktrees looking for help and the right tools to help keep me sober, but it has been so much more than that. It has helped me look at myself as a person and what I need to work on to not only stay sober but also be a better version of myself. Making good, trustworthy friends along the way has been a huge plus."
(Week 9)

"Oaktrees is like a support family. They're the only people who know what you're going through. Changed my life, probably saved it to be honest."
(Week 11)

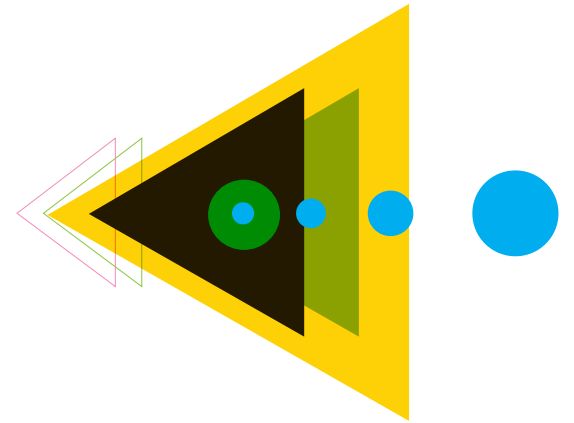
"Oaktrees, it's giving me the steppingstone and accountability to get sober and continue the journey with the tools I've learnt. It's now up to me to enable myself with a good orderly direction to continue." (Week 6)

"The first two weeks will be the hardest, get past them and you will find your feet and find that path to recovery." (Week 6)

"Oaktrees gives me the freedom to share in a safe place. It's a nice friendly place for recovery. Oaktrees has been a huge helpful and safe place in my recovery so far."
(Week 7)

"I came to Oaktrees because I hope it will help me the best way I hope and believe it will. I was the only lad from Plummer that decided to come, and I think it's a better way to recover for me than just SMART meetings or one to one support." (Day 1)

THE RED BENCH PROJECT



The aim of The Red Bench Project is to try and help those people who are struggling and are thinking of doing the unthinkable, ending their life. Now thankfully this is not something that everyone can understand, but sadly more and more people are struggling every single day and it is becoming much more common. Help is out there, but if you do not know where to look it can be a very daunting process, if you are not thinking clearly and are struggling then that process can become somewhat impossible. Most people automatically think they have to go through their GP to get help, whilst that can be the case; there is more help and support out there. When you go through your GP you will more than likely be faced with a waiting list of 6+ months, which sadly is just too long for someone who is really that low. Another issue with depression and suicidal thoughts is it can be very difficult to talk to your family or friends, asking them for help. People often feel shame and embarrassment, when really you shouldn't feel either of those things.

This is where the Red Bench Project comes in, hopefully to help with both things. First off, we aim to have benches in or near suicide hot spots all over the UK. These red benches are very similar to the buddy/talking/loneliness benches you hear about (though they are not advertised very well with very few people knowing where they are), but we are hoping ours will be so much more than just a talking bench. Ours are red, to stand out, so people know they are part of The Red Bench Project. This is for two reasons, one, to be visible from the other benches nearby, so people know the difference, and two, to be used like a silent cry for help, an S.O.S. of sorts. In other words, if you see someone sitting alone on a red bench (or any bench for that matter), instead of walking past them, maybe stop and say hello, ask if they are ok, ask to sit next to them for a moment and talk to them. That moment of kindness can be enough to break through the fog of someone who is struggling, to show them that they are not alone, that people do care and are willing to help. For those struggling, they might not have the strength to ask family or friends for help, but by sitting on the red bench it could be a way of saying "I need help".

The other thing with the benches is that each one will have two plaques on them. One on the front where you sit, this is so that someone struggling can get help then and there. It will have the phone number for the Samaritans, our logo, web address and a QR code that you can scan to take you direct to the website. Each bench will also be numbered so that you can find them on our map which will be on our website. The second plaque will be larger and will go on the back, this way anyone walking past can see that it is a Red Bench Project bench, it will have info about the benches and what they are for as well as how you can follow us.

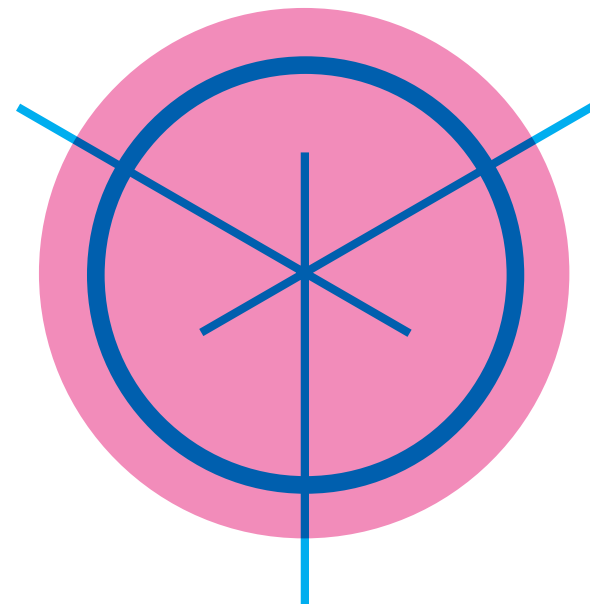
The website itself will tell you about The Red Bench Project, it will have several features including the option for HELP. This will open up to a list of reasons that you may need help, everything from money troubles, debt, family issues, PTSD, abuse, addiction, health issues etc. Then when you click on the option that you are struggling with it will list all of the different charities, groups and organisations that can help you. It will have the logo, info, contact details, address, website, socials and any other information we have. That way you can see all of the different help there is for you and can contact them. We want to sign post people to the right place, as not all will be known. The website will also have a map of where each bench is located, that way people can see for themselves where they are, and can keep an eye on them if they pass them, they can easily be found in an emergency (as we will have the location, address and what 3 words search point they can be found).

We will also feature things like the people and businesses that have supported/funded The Red Bench Project, so people can support them in return. Also, any testimonials from anyone, so that people can see that it can work and there is a light at the end of the tunnel, that things will get better.

We aim to promote and work with as many of the charities, groups and organisations as possible as we are a firm believer in everyone helping and supporting each other and in doing so we will all make a big difference.

Now as for me, I am not a medical professional; I have no background in mental health or any kind of health work or experience. But I do have the experience of being the person on both sides of the bench! I have been the person who tried to kill himself, I wouldn't even be here if it wasn't for a friend finding me unconscious in a pool of blood and rushing me to hospital where I had to get stitched up and have my stomach pumped after downing a bottle of vodka and several packets of pills and trying to slit my wrists. To be told another 5 minutes and you wouldn't even be here is quite a sobering thought, though at the time I felt like even more of a failure as I couldn't even get that part right. In hindsight, I now know how very lucky I was. Since that occasion I have struggled and have fought my demons on many occasions, even having what I can only describe as a mini break down years later. Which, as crazy as those sounds, was possibly the best

thing to happen to me, as that was my rock bottom. Since then, I have learned to cope with the downs so much better, I have taken that negative and turned it into a positive. I have helped and inspired others, though more through accident than actually trying to do so. I opened up about my past, no longer afraid, no longer ashamed or embarrassed by it. I am now very open and honest about my experiences and others have found help in that, have found strength from reading about my story, what I went through, how I somehow managed to get through it, how I am still going. They see the similarities and that helps them to see that they too can get through it, though I write down my thoughts and ramblings as a kind of therapy for me, not to help and inspire, by writing this things down I get them off my chest and I also put them out there for everyone to see, meaning I cannot hide from it like I used to do, I hold myself accountable and it forces me to do something about it, I can also see how far I have come when they pop up on my memories. The fact that these have somehow helped and inspired others is just an added accidental bonus.



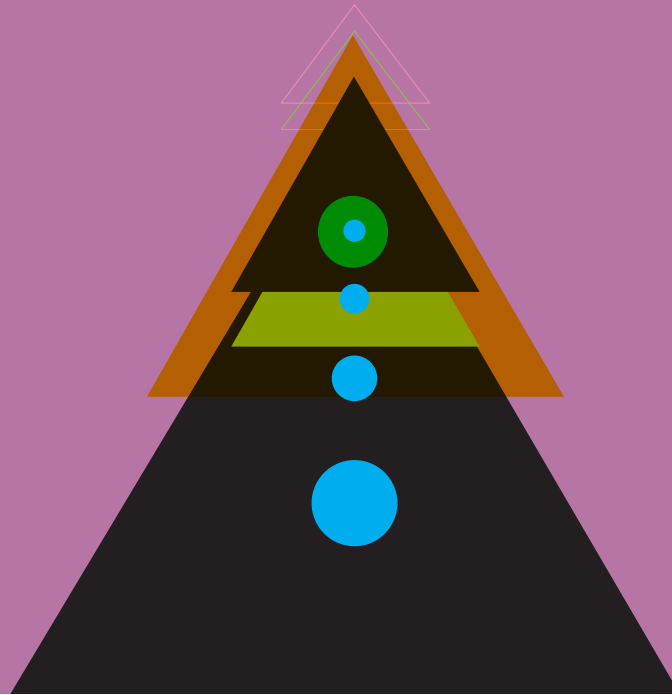
I have also helped a few people over the years, people who were about to kill themselves or were literally in the process of slitting their own wrists. I've managed to talk to them, calm them down and hopefully stop them from making a big mistake. I have been a great listener for people, someone who they can talk to, get help and advice from (if only I could take my own advice), something I have always been very good at. I try and help people in different ways. I am a firm believer in helping others, that if we all help and work together we can accomplish so much more, we can help more, this is why I set up The Red Bench Project, because I have been the person on

both sides of the bench, the one needing help and the one giving help. I have more of an understanding than lots of the professionals out there. But those professionals can help in the ways I can't, so by working together we can help those who need it.

So now I am trying to connect with as many different charities, groups and organisations as I can, trying to see how we can help and promote each other so that people can find and get the help and support that they need.

I am trying to fundraise to buy more benches for those much-needed hotspots, trying to raise awareness of The Red Bench Project so that people understand and actually help, rather than just walking past. The fact that our first bench in South Shields has already been used for its intended purpose just blows my mind and fills me with pride, I am seeing people's attitudes change, people are now willing to talk to strangers, to help them, the empathy is there and that is good to see. The support from people and businesses, especially with money being so tight for people right now, just blows me away. It's sad that this is so badly needed, but it's great that people are getting behind it in the way that they are.





supported by **nearby**

Help save a life, one Red Bench at a time



The aim of The Red Bench Project is to have our Red Benches in suicide hot spots all over the UK.

Use them, sit and chill, clear your head, gather your thoughts.

Maybe sitting there can be a silent way of asking for help.

If you see someone sitting alone, go and check on them, why not sit and chat. It could make all the difference.

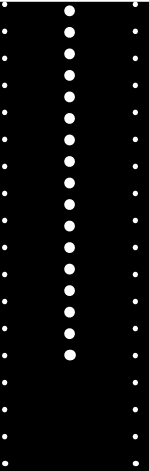
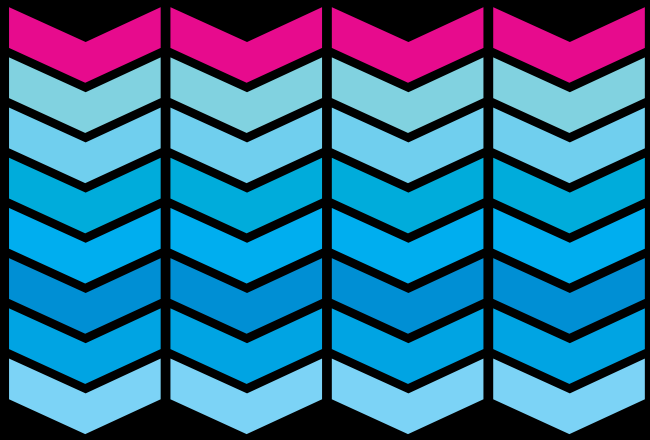
You could even direct them to our website where they can find the help they may need.

