



working in partnership with



# *Recovery College Prospectus*

Details of co-produced courses with  
you and for you!

# Recovery

Recovery is a journey of discovery that involves making sense of and finding meaning in what has happened, becoming your own expert helper, building a new sense of self and purpose and discovering your own resourcefulness.

(ImROC, <http://www.imroc.org/what-is-recovery/>)

*Tell me and I forget,  
teach me and I may remember,  
involve me and I learn.*

Benjamin Franklin



**"A deeply personal, unique process of changing one's *attitudes*, values, feelings, goals, skills and/or roles. it is a way of living a *satisfying*, *hopeful*, and *contributing* life even with limitations caused by the illness. Recovery involves the *development* of a new meaning and *purpose* in one's life as one grows beyond the catastrophic effects of mental illness. Recovery from mental illness involves much more than recovery from the illness itself."**

Anthony W (1993) Recovery from mental illness



Thurrock Recovery College provides a FREE, relaxed, informal education approach to well-being and recovery. We create a safe place where people can come together to learn ways to live healthier, happier and more fulfilling lives.

We aim to help people discover hope, connect to their strengths, resources and abilities and discover opportunities to reach their dreams and aspirations.

The Recovery College is a partnership between its students, Inclusion (part of Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust), Thurrock and Brentwood Mind (a local charity with a proud tradition of helping those experiencing difficulties with their mental health) and Essex Partnership University NHS Trust.

Thurrock Recovery College has been offering shared learning opportunities to people who live, work, study, are a carer for a resident or have a GP in the area in Thurrock since 2016.

**Hope...Control...**  
**& Opportunities...**  
*Discover Yourself!*

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You can find course timetables and further details of dates and venues on our website  
<http://recoverycollege.inclusionthurrock.org> , or you can email us

[ThurrockRCollege@mpft.nhs.uk](mailto:ThurrockRCollege@mpft.nhs.uk) or call us on 01375 809708.

[ThurrockRCollege@mpft.nhs.uk](mailto:ThurrockRCollege@mpft.nhs.uk)

# Our values and philosophy

## What is Shared Learning?

Shared learning is about people coming together in a safe environment to learn from each other.

We aim to provide the space and tools to empower students to live more fulfilling lives. Our opportunities are open to anyone who lives or works in the Thurrock community.

Recovery can be hard on your own, but together we are more able to learn and discover a meaningful life. As human beings, we all experience our own personal recovery journeys, and we can benefit greatly from sharing and learning from each other in a safe and equal place.

## What is Co-production?

All of our courses are developed and delivered in partnership by people with lived experience of the topic (peer workers) and someone with a professional background. We recognise that life is not lived through a text book.

Our peer trainers will use their own experiences to support and inspire students in their recovery journey. This model of shared learning and co-production is at the heart of the Thurrock Recovery College and allows for rich and diverse perspectives on well-being.

# How to enrol

## *How to enrol?*

In order to enrol, simply call: **01375 809708** or email us at **ThurrockRCollege@mpft.nhs.uk** and ask for a registration form.

Places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. The next step will be to arrange a one-to-one interview to discuss what you want to gain from the College and your learning requirements, and together complete an Individual Learning Plan.

Our courses are currently open to anyone who is over 18 and residing in Thurrock or working in a caring or professional role with Thurrock residents.

## *Get involved*

We are keen to involve the whole community of Thurrock. If you would like to help us develop this fantastic local resource, please contact us and see how you can get involved at a level you feel comfortable with – as a volunteer, trainer, ambassador or in our engagement forums. We want to hear about your ideas, experiences and strengths that can help us all achieve a satisfying and meaningful life.

# Accessibility and learning support

## *Accessibility*

The Thurrock Recovery College is open to anyone aged 18 or over who live in the Thurrock locality and those working in a caring or professional role with Thurrock residents. It is for people who have used mental health or counselling services, their friends and families, staff and anyone interested in our work.

