



# INSPIRE

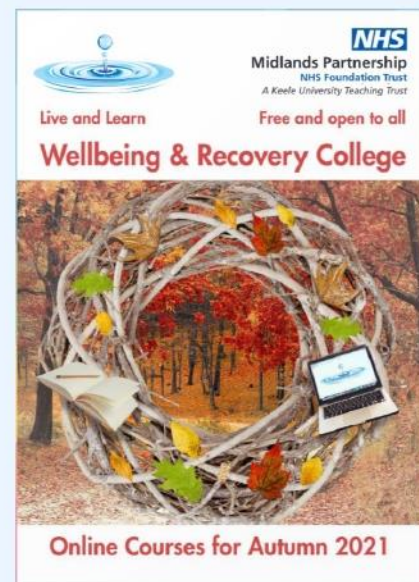
**SUMMER 2021**

**ISSUE 6**

Welcome to Issue 6 of INSPIRE, a termly newsletter from the Wellbeing and Recovery College. Here we will keep you up to date with what is happening at the college, including details about our courses, stories from members of the college team, pictures of what our students have been up to recently, and other information that we think you'll find useful.

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We are pleased to be able to deliver 9 NEW courses online via Zoom again in the Autumn Term. For further details about this, please see Page 2.

## Are you following us?

Find us on social media to stay up to date on the availability of our courses and much more!



Wellbeing and Recovery  
College MPFT

Website:

<https://recovery.mpft.nhs.uk/>



@wellbeingrecoverycollegempft



@reccollegempft

## An Update From The College

We wanted to keep you up to date regarding arrangements for course delivery during Autumn term. Our long term aim is to offer a balance of classroom and online courses during future terms. For Autumn term most of our courses will remain online via Zoom and a selection of nature and social based courses will be located in community settings. Of course, as always we'll continue to keep you updated with any developments.

## Coming Up In The Autumn Term

Behind the scenes, we've been working hard to prepare our Autumn courses. We have **over 30 courses** available. Our upcoming courses can be found here in our Autumn prospectus: <https://flip.printstafford.com/wrcautumn21/>

We are delighted to be able to offer **9 new courses**:

- **Mindful Walking** - Join us for an outdoor mindful walk in nature, where we will undertake a gentle pace along a designated route. This is a social course along identified walking trails, where we can chat and learn more about our immediate environment as well as experience the practice of mindful walking.
- **Getting through the work week! A guide to understanding and managing wellbeing in the workplace** - At the end of the day/week, we all need to be able to enjoy our free time, without the baggage from work interfering. Join us on this fun, positive and practical 4-week course where we will be sharing evidence based tools to support your mental health in the workplace.
- **Gratitude - Learn to Appreciate the Small Things in Life** - Practising gratitude does not mean finding the positive in every situation but it instead focuses on recognising and appreciating the positive things we may overlook. In this course we will explore the concept and the benefits of practicing gratitude and we will identify simple exercises aimed at introducing gratitude in your daily life.
- **Building Awareness around Addictive Behaviour** - Addictions are currently rising in society and in this course we offer an introduction into exploring the different types of addictions. How it can affect the individual but also loved ones. We'll explore the range of treatment options available and share information about where more support can be found.
- **Exploring Loss and Moving Forward** - We've all experienced different types of loss such as grief, estrangement, employment, financial or personal loss. Loss is unique and affects people in so many different ways. This course will look at what generates the sense of loss, different experiences and self-care.
- **Understanding Fatigue and Fatigue Management** - Within this workshop we will be focusing on fatigue in relation to Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Long Covid and Fibromyalgia and reflect on experiences of these conditions; the content of our session can still be applied to the fatigue element of others such as Cancer and Multiple Sclerosis. We will look at the impact fatigue can have on various aspects of a person's life and discuss management and energy conservation strategies that can help in improving the general quality of life when living with fatigue.
- **Understanding Dementia** - The course provides an introduction to Dementia, information on the signs and symptoms of Dementia and the most common types that individual's experience. Together we will explore practical tools and coping skills for day to day wellbeing for all those supporting a person living with Dementia.
- **Suicide Awareness** - An introductory session to develop awareness of suicide and suicidality and have a chance to reflect and discuss this sensitive subject and what it is like caring for a suicidal person and/or experiencing suicidal feelings and behaviours as well as providing in the session some do's and don'ts when talking to someone about suicide.

- **Baby and me** - Baby and Me is a course made up of 4 interactive online sessions, facilitated by trainers who have professional and lived experience of perinatal mental health. We have created this course to support anyone wanting to gain more understanding of how we can look after ours and our babies' mental wellbeing, and support one another as parents/carers. We will also have space to consider the impact of the global pandemic on families' lives and relationships. There will be opportunities to think about the growth, learning, joys, and challenges associated with bringing a baby into the world.