A little kindness can go a long way, if we all help each other we can all get through those tough times

If you would like to get involved in any way please get in touch



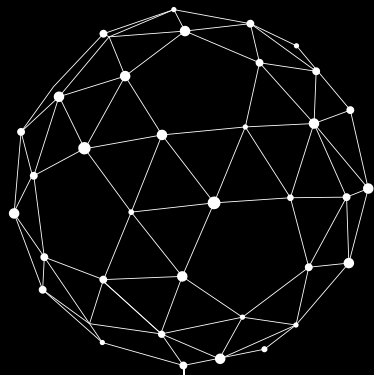
info@theredbenchproject.co.uk



BE

EXCELLENCE

over



ALLEMENT

Walter

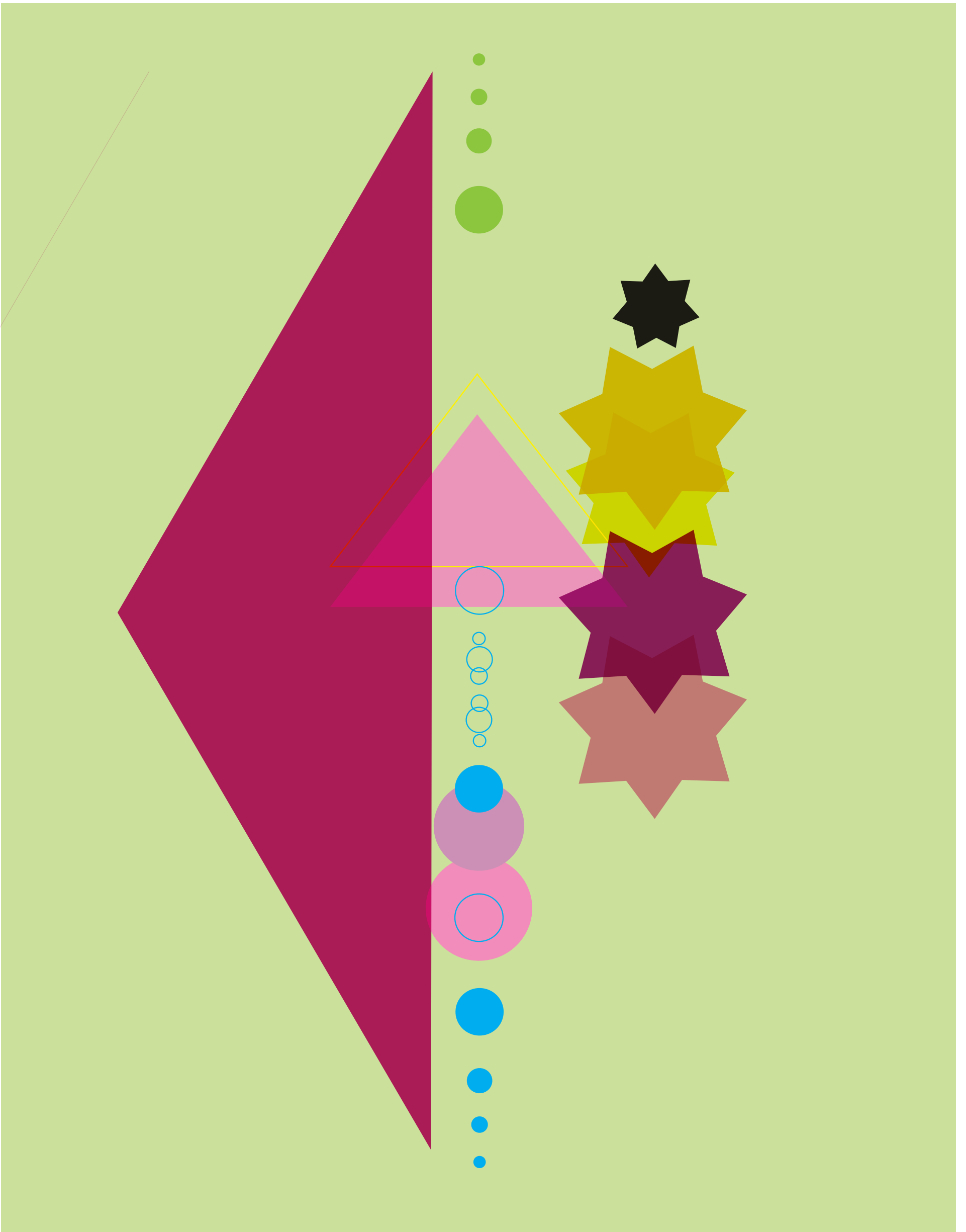
RE-CO-CO
RECOVERY COLLEGE COLLECTIVE

WINTER WORDSEARCH

- | | | |
|----------|------------|---------|
| Acorn | Blanket | Candles |
| Coffee | Cold | Conkers |
| Cosy | Crisp | Dark |
| Earth | Equinox | Gloves |
| Harvest | Latte | |
| Leaves | | |
| Logs | Nature | Puddles |
| Pumpkin | Quilt | Rain |
| Scarf | Stars | Sweater |
| Tea | Television | Trees |
| Walks | Wellies | Windy |
| Woodland | | |

A word search grid with a decorative background of overlapping pink and purple shapes. The grid contains the following letters:

B	X	C	M	O	S	P	P	U	M	P	K	I	N	Y
M	L	A	C	A	R	S	N	U	L	T	U	R	W	W
F	R	A	C	S	A	I	H	Y	D	O	K	H	I	E
H	K	O	N	M	T	R	V	W	A	D	G	Z	N	L
D	R	D	U	K	S	C	S	E	J	L	L	S	D	L
N	L	L	N	B	E	E	T	D	O	S	T	E	Y	I
L	O	O	Z	O	V	T	C	V	R	V	B	W	S	E
X	A	H	C	A	I	A	E	E	N	K	R	A	D	S
O	W	T	E	W	N	S	K	T	I	Q	U	I	L	T
N	A	L	T	D	G	N	I	H	A	T	R	E	E	S
I	L	Y	L	E	O	W	T	V	R	W	O	G	M	L
U	K	E	S	C	A	R	B	L	E	R	U	T	A	N
Q	S	G	W	O	A	E	D	N	A	L	D	O	O	W
E	V	N	L	E	C	V	H	A	R	V	E	S	T	K
C	O	F	F	E	E	X	D	S	W	E	A	T	E	R



COURSES / WORKSHOPS
 COURSES / WORKSHOPS

@ CARLIOL

(Booking required)

- 40 Body Wise
- 40 Cultivating Meaningful Connection
- 41 How to Sleep Well - Workshop
- 41 Introduction to DBT Skills
- 42 Journaling for Beginners
- 43 Loving Me
- 43 Low Impact Exercise
- 44 Men's Group – A Few Good Men
- 44 Moves and Grooves
- 45 Psychological Trauma
- 45 Reducing the Rage
- 46 Spirituality and Recovery
- 47 Tools for Your use to Recover Your Value
- 48 Understanding Medication - Workshop
- 48 Understanding the Experiences of Depression
- 48 Understanding Psychiatry - Workshop
- 49 Wonderful You by Design
- 50 WRAP Awareness
- 50 Yoga for Positive Mental Health (Trauma Informed Yoga)





This course is for anyone who struggles with their body image. Over 4 sessions we look at what can be the cause of body image problems, the effect low body confidence has, and ways to feel more positively about our bodies. Each session will last 2 hours and the course will run over 4 weeks. Look forward to seeing you!

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Day: Tuesday

Date: Weekly for 4 weeks

Cohort 1 – 9th Jan

Cohort 2 – 27 Feb

2

CULTIVATING MEANINGFUL CONNECTION

(based on Atlas of the Heart from the research of Brené Brown)

“Connection is the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard and valued; when they can give and receive without judgement; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship”

This course explores Brené Brown’s three skill sets for Cultivating Meaningful Connection and will help you develop an actionable framework to integrate these skills into your own life and relationships.

Skill set 1 - Developing Grounded Confidence

Skill set 2 - Practicing the Courage to Walk Alongside

Skill set 3 - Practicing Story Stewardship

Time: 1.00pm - 3.00pm

Day: Wednesday

Date: Weekly for 8 weeks from 10th January

Course Facilitator: Claire Robinson

A LESSON FROM MY MOM:

Don't look away. Don't look down.

Don't pretend not to see hurt.

Look people in the eye.

Even when their pain is overwhelming.

And when you're hurting and in pain, find the people who can look you in the eye.

Brené Brown | ATLAS OF THE HEART



3

HOW TO SLEEP WELL - WORKSHOP

We all feel our best after a good night's sleep but it's one of the things that many of us struggle to achieve. If you want to know more about sleep, and some top tips to get a better night's sleep, this is the talk for you!

We will cover -

- Sleep in our modern western society
- Is sleep so important?
- What healthy sleep looks like
- The sleep disorders
- Spielman's model of insomnia
- CBT for insomnia
- Where to get further help and information

Time: 10.00am - 12.30pm

Day: Wednesday

Date: 17th January

Facilitator: Dr Thomas Christodoulides,
Consultant Clinical Psychologist

4

INTRODUCTION TO DBT SKILLS

This is not Dialectical Behavioural Therapy! At ReCoCo we run weekly skills based groups, giving an overview of what DBT is. During each session we will explore and discuss skills that people find helpful in managing their emotions and dealing with distress. Each week we will explore a specific group of DBT skills;

Week 1 – Distress Tolerance Skills

Week 2 – Emotional Regulation Skills

Week 3 – Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

The 3 weeks will repeat continuously to provide as many people as possible with these skills. Mindfulness will also be incorporated into each session.

Time: 10.00am - 12.30pm

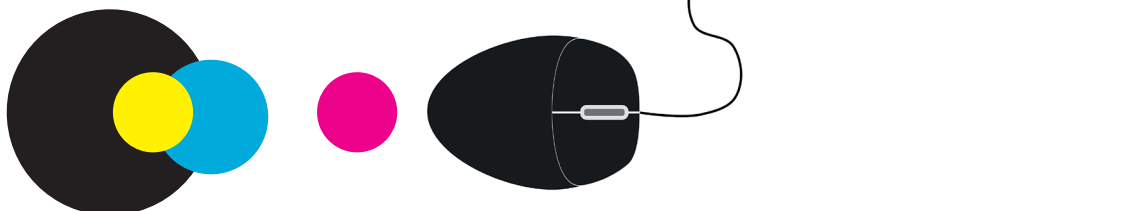
Day: Thursday

Date: Weekly for 3 weeks

Cohort 1 – 11th January

Cohort 2 – 1st February

Cohort 3 – 7th March



JOURNALING FOR BEGINNERS

My name is Steve Watts and I run journaling courses to help people with their wellbeing. This course is designed as an introduction to journaling and its aim is to help you find a method of journaling that works for you.

Over the six weeks of the course Steve will introduce you to different ways of journaling so you will be able to try them all out and decide what works best for you. The approaches to journaling that Steve will share with you include gratitude journaling, morning pages, night pages, mindful journaling, bullet journaling and long and short form journaling.

This course is open to anybody with an interest in journaling. If you have never journaled before, do come and join us to find out more about it. No prior experience is needed. If you are concerned about journaling involving lots of writing, come along and I will show you a quick way into journaling without the need to write pages. If you have been journaling for some time do join us as well to share your experiences and learn some new approaches. The sessions are informal with lots of opportunities to talk and share your experiences of journaling as you progress through the course.

The course is supported by research into the benefits of journaling and the findings of the research will be shared with you. In particular, the research shows that by journaling regularly you experience a range of benefits including greater clarity in your thinking, better sleep, a changed mindset, less anxiety and greater positivity.

The course is also built on the experiences of previous students that Steve has tutored who all confirm the benefits that starting to journal has had for them. Many state that the benefits begin quickly once you start to journal regularly.

A previous student commented:

'Taking part in Steve's journaling course has inspired me to keep a regular record of my thoughts and feelings. By keeping a journal I have been able to reduce lots of my negative thoughts and recognise how many positive elements there are in my life. I read back my writing regularly and it's great to see how far I have come in terms of my mental health. Since I began journaling using the skills I learned from Steve I've been through an enlightening period of self-reflection.'

Come and join Steve on a journey to better wellbeing and learn how to 'ink it not think it.'

Time: 11.00am - 1.00pm

Day: Thursday

Date: Weekly for 6 weeks from 11th January

Course Facilitator: Steve Watts



6

LOVING ME

"Loving me" - loving ourselves is exactly what it sounds like.

By accepting our own flaws and limitations, our weaknesses and things we don't like about ourselves, learning to love ourselves in all aspects of our being. Recognising our strengths and achievements and celebrating them!