## *Support with Learning*

We offer information, advice and guidance about our courses and their content. When you first enrol on a course, you will meet with a member of our team. This is an opportunity to discuss any questions you may have, to hear more about the course content and think about what you would like to gain from the course. Together, we complete a learning plan to help you build on your strengths and identify any support you may feel you will need to participate in the course.

## *Individual Learning Plan (ILP)*

This individual learning plan is a central part of your student journey and we will help you develop your own plan. It is personalised to you and allows you to reflect on your previous learning and experience, your personal qualities and to identify your short term goals and longer term aspirations. We will also discuss and plan any learning support needs and /or personal support you may require while attending the College.



# Courses: Understanding conditions (In-person)

## Food and mood

### About the course:

Are we really what we eat? Is there a relationship between what we eat and our mental well-being? Which foods can boost our mood and physical well-being, and which foods may have a more negative impact?

### The course includes:

The aim of this introductory workshop is to increase our awareness of how our diet affects our energy levels, mood and daily lives. We will look at tools and tips which may help us live healthier lives and achieve more from each day.

*"Extremely informative! Great to learn about the links between what your body lacks and your mood."*

## Understanding depression

### About the course:

'Feeling low' is something most of us experience from time to time and it is a natural part of being human. However, when these feelings become more severe, begin to take hold of your life and just won't go away, it may be something more serious like 'depression'.

Depression is common but for those who are diagnosed, it can be a frightening and isolating condition. You cannot just 'snap out of it', it can be hard to understand and may present differently in different people.

### The course includes:

The aim of the workshop is to explore the facts and realities of depression, how it is diagnosed, treated and a few tips on how you can manage it or support someone you care about who may experience depression. In this safe environment you can share your experience, learn from and help others.

# Courses: Understanding conditions (In-person)

## Five Ways to Wellbeing

### *About the course:*

No matter who we are, it is important to look after our mental health and well-being. However it can be hard to know what helps. It is just as important to know how to live well as it is to know how to avoid or reduce things that distress us. Learning skills for our emotional wellbeing can help us to be more resilient in dealing with the inevitable knocks in normal life.

### *The course includes:*

These workshops consider the idea that wellbeing is a balance of both mind and body. We cover the five ways to wellbeing and consider how we can apply these in our everyday lives. You may like to use this information to develop your own wellbeing plan, with support from others if required.

*"Overall have enjoyed the course and the lesson taught by the multiple tutors, which made it more interesting and diverse."*

## Understanding anxiety

### *About the course:*

We all experience anxiety at times – that ‘butterflies in your stomach’ feeling when you worry about sitting exams, going for an interview or seeing the dentist. It is a natural feeling and can be useful, as it can help us perform better or warn us when we need to act if in danger.

However, anxiety can be persistent, excessive or overwhelming. It can begin to interfere with many aspects of our life – from confidence, to seeing people, going out and engaging in everyday activities like shopping.

### *The course includes:*

The aim of this workshop is to explore the facts and realities about anxiety, making a distinction between stress, common anxiety and anxiety disorders. We discover some tips on how you can manage it or support someone you care about who struggles with anxiety.

# Courses: Skill based (In-person)

## Ways to Wellbeing: Learn

### *About the course:*

We need to look at the benefits of learning and some of the possible current barriers. We take the opportunity to reflect on ways which have worked for us and the specific learning circumstances at the time.

It will give the chance to explore different ways in which we can all learn and identify ways of improving our sense of wellness.

### *The course includes:*

This one session course, as part of the 5 ways to wellbeing, aims to define the term 'Learning'. Learning new skills can boost confidence and give you a sense of achievement. It does not have to be formal in a classroom, it could be picking up a book or picking up a new hobby/skill.

*"My subject knowledge increased from a 9 to 10."*

## Ways to Wellbeing: Be Active

### *About the course:*

Regular physical activity is associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety across all age groups. Exercise is essential for slowing age-related cognitive decline and for promoting wellbeing. But it doesn't need to be particularly intense for you to feel good – slower-paced activities, such as walking, can have the benefit of encouraging social interactions as well as providing some level of exercise.