## Zoom café

As we will be delivering all of our courses online on Zoom for the foreseeable future, we will continue to run Zoom Cafés for you. A Zoom café is a relaxed, informal 30-minute session that will help you to practice to access a zoom session from an email link, how to use your microphone and camera, where to find the chat box, and more.

### Upcoming dates:

Thurs 19<sup>th</sup> August 1pm-2pm

Wed 25<sup>th</sup> August 10.30am-11.30am

Tues 7<sup>th</sup> Sept 1.30pm-2.30pm

Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept 4pm-5pm

Mon 4<sup>th</sup> Oct 12.30pm - 1.30pm Tues 19<sup>th</sup>

Oct 1.30pm - 2.30pm

## Online Social events

During our Autumn term we'll continue to offer our social events. The socials are open to all of our students and they aim to provide an opportunity and safe space to get to know other students and the college team.

We plan to deliver a variety of social events to cater to an array of interests. Last term, for example, we ran events for people who enjoy friendly competition (Quiz), talking about books (Reader's Corner), showing and talking about arts and craft (Creative Corner), get to know other students and make casual conversation (Coffee & Chat).

### First time attending and not sure what to expect?

Our social events run just like our courses, with the difference that you can keep your microphone on for the duration of the session to allow for easier conversation.

Our facilitators will foster a relaxed, informal atmosphere and guide you through conversations. There will be a chance to introduce yourself at the beginning of the session but we aim to never single out anyone if they're not comfortable to do so.

**Look out more details and dates in the fortnightly email update and on our social media**

## Welcoming Alison

Hi my name is Alison and I have recently joined the team. I wanted to tell you a little about my journey with the college

In 2017 I joined the recovery college as a student to help with my anxiety especially in new situations. My confidence and self-esteem was low and I was incredibly nervous to be entering into a group setting.

Needless to say my first few courses were difficult to take all the information in as I was focusing on my surroundings.

I found the college to be very supportive in completing my individual learning plan to get an idea of who I was and what I wanted to achieve by attending the college.

I then began using my role as a peer support worker to support individuals in attending the courses as I understood having that support can sometimes make easier.

I was then invited to join the college as a bank worker completing enrolments which I felt would be a suiting role as I knew how for some people this can be a big step. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting students and being able to offer information on the courses.

It was not long after that I dipped my toe in the water of being a lived experience trainer, completing train the trainer and going on to co facilitate sleeping well, wellbeing toolkit and yoga.

In April this year I started a 12 month secondment with the college which has enabled me to explore different areas of the college including coproducing courses, course mentor and continuing to assist students in their individual journey.

I am passionate about recovery and I like the way the college supports students in understanding their individual needs. I also feel there are varied courses on all different areas of wellbeing which is important in recognising recovery as being individual.

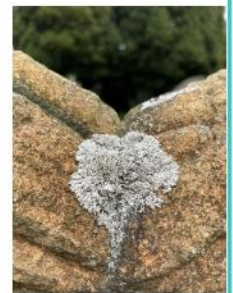
I continue to enjoy meeting/talking with students and I am grateful to be part of a wonderful team and having the opportunity to do something I am passionate about.



## Hidden Nature - Course Highlight

Spending time in nature is known to have many health and wellbeing benefits. How often do we stop and explore the natural landscapes and what they have to offer? Alongside The Beautiful Burial Ground Project team, we have developed a course that focuses on using nature for wellbeing. This course takes place outdoors in local old cemeteries that are often overlooked areas of natural landscape, a haven for wildlife. This course is designed to be a fun, enjoyable insight into nature for wellbeing, including small mindful activities that can be incorporated into your daily life while spending time in natural environments.

Our most recent hidden nature course took place at the Eccleshall Road Cemetery in Stafford where we explored the use of nature when practicing mindfulness and discussed facts about the birds, trees, plants, insects, the badger holes and snuffle marks as well as the lichen growing on the gravestones and sticks that we saw (some pictured below).



Some of the feedback for the session included:

- I went to the course not expecting much, but was amazed at how much I enjoyed it! The facilitators had a lot of knowledge about the subject. Delivery of information was concise and very easy to understand. I went away with a greater understanding of the natural world, and realized on the course how much better I felt after being outdoors; Settling my mind from the usual thoughts that swirl around, and focusing on the natural world around me, such as the wind and the sound of birds.
- Lovely course, knowledgeable tutors. Will definitely be doing this myself. Loved it! □  
Very informative. A nice contrast between interesting facts and mindfulness practice.

We have some more hidden nature courses coming up (the dates are in our prospectus) so if you are interested in attending then please get in touch with us to book on!

## Coming out of lockdown

As we begin to emerge from numerous lockdowns and restrictions, we've all waited a long time to 'get back to normal'. But what will the new 'normal' look like? And how do we feel about emerging from our homes and going out into the world again?

The phrase "we're all in the same sea but in different boats" illustrates how we've all been in this pandemic together but everyone's experiences have been different and we've all faced different challenges. In the same way that going into lockdown presented us with our own challenges, coming out of lockdown is also a different experience for each of us. For some of us the thought of leaving home, socialising with others and going back to work evokes a variety of emotions, including apprehension, nervousness, increased anxiety, anger and agoraphobia.