We will cover "Loving me"
"Accepting me"
"Self Confidence"
"Assertive me"

Time: 1.00pm - 3.00pm

Day: Wednesday

Date: Weekly for 4 weeks

Cohort 1 - 10th January

Cohort 2 - 28th February

Course Leader: Gemma Muldowney

7

LOW IMPACT EXERCISE

You don't need to be fit to attend this class, it's for anyone that wants to improve their fitness.

Natalie starts with a gentle warm up and some of the class is delivered seated. It's at a steady pace with clear instructions. The pace picks up in the second half but Natalie adapts her exercises to accommodate each person's level of fitness so that everyone can join in....how perfect!

So, get fit, have fun and enjoy Natalie's wicked choice of music!

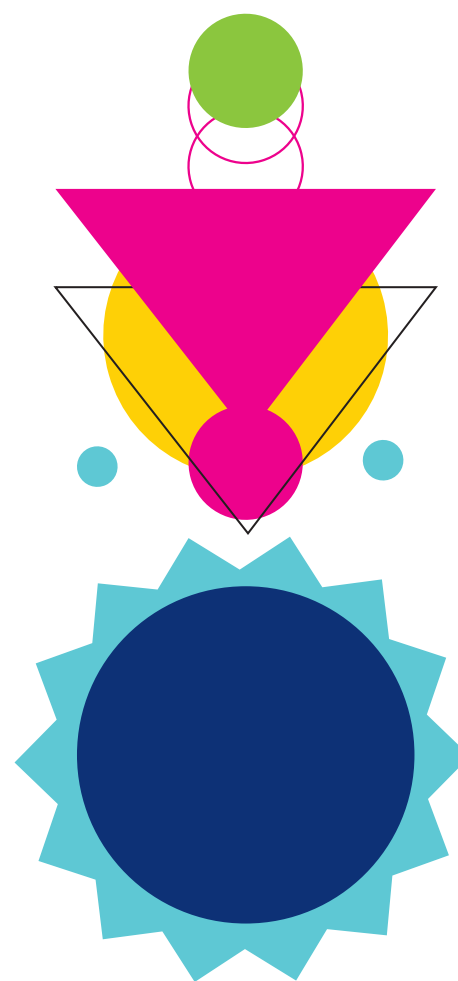
Booked in 4 week blocks - book 1 week or all 4. (NB advertised on a monthly basis with limited spaces)

Time: 11.00am - 11.45am

Day: Tuesday

Date: Weekly from 9th January

Course Facilitator: Natalie Bell



MEN'S GROUP – A FEW GOOD MEN

8

"Hello" – sometimes that's all it takes to spark a conversation. Seems so simple doesn't it?

Just making that connection, that's all it takes.

In this friendly support session for men you will have the opportunity to chat about things that will be student and facilitator led that everyone can relate to.

The more you talk the better everything gets.

Time: 1.30pm - 3.00pm

Day: Tuesday

Date: Weekly for 4 weeks

Cohort 1 – 9th January

Cohort 2 – 6th February

Course Facilitator: Stuart Mitchell

MOVES AND GROOVES – EXERCISE

9

Have you been thinking about upping the ante with your fitness regime? Then Moves and Grooves, a 45 minute, high intensity, aerobic class, is the place for you. You'll need plenty of stamina to attend. As the title suggests you'll be moving and grooving to Natalie's iconic choice of music along with her enthusiastic instruction. The sessions will use handheld weights in parts (Please note if you have any back or knee issues then it won't be suitable for you).

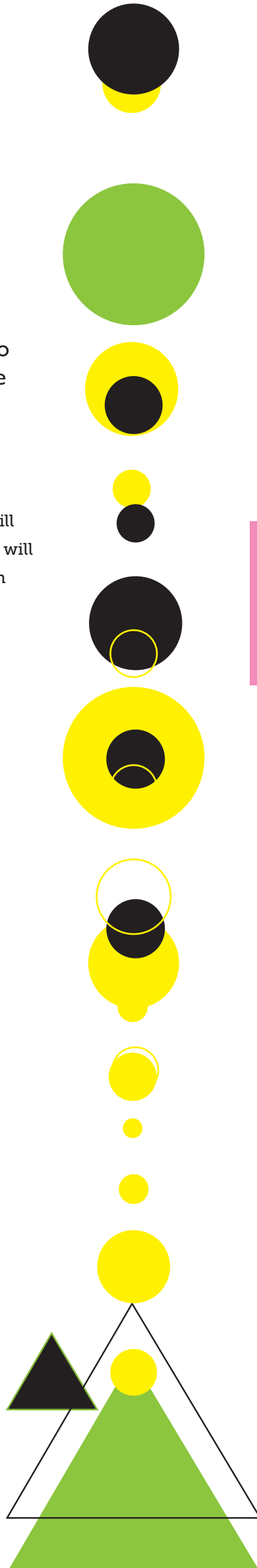
Booked in 4 week blocks – book 1 week or all 4. (NB advertised on a monthly basis with limited spaces)

Time: 12.00pm - 12.45pm

Day: Tuesday

Date: Weekly from 9th January

Course Facilitator: Natalie Bell



10

PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA

Hi, my name is Gayl McCain I have lived experience of psychological trauma. I studied psychological trauma at Chester University and trained to be a group work practitioner. My goal was to work with groups to help them understand trauma and the impact it may have.

This course is Psycho- Educational. Debunking myths using neuroscience: beginning to consider what belongs where and to whom; recognising unhelpful positions and patterns with regards to trauma.

- Reduce isolation, feelings of alienation and shame
- Encourage free flowing discussion amongst students
- Increase understanding of how trauma affects the brain, body and behaviours
- Recognise unconscious positions they take up in relationships that may perpetuate unhelpful behaviour
- Learn techniques that may relieve or help manage the symptoms of psychological trauma, such as anxiety, flashbacks/ nightmares, anger, depression, guilt and shame

Over the 8 week duration of the course:

We will define what psychological trauma is as well as exploring neuroscience looking at impact trauma has on the working of the brain.

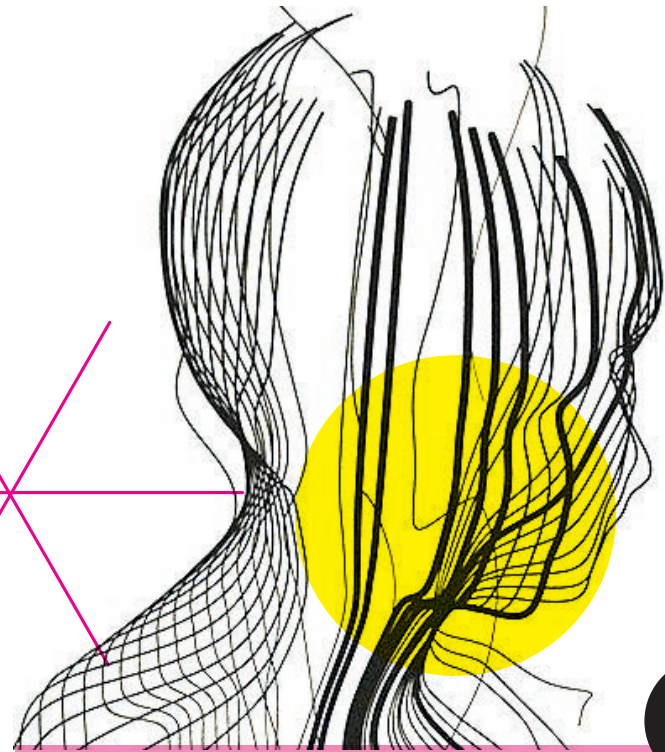
- Traumatic memory: How the brain processes traumatic memories
- How emotions can impact trauma. Overview of good and bad emotions
- Anger, Shame and Guilt
- Depression and low mood
- Post- Traumatic Growth and Resilience:
- Addiction and Coping skills

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Day: Tuesday

Date: Weekly for 8 weeks from 9th January

Course Facilitator: Gayl McCain



11

REDUCING THE RAGE

Everyone gets angry or frustrated. It is a totally normal and healthy emotion, particularly in times like this.

Sometimes though, our anger can get away from us and begin to take over. If anger plays a larger role in your life than you want it to, this course may be for you. Whether you get angry at the smallest things, your rage is an uncontrollable monster, or find it difficult to express your anger in a healthy way, this course may help in getting your anger back under control.

Everyone is welcome to this course, however, please be mindful that this course can be emotionally challenging and triggering. We will discuss issues around trauma and shame which can be difficult if you are currently earlier on in your recovery journey. This class may be a process of self-discovery through skills and knowledge. Let's get 'a'had a'the rage.

Participants must have already completed a WRAP Awareness or Introduction to DBT Skills course within ReCoCo before signing up for Reducing the Rage.

Time: 1.00pm - 3.00pm

Day: Thursday

Date: Weekly for 5 weeks

Cohort 1 – 11th January

Cohort 2 – 29th February

Course Leader: Megan Shaftoe

SPIRITUALITY AND RECOVERY

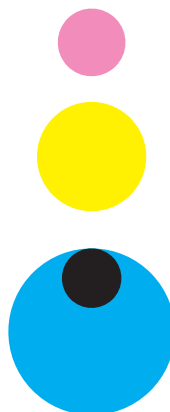
This five week course will provide an opportunity to explore in a supportive group how addressing our spiritual needs can help our mental well-being. How do we feed our spirits? How can we best deal with the past and look forward to the future? We'll seek to explore the concepts of joy, forgiveness, spirituality, faith, hope, and love. This is for everybody whether religious or not ...

Time: 1.00pm - 3.00pm

Day: Thursday

Dates: Weekly for 5 weeks starting 29 February

Course Facilitator: Clare Connors



14

TOOLS TO TAKE BACK YOUR VALUE

We are all worthy as human beings but recognising our own self-worth is something that we often overlook. Come and learn the solution to get the courage to be yourself.

Scheduled for groups of students really prepared and willing to change:

In each of the connected sessions you learn one of 5 connected tools, TO USE with/for your value, to handle your emotions.

Previous participants of "Tools to" and "Take Hold of Your Emotions" are welcome to join and refresh, as the content is the same at heart.

You will learn

- a) New meanings of usually used words;
- b) How to separate relative values from absolute values;
- c) How to keep a cool head. Key word: anger
- d) How to look at yourself with positive eyes, from absolute value;
- e) Some basics in handling relationships;
- f) What are the "Mental Tools", and how and when to use them;
- g) How to ask yourself about yourself;
- h) Facts about your body, which few are aware of.

YOU WILL HAVE TO LOOK VERY DEEP INTO YOURSELF:

This is emotionally challenging.

It is advised to be in good shape for the whole course.

The presentation is in discussion/Q & A style from both sides.

In some sessions you are asked to answer a few questions in writing (to break the ice or get started).

'Human: In Centre' is the provider of this course. Walter Morauf has over 40 years of experience in dealing with emotional problems of others.

The heart is the centre of body and SOUL!
This is the core of value of the human.