### *The course includes:*

In this 2 session course, we aim to provide you with support, tips, techniques and skills to improve your wellbeing. We give a brief overview of all 5 ways to enhance your wellbeing and then in session 2, we focus on being more active together, with provided resources in the community.

*"I really liked the course and made a friend!"*

# Courses: Skill based (In-person)

## Ways to Wellbeing: Give

### *About the course:*

Research suggests that acts of giving and kindness can help improve your mental wellbeing. It could be small acts of kindness towards other people or larger ones like volunteering in your local community.

In this course, we look at the benefits of giving and kindness and identify things that you can try out for yourself.

### *The course includes:*

This 2-session course explores and gives the opportunity to reflect on your life priorities. You can develop a new direction and set possible new ways of how you want to plan actions, which are easily achievable.

*"The group discussion were all quite interesting."*

## Ways to Wellbeing: Connect

### *About the course:*

Connecting with others, nature and other living beings is essential to our health and wellbeing. We are inherently a social species and having safe places, people and pets in our lives can help us heal and learn to thrive. Connecting is also one of the five ways to wellbeing, alongside being active, learning, taking notice and giving. We are all different but we all need some form of connection.

### *The course includes:*

This 2-session in-person course aims to explore what we understand by 'connect', as well as the benefits of connecting. We look at some common barriers and help you think about how you can work around these. You will have the opportunity to reflect on the ways you are currently connecting and consider other opportunities for meaningful connections that are right for you.

*"The materials and handouts provided were helpful."*

# Courses: Skill based (In-person)

## Ways to Wellbeing: Notice

### About the course:

Taking notice can help you to be aware of how you're feeling. It can help you understand what triggers your feelings of stress or anxiety.

Some studies have shown that savouring 'the moment' can also help you to feel more positive about life. Take some time to enjoy the moment and the environment around you. Here are a few ideas:

- Get a plant for your workspace
- Have a 'clear the clutter' day
- Take a different route on your journey to or from work
- Visit a new place for lunch

*"It has set me on the right path to overcoming barriers."*

## Communicating with confidence

### About the course:

Life is full of times when we want to communicate with confidence. We may want to speak up, ask for help, or simply feel confident to chat, all of which can be hard for many people, especially when feeling low or anxious. Communication is important to interact with family and friends as well as wider social connections and to getting the right help from services. It is more than just what we say; it is how we say things and what we understand from what is said to us.

### The course includes:

The course will take place over four sessions. We start with an introductory workshop and then people can join the full course if they want to know more. Topics covered will include understanding confidence, how our behaviour and thinking can affect confidence, the role of body language, and practical strategies to be confident in social situations. This course will offer you the opportunity to identify situations in your own life where you would like to be more confident.

# Courses: Skill based (In-person)

## Money Matters

### *About the course:*

Managing money can be stressful. We need information and share skills which help us understand and manage our money reducing a major cause of stress in our lives. It is going to support in the current Cost of living crisis.

Methods on how to find out if we are getting all the income we are entitled to, when to carry out a benefit check, organisations that can offer support, co-productive support through facilitating the course, lived experiences of trainers and those on the course.

### *The course includes:*

Over three sessions of 2 hours each we will look at understanding income, debt management and budgeting for the future.

## Veterans Moving Forward

### *About the course:*

The course is split into 6 x 3 hour modules over 6 consecutive weeks.

1. Introductions, ways of working and individual aims.
  2. The military mindset: understand how the human mind works and the impact of how your experiences shape your mind.
  3. Breathe, sleep, move: review your health and wellbeing and the positive changes you can make to your lifestyle.
  4. Learning to prioritise, plan and make good decisions: understand and apply different tools to help you review your priorities and set actions.
5. Overcoming obstacles to your progress: recognise barriers to change and discover the benefits of thinking/planning ahead and review and reflection skills.
6. Sustaining positive change: Refresh and recap on your learning, review your support networks and develop an action plan for your future

# Courses: Understanding Conditions (Online)

## Introduction to Anxiety

### About the course:

Are you interested in exploring a different perspective of anxiety?

Are you curious about the impact of your wider environment & lifestyle on the experience of anxiety?