Psychologists are calling these feelings 're-entry anxiety' and reassure us that this anxiety about re-adjusting to life in the outside world again is completely natural. It took a period of adjustment to get used to life in lockdown and over time this has become the new norm. For many of us it will take a period of re-adjustment to return to old routines and many are adjusting to a blend of old and new ways of life.

Most of us find change very difficult and we've had to adapt quite quickly to many changes over the last 18 months. Going back out into the world again can feel like a sensory overload of sights, sounds and interactions that are very different to being at home. Many people who live with anxiety as well as those who don't are noticing varying degrees of social anxiety about mixing with other people again. Again, it's understandable that after over a year of social distancing, social closeness is likely to feel uncomfortable and uneasy to begin with.

Here are some steps that may help you to gradually re-adjust, but if you feel you need help with leaving home or feel that counselling would help you in any way, please see the support section for details of organisations that can assist you.

Here are some steps that may help you to gradually re-adjust, but if you feel you need help with leaving home or feel that counselling would help you in any way, please see the support section for details of organisations that can assist you.

- 1) **Take your time.** While others may be comfortable to leap back into life, take things at your own pace and build up gradually.
- 2) **Self-compassion.** Reassure yourself that your feelings are natural and understandable. Support yourself in the steps you take by offering yourself soothing words and space to feel your feelings.

## Coming out of lockdown - continued

- 3) **Challenge yourself a little at a time.** Begin by stretching your comfort zone gradually. It can help to break challenges down into manageable goals.
- 4) **Take small steps frequently.** Whether this is a short walk every day or reaching out to friends to build social confidence, small steps can help you to readjust slowly.
- 5) **Rest and recuperate.** Take time to rest your nervous system after any challenging steps.
- 6) **Support.** It may help to ask someone you trust to support you in whatever way you need.

We offer further ways to manage anxiety on our understanding anxiety & anxiety management course. Please see our new prospectus for our full range of courses.

## Support organisations

### British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

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

01455 883300

### Mid-Staffs Mind

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

Email: [midstaffsmind@gmail.com](mailto:midstaffsmind@gmail.com)

01785 747070

### Telford Mind

[www.telford-mind.co.uk](http://www.telford-mind.co.uk)

01952 588367

### Staffordshire NHS Wellbeing Service

[www.staffsandstokewellbeing.nhs.uk](http://www.staffsandstokewellbeing.nhs.uk)

### Mental Health Matters

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

0191 516 3500

Staffordshire - 07813558607

TheRecov-

[ery.HubStaffordshire@makingspace.co.uk](mailto:ery.HubStaffordshire@makingspace.co.uk)

### Making Space

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

## What Have Our Students Been Up To?



The above photos are of some of Paul's origami creations and of a lovely watercolour pencil piece based on a photo taken at Attingham park.



The above images of some of Claire's lovely creations from our Open Arted, Open Hearted course!



These are some of Gail's beautiful crochet creations!



## A Big Thank You

As always we have many people to thank who do an amazing job to make the college the success it is! We'd like to say a big thank you to all of our students for your continued support and participation in our courses during the summer term. We hope that you are all continuing to enjoy learning in this new virtual way and we very much hope that you'll be joining us again in the autumn term, where we have even more to offer. We would also thank all of our trainers. Without you, we would not have been able to deliver the wide range of courses that we have had on offer over the zoom platform. We also wish to thank the dedicated core team at the College who work passionately behind the scenes to keep everything running smoothly! Thank You Everyone!

### What are your thoughts?

In everything we do at the college, we really value your feedback and ideas. INSPIRE is a newsletter that we create each term for you: our students and trainers. We would really like to hear from you regarding the type of content you would like to see in our newsletter, including any topics you'd like us to write about and any information that would be helpful. We are looking to expand our 'What have our students been up to?' section, so we welcome your poems, photographs and stories. If you'd like to submit something to our newsletter, have an idea for an article, or if you have any thoughts you'd like to share with us, please get in touch using the contact details shown below.

### About Us

We are the Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Wellbeing and Recovery College. Here at the college, we aim to provide wellbeing and recovery focused educational courses that are accessible to everyone within our local communities across Staffordshire and Shropshire. We work together with our growing community of students to create a safe learning environment to promote hope, control and opportunity for all. Our courses bring together an equal blend of professional, carer and lived experience trainers who encourage shared learning, where we can all learn from one another through the sharing of each individual journey towards wellbeing and recovery.

If you are interested in one of our courses but haven't yet enrolled with the college, please get in touch with us via your preferred method to arrange an enrolment appointment. There you will be invited to complete an individual learning plan with a member of our team. Please also get in touch if you are interested in being involved with the Wellbeing and Recovery college team; we'd love to hear from you!

### Contact Us

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