Time: 10.30am - 12.30pm

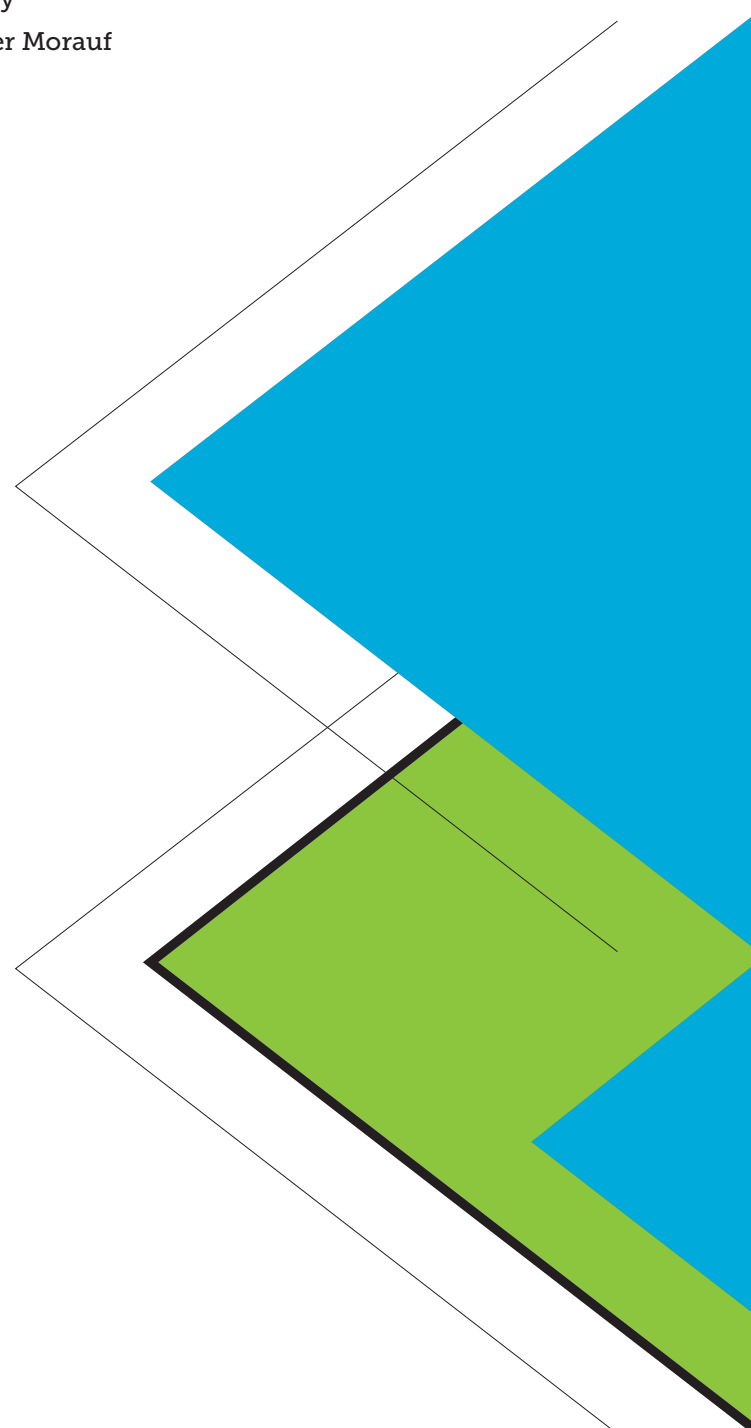
Day: Wednesday

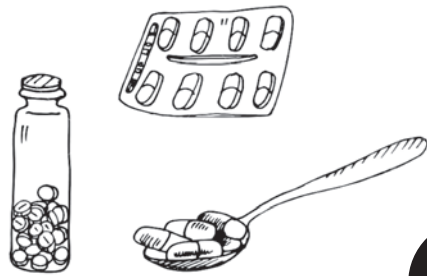
Date: Weekly for 5 Weeks

Cohort 1 – 10th January

Cohort 2 – 28th February

Course Facilitator: Walter Morauf





15

UNDERSTANDING MEDICATION

This two hour workshop explores the various facets of taking medication that are important to you. 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.

Date and Time: TBC

Workshop Facilitator: Sanjay Gohil

16

UNDERSTANDING EXPERIENCES OF DEPRESSION

This course explores the various dimensions to the experience of depression. Topics will include changes to emotions and moods, the bodily aspects of depression, changes to interpersonal relations and difficulties performing everyday tasks. Our focus will be on lived experience exploring the experiences of depression through engaging with first person testimony.

The course will provide a range of ways to understand experiences of depression and give you opportunities over a number of weeks to discuss and reflect on forms of recovery.

Time: 1.00pm - 3.00pm

Day: Thursday

Date: Weekly for 4 weeks starting 1st February

Course Facilitator: Ben Smith

17

UNDERSTANDING PSYCHIATRY

The session will initially describe the approach taken by psychiatrists in assessing, understanding and treating mental disorders. It will briefly include 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 into 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.

Time: 1.00pm - 3.00pm

Day: Tuesday

Date: 6th February

Workshop Facilitator: Dr Isobel Cane



18

WONDERFUL YOU BY DESIGN

This is a collaboration with Northumbria University, ReCoCo and Chilli-Studios.

Wonderful You by Design offers students the opportunity to amalgamate a new understanding of their mental health lived experiences with their Recovery Journey.

Alongside this, students will learn all about design methods and mindsets. This will enable students to design a sweatshirt that encompasses their own recovery.

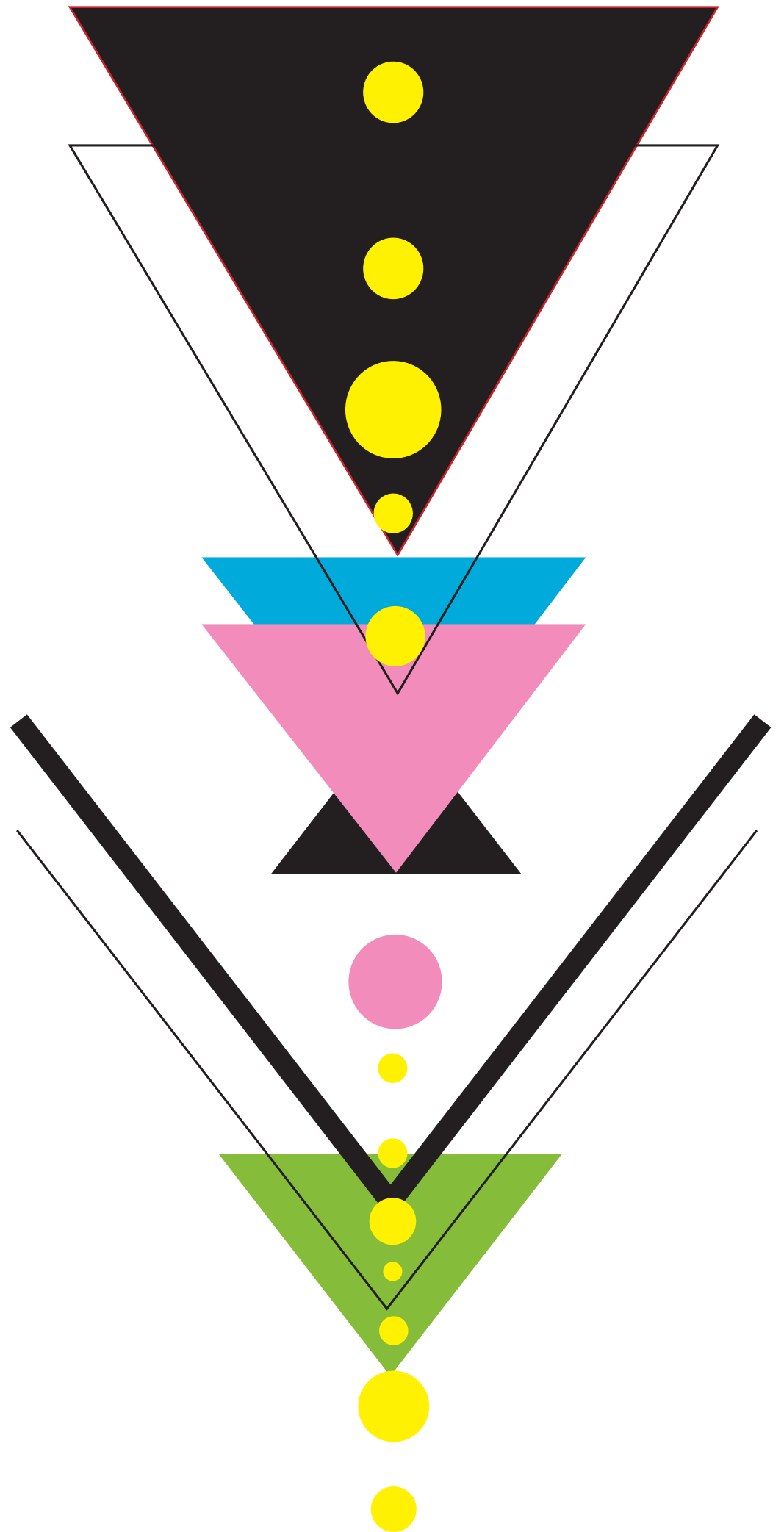
During the course we will explore what mental health means to you, help build confidence, self-esteem and offer new learning opportunities. This all culminates in students creating their own sweatshirt which represents their own recovery journey. This will include some screen printing tutorials from Chilli-Studios and your personalised sweatshirt to take home at no cost to students.

Time: 2.30pm - 4.00pm

Day: Monday

Dates: Weekly for 6 weeks starting 8th January

Course Facilitator: Alex Tinning



19

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 behaviors
- 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 opportunities to bounce ideas off like-minded people.

We recommend WRAP for all of our students.

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

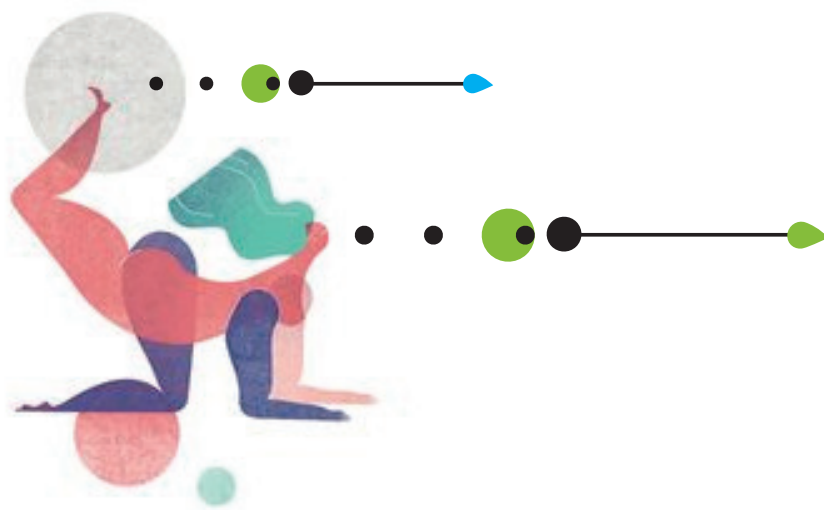
Day: Wednesday

Dates: Weekly for 3 weeks

Cohort 1 – 10th January

Cohort 2 – 31st January

Cohort 3 – 28th February



20

YOGA FOR POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH (TRAUMA INFORMED YOGA)

A gentle and mindful trauma-informed yoga class that builds a sense of connection to the self. Giving you a choice about what feels right for your body and time to notice whilst positively affecting your emotional and mental health.

Everyone is welcome, from beginners with limited movement to those interested in the mind-body connection and mental health.

The focus of the classes will be moving and breathing to improve mental health, focusing on anxiety and depression.

- There is no pressure to attend the full 4 classes, and you're welcome to leave the class at any time.

- There's no touch or adjustments made by the teacher, and yoga mats are provided.

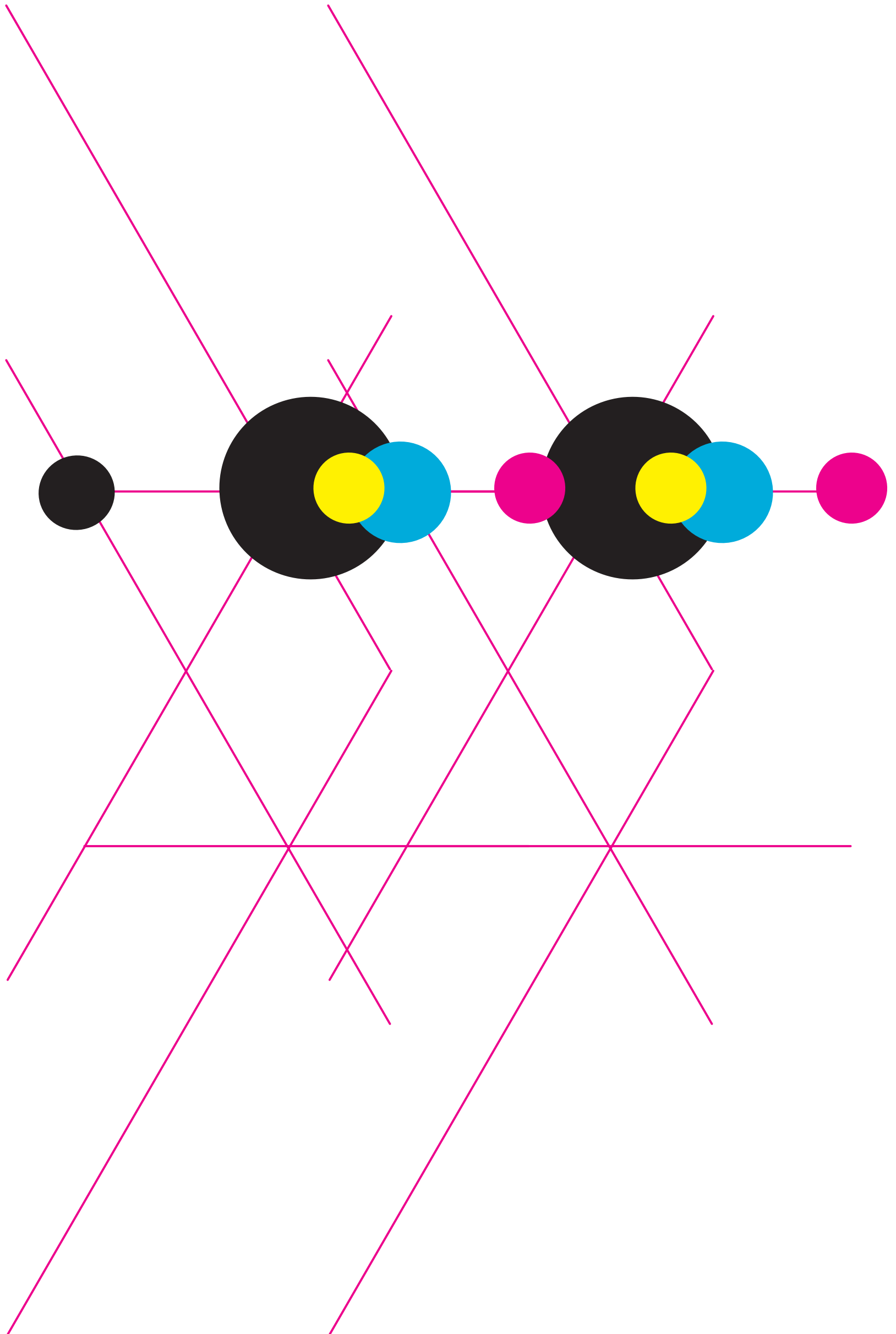
- It's good to wear comfy clothes you feel relaxed in. Not tight.