### The course includes:

This 2 session online course complements our in-person Understanding Anxiety course, by approaching the subject differently.

It can serve as a great follow-on or introduction to the subject. We will explore nonmedical triggers for anxiety such as sleep, lifestyles, diet and the time of year. We will offer some experiential learning to support thriving with anxiety.

*"I'm extremely likely to recommend this course to a family member."*

## Identity and Personality

### About the course:

We explore what identity and personality means to each of us.

### The course includes:

This 2 session 90 minutes course considers the relationship between our identity and society, explore the notion of identity as a changeable, evolving process and we aid to find out about your signature strengths list.

This is a great way to begin thinking about activities, hobbies, roles that would make best use of your unique abilities. There are going to be opportunities to reflect on areas of personal growth.

*"It's okay to be me! It's okay to feel silly, it's okay to just be! It's okay not to be, It's okay not to know me, It's okay to like me."*

# Courses: Understanding Conditions (Online)

## Exploring Loss and Moving Forward

### *About the course:*

We've all experienced different types of loss including many forms of grief relating to over more than 40 areas of life. Loss is unique and affects people differently. Through this course we explore how we experience it and there after look into actually using self-management tools to move forward.

In the two online session of 2.5 hours each we cover and gain an understanding how growth can happen after often challenging emotions and trial out practical exercises for self-care.

### *The course includes:*

This course will run over 2 sessions of 2.5 hours each, where we will explore how growth can occur after challenging emotions and we will practice different self-care exercises.

## Thriving with Neurodiversity

### *About the course:*

Are you interested in dyslexia, ADHD or Autism? Do you identify as "Neurodivergent" or support someone who does? Would you like to explore a strengths-based understanding of neurodiversity, or connect with other members of the neurodivergent community?

We are going to discuss awareness of our individual challenges and the strategies that support us. Encourage acceptance through valuing our unique qualities and individual selves.

### *The course includes:*

This single-session online course serves as an introduction to the topic and will include break times. A key aim of the course will be to recognise and celebrate our innate capabilities and potential strengths.

*"It helped me to identify positive attributes."*



# Courses: Skill based (Online)

## My Rested Self: Sleep

### *About the course:*

Are you struggling with your sleep?, Do you want to improve the quality of your sleep? We all need to sleep and there are biological reasons for it

### *The course includes:*

This 3-session course explores our relationship with sleep, how anxiety and worry affect sleep, how to improve on having less of it and the next steps with signposting.

In this course, we consider what happens physically and emotionally when we do not get good quality sleep. We explore sleep hygiene and the impact of the choices we make throughout the day. You can develop a sleep plan to help with understanding your sleep habits and routines better. We trial short bursts of relaxation techniques.

## My Rested Self: Relaxation

### *About the course:*

We need to explore our relationship with relaxation.

- What is relaxation?
- Which activities count as enjoyable but are not actually putting our bodies in a relaxed state?
- How can we bring simple little moments of pause into our daily lives?

We explore the need to relax and the benefits to body and mind when we do.

### *The course includes:*

This course is 3 sessions of 2 hours each long and is interspersed with the opportunity to try various techniques for relaxation.

There is the opportunity to work on a relaxation plan, including understanding our patterns and balance of activity, so that we can make small changes to help us feel more refreshed, focused or a tease.

*"Really enjoyed it."*

# Courses: Skill based (Online)

## Progressing with Visualisations

### *About the course:*

Guided visualisations use our imagination to picture nice surrounding sceneries. This in turn relaxes the body.

### *The course includes:*

This is an advanced, experiential follow-on course. This is a one & a half hour single, workshop and is available only to students who have previously completed the Visualisation for Relaxation, Mindfulness Walk or Creating Mindfulness courses.

This progression includes a longer guided visualisation in which students build upon the relaxing outdoor space previously designed, as well as experiencing further mindful relaxation techniques.

*"Thanks again for coming up with such innovative ideas for helping us to learn and control our stress and anxiety."*

## Visualisation for Relaxation

### *About the course:*

Do you need some time to relax? Sit back, turn off your camera and join us for an hour of guided visualisation.

