



Case Studies – The Women’s Project

The aim of the Women’s Project was to impact on self esteem and confidence of this vulnerable group. The majority of the women had been subject to domestic abuse and had issues with substance misuse. Other issues included depression, isolation and mental illness. It is widely recognised that vulnerable women engaged in or in danger of becoming engaged in the criminal Justice System lack self worth and need to recognise their personal value to realise that their lives are worth changing.

General Results

Participants, support workers and Offender Managers were asked for feedback about the impact of the programme.

Generally participants reported increased confidence, self-esteem and a recognition that they were able to do more than they thought they could. Trust was an issue for most of the participants and the majority of participants became more trusting of professionals after attending the programme, and subsequently engaged more with other services on offer to them.

Many of the participants reported that they felt calmer as a result of attending the programme. Several of the participants reported improved problem solving abilities. All of the women reported a sense of achievement in attending the programme.

The inclusion of interaction with the birds had a positive impact on all of the women. Most reported the experience to be “scary” but “exciting”, and it is this experience that helped the women to recognise that they were able to achieve more than they previously realised. All of the women stated that the discussions held after the interactions were impactful and helped them to recognise the lessons learned.

Feedback from partner organisations has been very positive and the impact on participants of the Hack Back programme appears to be being sustained.

CB

CB joined the Women’s Project after becoming involved with the Criminal Justice System. She had never had a job, tended to get up at lunch time, suffered from depression and regularly used drugs. CB had never been able to stick to anything and usually dropped out of interventions after attending a

couple of sessions. After attending the project with Hack Back she got up early in the morning on a regular basis taking her dog for a walk. Her depression was much improved and she reduced her use of drugs. She began to take responsibility for her self and her behaviour. She started to engage other programmes and opportunities available to her. CB attended every session of the Hack Back programme and asked if there was the opportunity to attend further sessions. For someone who had never been able to stick to anything this was a major achievement for her.

Having recently spoken to her case worker we were delighted to hear that CB had got a job.

“I want to get qualifications a CV and get a job. I’ll be doing something positive every day, earning my own money. I would like to be settled in a nice home with a nice lifestyle. Peaceful, with no mice and no broken radiators. I want to live my life. There is so much I can do when I get a job.”

“I would like to say thank you and I appreciate being able to come. I was depressed and didn't care. I didn't get up and now I do. I've learned a lot about myself”

H

When H joined the Women’s Project she was receiving treatment for drug use as she had been addicted to Heroin. As a result of her drug use she had become involved with the Criminal Justice System. H was very withdrawn and lacked confidence. Her self esteem was very low and she felt that she had no value. After attending the Hack Back project she reduced her intake of prescribed drugs and was deemed no longer in need of supervision. Like others on the programme she started to engage positively with other interventions. Her case worker was delighted with her progress. Her offender manager reported that H demonstrated a “more positive attitude to life in general”, “can see a positive future”, “so excited about what she has achieved on the programme”. The participant was pleased that she completed the programme and “She felt a sense of empowerment with her relationship with all of the staff involved who treated her as a person not as an offender or drug user”. The Offender manager also mentioned that H demonstrated greater trustworthiness.

In H’s own words “I have learned that I can do things if I put my mind to it. I was scared of meeting the birds but when I met them it wasn't as hard as I thought it was going to be.

The birds did make a big difference, we learned how they learn to trust people. We saw how the birds trust, until you see it with your own eyes you don't realize. Just talking about it doesn't get it across.

I want to carry on going up. Stop thinking negative, what can be positive in the future. Reducing medication. Carrying on with confidence. Can't believe how much this has helped me. Can't believe how much of a change I have made in last 6 weeks of coming here “.

G

G joined the Women’s Project after becoming involved with the Criminal Justice System. She had been abusing alcohol for some time which had had a negative impact on her life and behaviour. She felt worthless and also suffered from panic attacks. After attending the programme she reported that she felt less anxious. “Since I’ve joined the Tuesdays, I’m panic attack free person! I used to have panic attacks all the time.” She began to take responsibility for her actions and take control of her alcohol addiction actively seeking out appropriate support. The project not only impacted on G but also her family “I would like to become a better mum. I feel like now I can do all that, thanks to Tuesdays with you.”

Both her case worker and offender manager stated that G need no further intervention after attending the project with Hack Back.

C

C attended the Women's Programme after spending time in prison for drugs related offences. She had experienced domestic abuse, family difficulties and financial difficulties. After attending the programme she gained confidence and a sense of personal success. Throughout the programme she was faced with continual challenges including financial issues that left her with no money for food and heating. However, she sought appropriate help and advice to help her to overcome these challenges. She was truly determined to create a different future for herself and her family.

After completion of the programme she required no further intervention and she attended college courses for English and Maths to help her to improve her chances of getting a job. She has recently sought alternative accommodation, and with the help of the Hack Back team and her Offender Manager she has put a case forward to a local Housing Trust.

Anita Morris

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