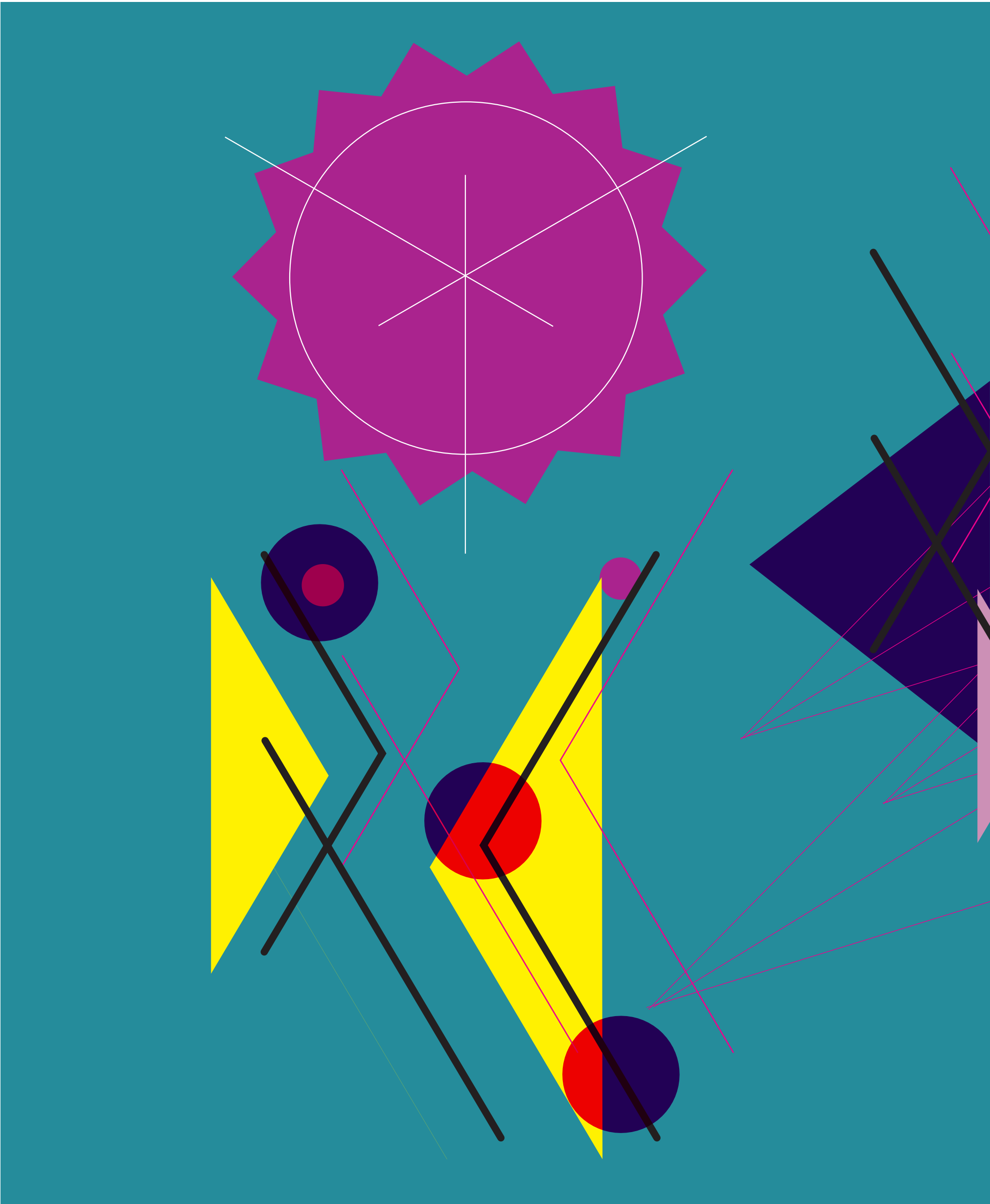
Time: 11.00 am - 12.00 pm

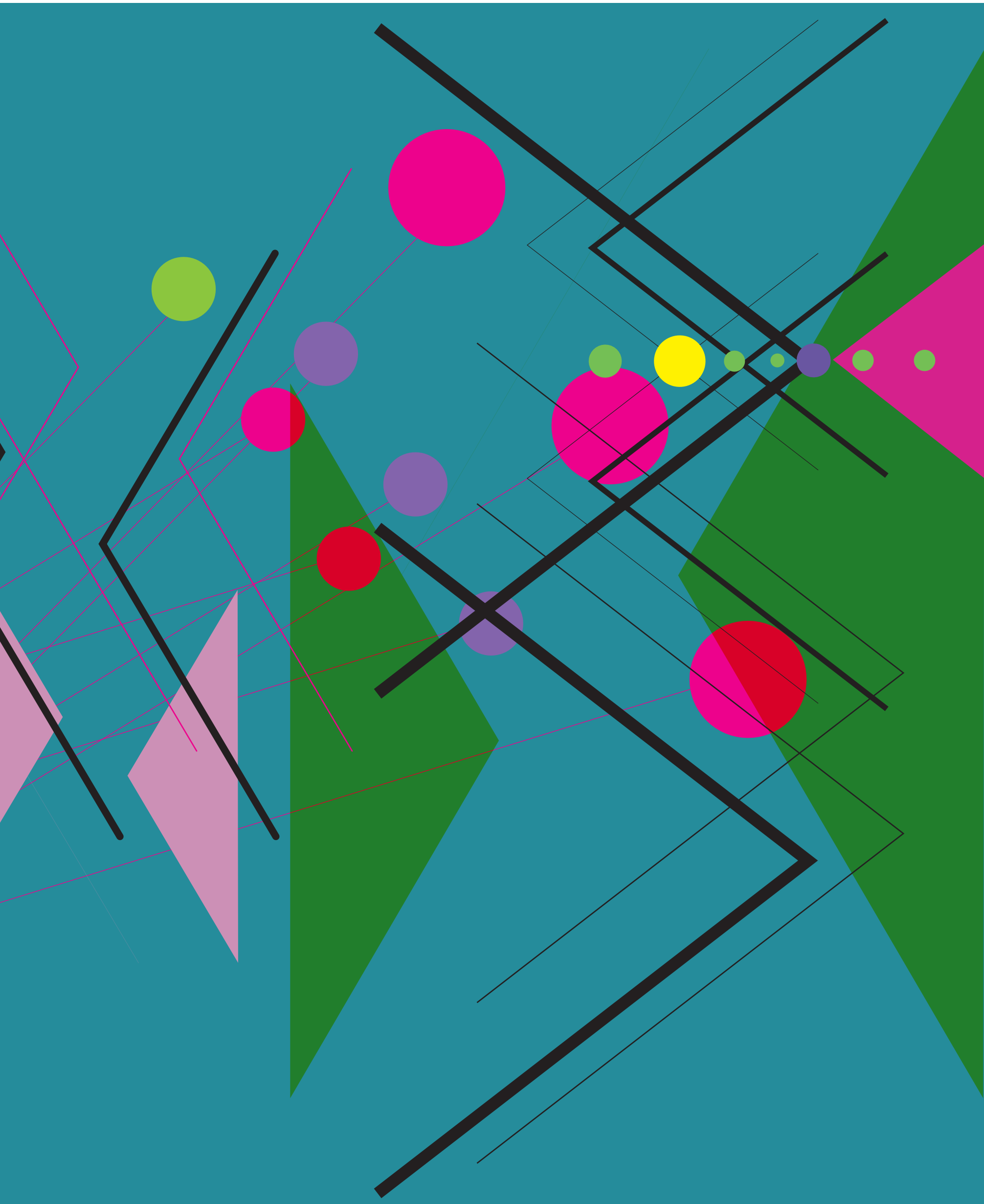
Day: Thursday

Dates: Weekly for 4 weeks starting 7th March

Course Facilitator: Lorna Evans

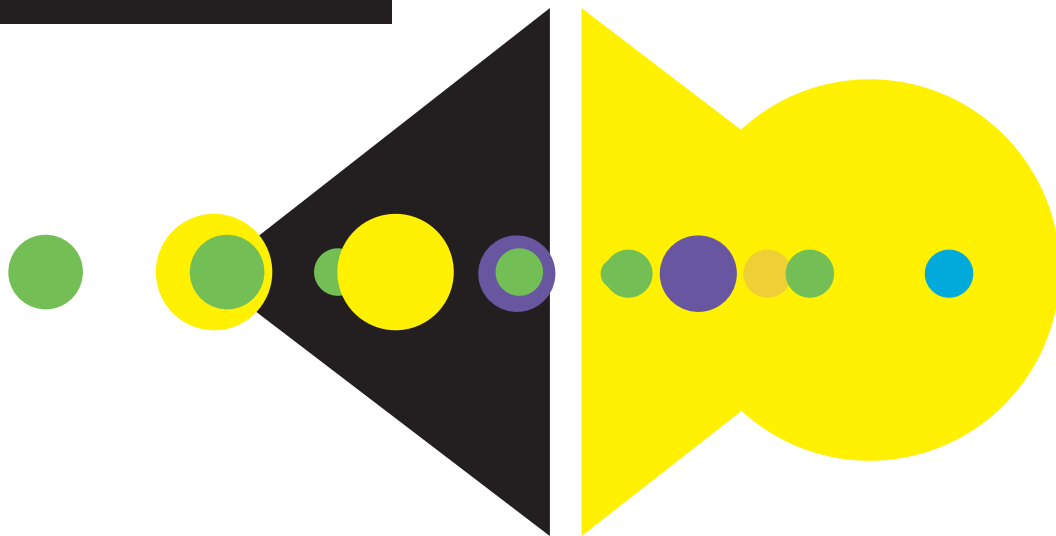






DROP-INS AND GROUPS

@ CARLIOL



- 55 Acupuncture
- 56 A Walk in the Park
- 56 Breaking Bad Habits (Drug and Alcohol Support Group)
- 56 Carers Support Group
- 56 Creative Wellness & Mindful Modelling
- 57 Creative Writing
- 58 Dinnertime Donk
- 58 Drop-by
- 58 New Students' Drop-by
- 59 Geek Group
- 59 Just Jamming
- 60 LGBT Group
- 60 Mindful Therapies Bitesize
- 61 Music Appreciation Society
- 61 Music Therapy
- 62 Self-Harm Awareness and Support
- 62 She Sings Well
- 62 Tai Chi
- 63 Unusual Experiences Group
- 63 Women's Group

1

ACUPUNCTURE

NADA Social – Weekly Acupuncture Sessions for Trauma, Anxiety, Depression and Addiction

The NADA protocol is a 5-point acupuncture treatment that uses acupuncture points on the ears to treat a wide range of conditions including trauma, anxiety and depression. It was developed in the 1970s at the Lincoln Memorial Hospital in New York to help people with addiction issues to manage trauma, anxiety, depression, irritability and cravings during recovery.