If you fall asleep in this course, we consider that a compliment, just put yourself on mute so your snoring doesn't put us off our script!

The more you practice relaxation, the easier it becomes to use the skills in stressful situations, so come along as often as you can and strengthen this skill. Practice makes progress.

### *The course includes:*

This is a 1-hour online session and includes a 20-minute guided visualisation.

We will lead you in an exercise for imaging and designing your own personalised, safe, outdoor space, in which you can relax whenever you wish.

We do a quick catch-up afterwards and can signpost you to other useful tools.

## *Interested?*

We will be working with other organisations across Thurrock to contribute to improving the emotional well-being of young people. We will support subject experts and topic related lived experience experts by providing opportunities to collaborate with us. If you like us to come together, please call and speak to the Recovery College Lead.

## *Events*

We like to raise awareness across the different local communities and will attend all sorts of special fairs, celebrations, fun days or whatever it might be where we can add by fighting stigma and discrimination together. If you'd like us to attend your activity, please email us.

# Volunteer with us

## Do you want to give back?

Have you considered volunteering at the Recovery College we have a variety of roles available that you might be interested in?

- Be part of our student feedback groups and help with questionnaires
- Volunteer in our main office
- Help out with our social media profile
- Be part of a team designing ideas for new upcoming courses
- Train up to become one of our course facilitators
- Gather information and resources
- Take part in community promotions and engagement events as peer trainers

There are exciting opportunities for people to join our team and volunteer with the Recovery College. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer you can do this by contacting Thurrock and Brentwood Mind, who partner with Inclusion to deliver this service, and enrolling as a volunteer. We offer training to develop your existing skills, build new knowledge and skills and help people make the most of their potential.

We also have links with other community groups and organisations so this could be a stepping stone into another exciting opportunity elsewhere. Volunteering can be a way for you to meet like-minded people, to give something back to your local community and to gain confidence. Through volunteering many people go into paid roles through the knowledge they have imparted whilst giving their time and commitment for free. Here is what some of our volunteers have said:

**90%**  
feel they  
make a  
difference

**93%**  
feel  
enjoyment

**77%**  
say that it  
improves  
their  
mental  
health  
and  
wellbeing

## **How much do courses cost?**

All courses at the Thurrock Recovery College are currently free to attend for eligible students.

## **How many courses can I apply for at once?**

You can apply for up to 3 courses during any one term. This is to ensure equity, because most people find up to three courses in any one term to be about right.

## **What do I do if I want further information about a course?**

Please feel free to contact us on 01375 809708, or email us at [ThurrockRCCollege@mpft.nhs.uk](mailto:ThurrockRCCollege@mpft.nhs.uk)

We are always happy to talk to you about information you may need. Alternatively, more information can be found on our website:

<http://recoverycollege.inclusionthurrock.org/>

## **Are there parking facilities?**

This will depend on the venue. There are also usually public car parks near most of our venues.

## **Is there food and drink provided?**

Some of the venues will offer tea and coffee, although sometimes this will need to be purchased depending on the venue's facilities.

## **I use mental health services – do I need to be referred by my health professional?**

There is no need for a referral. Our courses are designed for people with lived and/or professional experiences of mental health services. We operate the same as any other further education establishment. Your local team may recommend us to you and might be able to help you with the registration process. All are welcome to access the college, whatever your motivation.

## **How many courses can I take overall?**

That is up to you as we are always available for the courses you want to do! You can step in and out of being an active student to meet your own needs and circumstances.

## **I care for someone who uses services, can I enrol?**

Of course! Our courses are designed for anyone who cares for someone, for people who use services, for those who work in them, and those who are simply interested in recovery based learning. We believe that all these different perspectives brought together create the richest learning experience for everyone.

## **Can a family member or friend attend with me?**

Yes, and we often find that family and friends are keen to enrol in the courses themselves.

*Call us on*

01375 809708

*email*

ThurrockRCollege@mpft.nhs.uk

*or visit our website at*

<http://recoverycollege.inclusionthurrock.org>

You. Me. *Us*