Since its development, the NADA protocol has been used to treat trauma and PTSD with NADA clinics set up in the wake of the 9/11 Twin Towers attack and more recently following the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017. Reports showed that the acupuncture helped with sleep, anxiety, grief and generally enabled people to feel a sense of calm and wellbeing. It also brought communities together as people sat quietly in a group all having acupuncture treatment for a common cause.

The NADA protocol is a non-verbal approach to healing and an effective method of resetting the nervous system that works best in group settings. There is no appointment necessary, no intake and no need to talk of past experiences.

The process involves five sterile, single-use needles that are gently inserted into the ears and left for approximately 30-45 minutes. The outer ear acts like a switchboard that sends impulses to the brain and stimulates the release of endorphins, lowers stress and induces relaxation.

During this time, people may fall asleep, experience a meditative state or just feel calm, relaxed and more grounded.



NORTH EAST ACUPUNCTURE PROJECT

The five ear points used:

- (1) **Sympathetic Point** – calms the nervous system and helps with overall relaxation.
- (2) **Shen Men / "Spirit Gate"** – reduces anxiety and nervousness.
- (3) **Kidney Point** – for calming fears and healing internal organs.
- (4) **Liver Point** – for detoxification, blood purification, and to quell aggression.
- (5) **Lung Point** – promotes deeper breathing and helps clients let go of grief.

The North East Acupuncture Project will also be offering reduced cost acupuncture at ReCoCo from Monday 8th January (10.00-5.00pm). Treatments are priced at £20 for students and £30 for non-students. Booking required. Please visit www.neap.org.uk for more info.

NADA Social - Free drop in sessions:

Time: 10.00 am - 11.30 am

Day: Wednesday

Date: Weekly from 10th January

Facilitator: Jane Eaglesham

2

A WALK IN THE PARKS

Newcastle

Gentle, friendly walks take place every Monday morning at Leazes Park. The walks end with a cuppa and a chat. We meet at the hut at the top of the lake. Make sure you wrap up warm.

Time: 12.00pm - 2.00pm

Day: Monday

Date: Weekly from 8th January

Facilitators: Steve O'Driscoll & John Horgan

Gateshead

We mirror these walks in Saltwell Park, Gateshead but run them a little earlier. Sean ends the walks with a cuppa and a chat. Meet at ReCoCo Retreat near the boating lake.

Time: 11.00am - 1.00pm

Day: Monday

Date: Weekly from 8th January

Facilitator: Sean Curtin

3

BREAKING BAD HABITS (DRUG AND ALCOHOL SUPPORT GROUP)

We would like to invite students to our Drug and Alcohol support group. It is important to say this is not a therapeutic intervention programme. This is a peer led support group for people who are currently experiencing or have in the past experienced issues with drugs or alcohol.

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Day: Thursday

Date: Fortnightly starting 11th January

Facilitators: Steve O'Driscoll & John Horgan

4

CARERS SUPPORT GROUP

An informal friendly get together where you can chat about what it's like to look after someone and give support to each other. Have your own needs recognised and understood. Get information about local services and support. Share ideas on looking after yourself and managing your caring role. A safe, supportive and non-judgmental group for carers.

Time: 1.00pm - 2.00pm

Day: First Tuesday of the month (term time only)

Starting 6th February

Facilitators: Diane Sandford and Wendy Ritchie

5

CREATIVE WELLNESS & MINDFUL MODELLING

Ever wanted to try your hand at drawing, painting or sculpture? Come and give it a go at our weekly art group. We have a variety of materials and ideas to get your creative juices flowing - no prior experience needed! Our sessions are flexible and very much user led, which means you are welcome to try anything that inspires you.

Developing creative skills can really boost your emotional wellbeing and can often become a valuable step on your journey to recovery. This group offers students a relaxed environment in which to try out new things, share ideas and just enjoy the process of creating something beautiful. The focus is on having fun, increasing self-confidence, and making a mess!

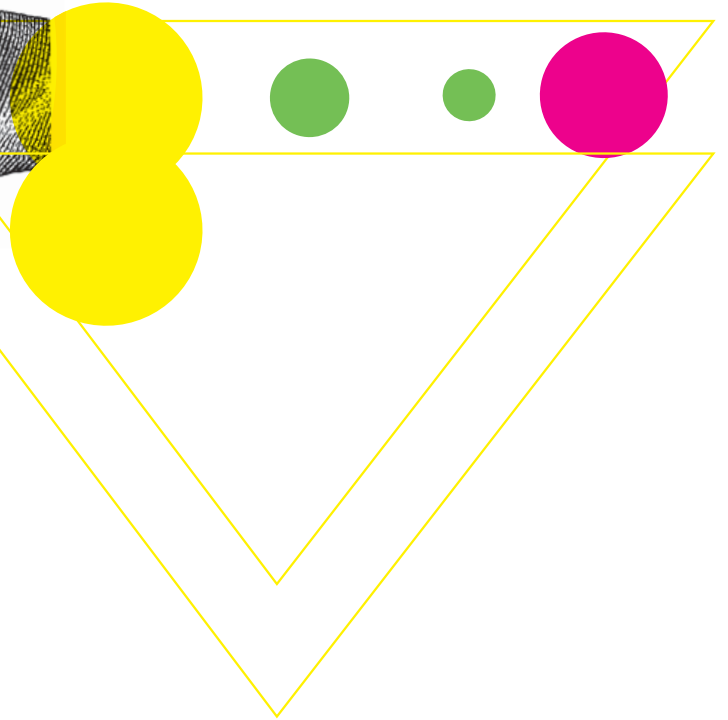
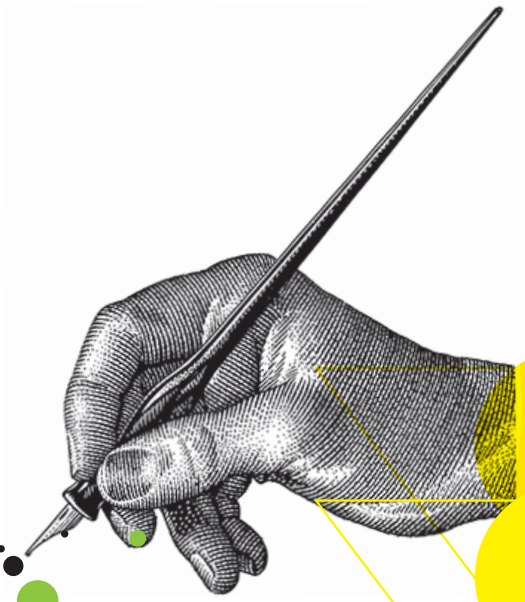
If making modelling kits is more your thing, we have a mindful modelling table set up. You'll need to bring your own kits but we will provide tea or coffee and friendship. Mark will be there to offer help and encouragement on your model making journey.

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Day: Thursday

Date: Weekly from 11th January

Facilitators: ReCoCo Therapeutic Enablers and Volunteers

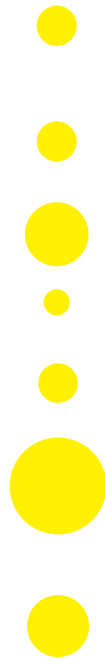


6

CREATIVE WRITING

This spectacular creative writing group will broaden your creative writing capabilities. With poetry, stories and more. It's a drop by, folk don't have to attend every session and it's a great relaxing group where people can connect with each other.

Time: 11.00am - 1.00pm
Day: Wednesday
Date: Weekly from 10th January
Lead by: David Kipping



7

DINNERTIME DONK

Oi Oi! Fancy a bit of BOUNCE to liven up your lunchtime?

Feel the physicality to a good old Charva jump about. Raving is good for the soul. 3 songs to lose your head to, as energetically or sedately as you like, with some breathing exercise before and after.

Dancing is known to have multiple health benefits; Boosts brain activity, improves flexibility, reduces stress, improves heart health and increases energy, as well as fosters connection between you and your fellow ravers.

It's OK if you find dancing embarrassing. Most of us do. Embarrassment is just fear of being judged. If you can overcome embarrassment, you can overcome FEAR.

www.everydayhealth.com/fitness-pictures/health-benefits-of-dance.aspx

Time: 12.15pm - 12.30pm
Day: Thursday
Date: Weekly from 11th January

8

DROP-BY

We have an informal, facilitated, drop-by each week where people can come along and have a chat with other students. Get to know each other, connect and learn more about ReCoCo. This is a good opportunity for students to meet each other as well as finding out from other students what opportunities might be right for you.

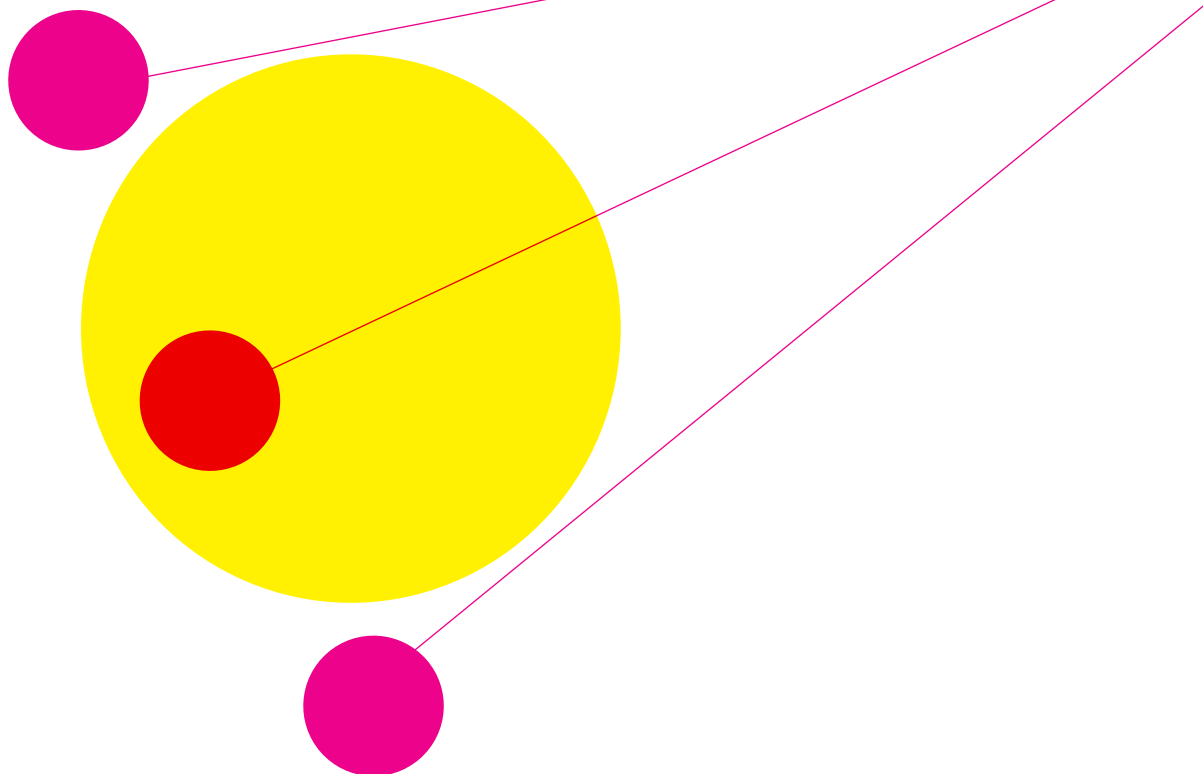
Time: 1.00pm - 3.00pm
Day: Wednesday
Dates: Weekly starting Wednesday 10th January

9

(NEW STUDENTS') DROP-BY

We also have an informal, facilitated, drop-by each week for new students that have just enrolled with us. This is the perfect opportunity to meet and connect with other 'newbies'. It's a chance to chat to folk and share the experience of coming along to ReCoCo.

Time: 1.00pm - 3.00pm
Day: Thursday
Dates: Weekly starting Thursday 11th January
Facilitator: Wendy Ritchie and ReCoCo volunteers



10

GEEK GROUP

Safe space to get ya geek on!!

A group for like-minded people to explore all things wonderful and geeky.

Board games, console gaming, movies, quizzes, trivia, comic books, sci-fi and more.

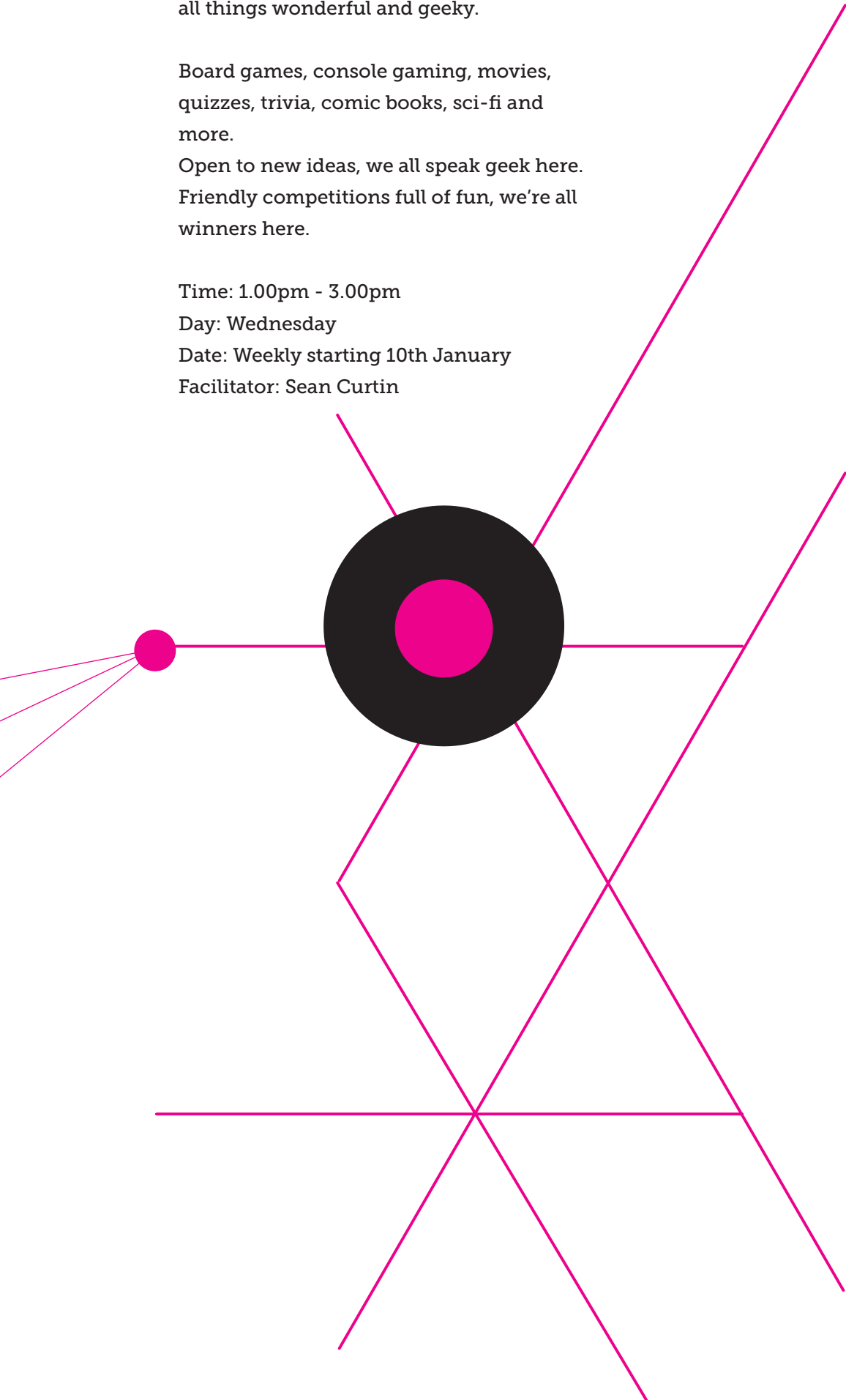
Open to new ideas, we all speak geek here. Friendly competitions full of fun, we're all winners here.

Time: 1.00pm - 3.00pm

Day: Wednesday

Date: Weekly starting 10th January

Facilitator: Sean Curtin



11

JUST JAMMING

Informal music session with guitar, vocal and percussion lessons. Feel free to bring along your own instruments. All genres of music are welcome. Music is a fabulous wellness tool and performing with others can be a great opportunity to develop this tool.

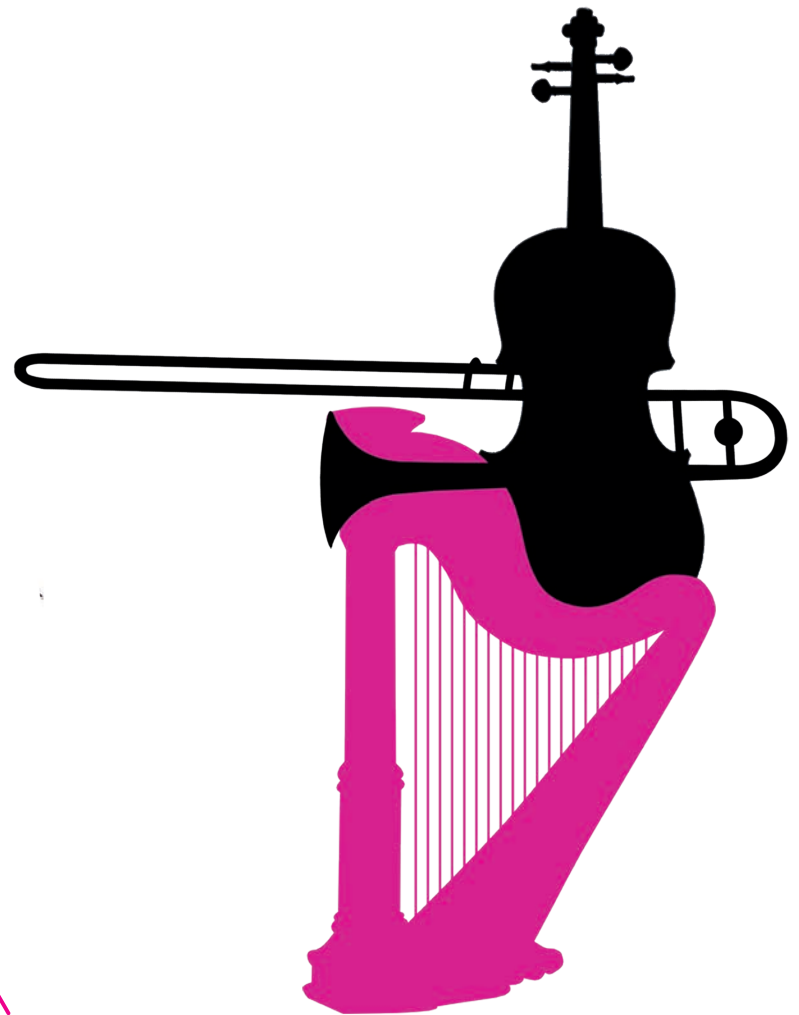
Limited one to one sessions available upon request. it might get loud!!

Time 1.00pm - 2.00pm

Day: Thursday

Date: Weekly from 11th January

Facilitator: Phil Guthrie and Paddy Villiers-Stewart



LGBT GROUP

12

Come and meet up in a safe space giving LGBT folk the opportunity to share experiences, issues and help support one another.

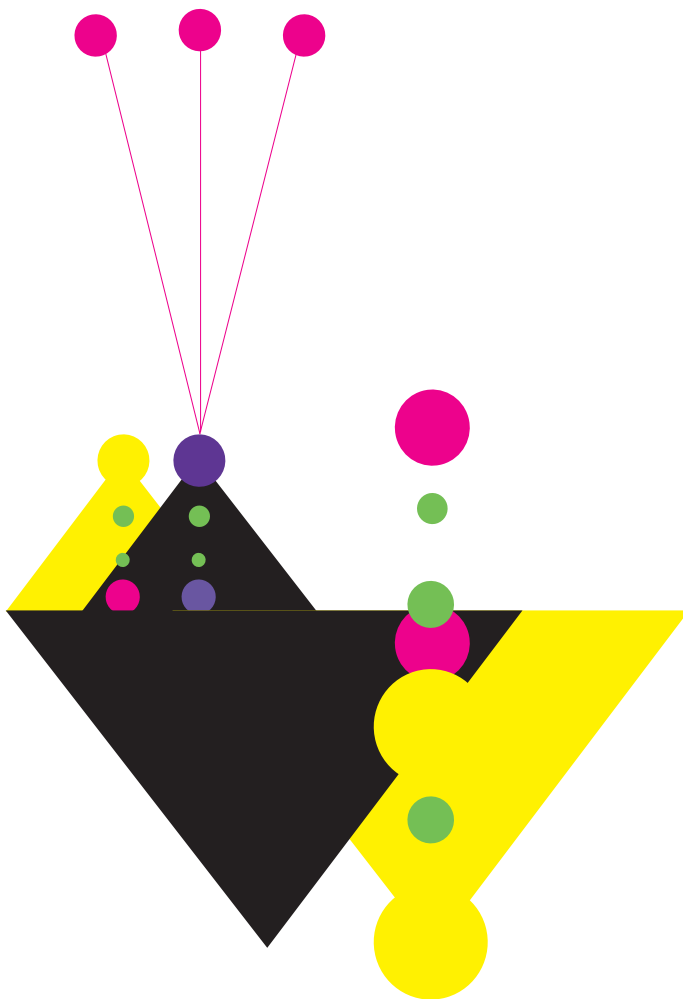
The group's aims will be discussed and identified by the facilitator and students.

Time: 1.00pm - 2.00pm

Day: Thursday

Dates: Monthly on 2nd Thursday of the month starting 11th January

Facilitator: Wendy Ritchie



13

MINDFUL THERAPIES' MINDFULNESS WITH ATTITUDE: BITESIZE

We will be exploring the attitudes of mindfulness and how we can bring them into our meditation practice and our everyday lives.

Two split half hour sessions per week

January

9 and 11 non-striving
16 and 18 - let it go
23 and 25 - generosity

February

30 (Jan) and 1 - patience
6 and 8 - trust
13 and 15 - intention setting
*19 February half term - closed
27 and 29 - beginners mind

March

5 and 7 - non-judgement
12 and 14 - gratitude
19 and 21 - acceptance
26 and 28 - summary and questions

Time: 12.30pm - 1.00pm

Day: Tuesday & Thursday

Dates: Starting from 9 January

Facilitators:

Victoria Backhouse and Mark Sidney from Mindful Therapies.

*During half term week, sessions will be available at Mindful Therapies, located just up the street at 15 Carliol Square, on the 1st floor. These will be at the same times and with the same format, but with additional themes. Please contact info@mindfultherapies.org.uk for further information.

MUSIC APPRECIATION SOCIETY

14

Music can represent many emotions and have many different moods. It is for the old and young and it is timeless.

As are the facilitators of the music appreciation society, one is young, the other is quite old, but we share a love of music. It has been there through the good times and the bad times. It can also represent social changes and a whole gamut of different emotions.

We come together once a fortnight to listen to our favourite songs, artist or genre and discuss what a particular song means to us. We hope to have a ReCoCo playlist at the end of each term. We also ask people to announce what the track is before playing, as we are aware that music can be a trigger for people. The group will listen to anything - all we ask is come along and enjoy.....

Be there or be square.....
Hope to see you there
John

Time: 3.00pm - 5.00pm
Day: Thursday
Dates: Fortnightly from 11th
Facilitator: John Horgan

MUSIC THERAPY

15

Sometimes the words are not enough to express what's inside us – music offers a unique way to explore feelings and creativity and experience a sense of connection with ourselves and others. Every one of us is musical - with the beating of our heartbeat, melody of our speech and rhythm of our walking. Whilst an individual session can help to experience your individual musicality, group sessions can be helpful as a means of exploring relationships and be a source of mutual support, reducing isolation and leading to greater self-understanding. For drop-in sessions there is no need to book. Just turn up and enjoy!

One to one sessions are also available but these are limited and only available by appointment. Please email karen@recoverycoco.com to book.

Time: 11.00am - 12.00pm

Day: Thursday

Date: Weekly from 11th January

Course Therapist: Paddy Villiers-Stewart,
a Nordoff Robbins Music Therapist



16

SELF-HARM AWARENESS WORKSHOP & SUPPORT

The sessions are led by Steve O`Driscoll who self-harmed for over 20 years and managed to overcome his problems and now shares his experiences to help and support others and also facilitates a group in Newcastle to support people who self-harm.

The session covers:

- What is self-harm?
- Types of self-harm.
- Who self-harms?
- What makes people self-harm?
- How does it feel?
- Are people who do mentally ill?
- Signs to look out for.
- Coping techniques.
- Treatment.
- Self-help.
- What if you don't get help?
- How you support a person.
- Self-harm first aid kit.
- Ongoing peer support.

Steve will also share his journey of recovery.

The sessions are very relaxed and there is plenty of opportunity to ask those unanswered questions around a subject that is still taboo to many in society.

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Day: Thursday

Dates: Fortnightly, starting 18th January

Facilitators: Steve O`Driscoll and John Horgan

17

SHE SINGS WELL

This is a weekly singing group for women. We start the sessions off with some coaching from Keren, who is a trained singing instructor. Come along and learn how to sing or just improve on the singing skills you already have.

Singing together can be a powerful experience. Feel the difference a song can make to your body, emotions and memory. Bond with a song. The more you sing the better it gets, something to sing about!

Time: 11.00am - 12.00pm

Day: Thursday

Dates: Weekly, from 11th January

Facilitator: Keren Banning

18

TAI CHI

Open your mind, open your heart, be curious

Tai Chi is a way of life that has been practiced by the Chinese for thousands of years. It focuses on mindful, slow and flowing movements and correct, natural breathing techniques. Promoting physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing. The key virtues to practice are patience and to enjoy the journey.

Tai Chi is accessible to people of all ages and abilities and is easy to follow, so come and embark on the journey with us.

Time: 2.00pm - 3.00pm

Day: Tuesday

Dates: Weekly from 9th January

Facilitator: Sandra Hutton

19

UNUSUAL EXPERIENCES GROUP

Hi, Graham here, I facilitate the Unusual Experience Group, I have extensive lived experience and have been running the group for quite a while now as a Therapeutic Enabler for ReCoCo. I come across people from all walks of life and backgrounds attending. Most of us have the shared experience of psychosis, hear voices or have unusual beliefs and thoughts. I try to make the group as informal as I can to put people at ease and to be as informative as possible. There is a lot of stigma in society today with people who have experienced these symptoms, but whatever society or other people throw at us we are all the same human beings who have encountered something that one in a hundred face every day.

There is no bias, discrimination or judgement in the group. If you are interested, as long as you are enrolled as a student at ReCoCo, just pop in for a taster. Come along and be yourself, everyone is an individual and embracing diversity is respected, regardless of what label society gives. After the group, there is a chance to socialise and have a cuppa outside!

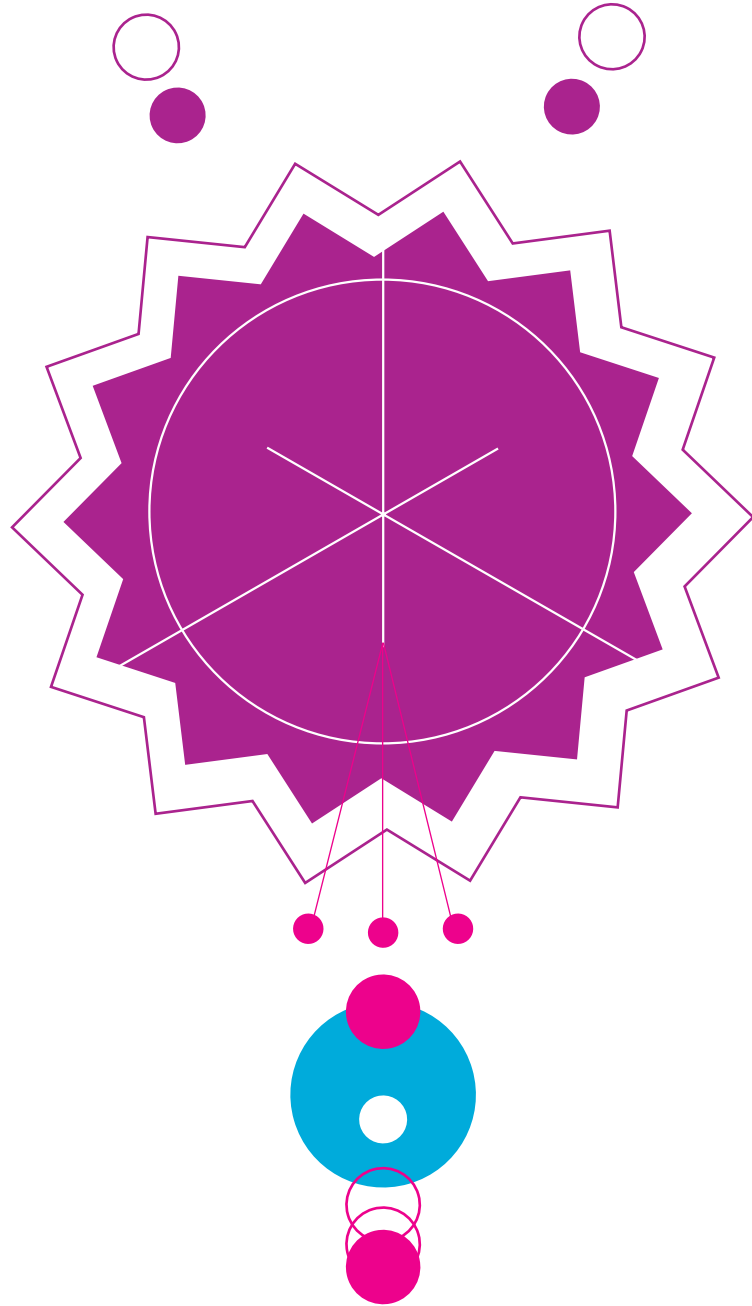
If you are interested see you there!!

Time: 1.00pm - 3.00pm

Day: Thursday

Dates: Fortnightly from 11th January

Facilitator: Graham Errington



20

WOMEN'S GROUP

Our women's group runs on a weekly basis and is a welcoming gathering where women can come together and have a chat about anything and get the support of each other. What could be nicer than a cuppa and a friendly ear?

Time: 2.00pm - 3.00pm

Day: Thursday

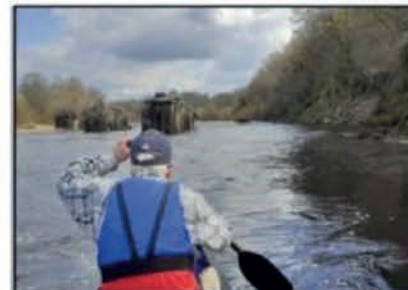
Dates: Weekly from 11th January

Facilitator: Sandra Adams



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Email: info@wingoutdooractivities.org

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Charity Number: 516516

Gateshead Council Learning and Skills are proud to work with ReCoCo to offer arts and craft courses promoting health and wellbeing. You will have the opportunity to meet new people, chat, socialise and work at your own pace with a range of projects.

Exploring Arts, Crafts and Jewellery – Friday 12:30 - 15:30

A hands-on arts and crafts course that will help you improve your mood whilst making beautiful things. You will join a sociable and hugely supportive group and you do not need any prior experience. You will experiment with a vast number of crafts including:

- Using epoxy resin to create coasters and boxes.
- Using UV-activated resin to create beautiful and unique jewellery
- Using polymer clay to create sculptures and jewellery
- Creating art with wet felting
- Needle felting to create small sculptures such as animals
- Making wire jewellery
- Painting and drawing

...and much more!



Exploring Sewing and Textiles – Friday 9:30 - 12:30

On this course you will have the opportunity to do a whole range of sewing and textile projects, such as bag and accessory making, upholstery, soft furnishings as well as other home interior projects.

All materials and equipment will be provided, so you don't need to worry about having to bring anything along. However, if you have a gorgeous piece of fabric at home that you've always wanted to do something with, but not sure what, then you can bring it along to the session, get ideas from the group, and see what lovely things you could make out of it!

Beginners and more advanced sewers are all welcome. You don't need to have any experience to do this sewing course. You will learn how to do all sorts of sewing and textile skills, such as threading a sewing machine and winding a bobbin; making and cutting out patterns; inserting zips and so much more.



Places on each course are capped and limited so act quick.

To reserve your space or for more information please call 0191 433 8721 or email learningskills@gateshead.gov.uk



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1:1 sessions & GROUP CIRCLES

Online & In-Person Energy Healing

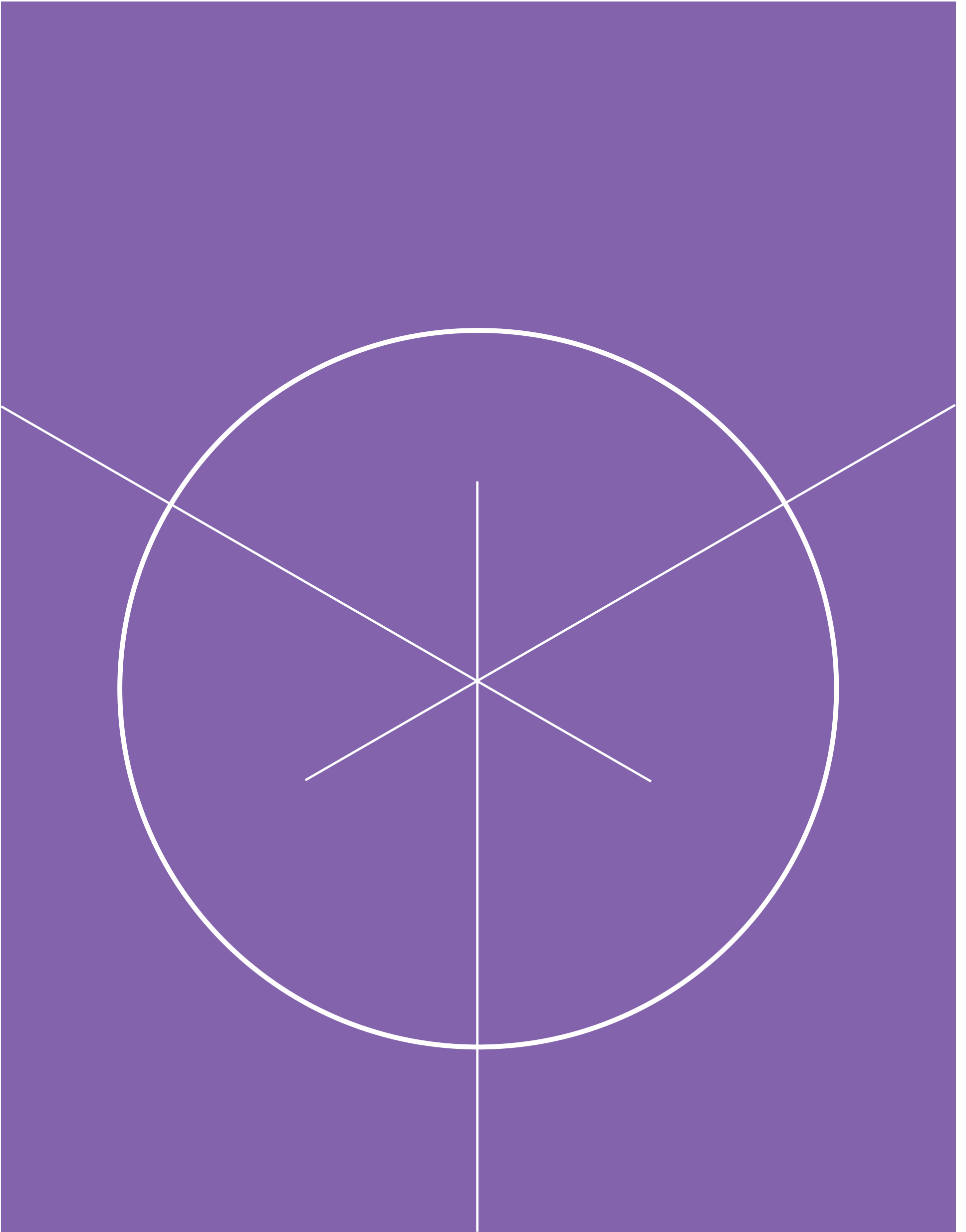
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RE-CO-CO 1, Carloli Square
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BY BUS:

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 or MANORS; 5 minute walk

BY BIKE:

There is public bike parking at the City Library

BY CAR:

There are public car parks nearby.



www.recoverycoco.com |  0191 261 0948  info@recoverycoco.com

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