

Thurrock Recovery College

THE NEWSLETTER

July 2024 / Edition 2

PERSPECTIVES

Once again our volunteer, Louise has provided a wonderfully thought provoking piece of art that she has named 'Perspectives'.

We invite you to move the page around to find what you see in this piece of art. Louise goes into more detail on page 3.



WELCOME BACK

Happy July! We have been reading about the symbolic meaning of July and discovered it is represented by a dove. Symbolising grace, gentleness, purity, divinity and freedom.

May this remind us all to be gentle with ourselves in our recovery journeys.



WELCOME BACK

From the Newsletter Team



DEAREST READER,

Thank you for joining us for the next edition of our newsletter.

We are thrilled to have you with us on this journey of growth and self-discovery. Behind the scenes, we've put in a lot of effort to ensure this newsletter becomes a beacon of support and positivity for the Recovery College community.

In this issue, we delve into the theme of PERSPECTIVES. Life often challenges us to be objective with our thoughts, and it's through different perspectives that we can truly appreciate the richness of our experiences. By embracing diverse viewpoints, we can cultivate greater self-love and start to thrive.

From our perspective our goal is to provide you with insightful content that not only informs but also inspires. We want to help you see the world—and yourself—in a new light, encouraging personal growth and resilience.

Our upcoming theme for August is: Love and Connection, as August bridges the gap between the carefree days of summer and the structured routines of autumn. It provides opportunity to pause and practice self-love, acknowledging both our progress and the areas where we continue to grow. With this in mind if you have an idea, an article, a poem, or a piece of art you would like to share, please do email it to us.

We are also eager to promote any upcoming events that you feel would enhance the mental well-being of our Thurrock community. Your contributions help us all grow and learn together.

With warm regards and best wishes for your journey,
The Newsletter Team



Perspectives: Art in the Mind

Louise (RC Student)



Louise speaks about her artwork this week and shared that she sees a figure sitting at a desk.

Behind them, there's a mind pointing to a mouth above and a mirror below. This imagery serves as a reminder of positive self-perspectives and the encouraging words from people who respect and have a positive view of you.

Their words bring hope and inspire self-love.

The painting is dynamic with moveable pieces, almost like the objects are transparent and interchangeable.

This represents how **perspectives can shift and change**.

The artwork isn't fixed; it symbolises the fluid nature of relationships with oneself and others. It suggests that through a change in perspective, there is always potential for growth and development.

Louise added that she felt the art represents us looking at ourselves from the outside, as well as the views of others on us and us on them and the world.

A shift in perspectives

Adopting a different perspective can help us see things in new ways and notice aspects we might have missed before.

For instance, Brene Brown emphasises that vulnerability involves showing up and being seen, despite not being able to control the outcome. She argues that vulnerability is a measure of courage, not a sign of weakness.

Many people fear vulnerability, worrying about rejection or judgment, which can lead to self-isolation and hiding behind a façade. As children, we are naturally open and carefree, but life's hardships often lead us to build protective layers that shield us from both pain and positive emotions. This protective shell may feel safe, but it can also be very lonely.

To overcome the fear of vulnerability, it's crucial to first love and accept ourselves. Everyone has flaws, makes mistakes, and experiences awkward moments. These are universal experiences. By understanding and embracing our imperfections, we cultivate self-love and can thrive even while facing mental health challenges.



Call me Dave: The Fifth Perspective

Written by Dave, RC Volunteer

I have always experienced depression from four perspectives:

- **From the entrance to a dark tunnel.** I am contemplating going in. This is where I am most of the time. I am surrounded by light, but before me is only impenetrable darkness.

- **From within the darkness of the tunnel** looking back at the faint light of the entrance far behind me. I can still turn around and go back!

- **Absolute darkness with no guiding light.** I am hopelessly lost and without hope.

- **From within the darkness of the tunnel able to see the faint light of the exit ahead of me.** I can go towards it or ignore it and go back into the darkness which, as bizarre as it sounds, I sometimes do. I imagine it's got something to the comfort of living with the predictability of familiar demons as opposed to the shocks and surprises that exist in the 'real' world.

It seems I have lived my life always within, or on the outskirts of, an 'episode. I'll hear echoes of other people's voices telling me to be positive but, instead of drawing encouragement from them, I feel worse. I am sometimes given advice by people who have no idea what's going on inside my head. "Think positive thoughts", "look how successful you've been", "things could be far worse", "cheer up" and "it's all in your head", are all statements that are well-meant, but only minimise my feelings and make me feel worse.

If life was simple, I would emerge from the dark place without the burdens I carried in there. but, alas, it's not like that at all. When I emerge, it doesn't mean I'm cured, it only means I've survived and, at some point in the future, something will trigger, and the cycle will begin again.



Artwork by, Call Me Dave

It occurred to me that to find the elusive peace my mind seeks when I'm fighting the darkest of thoughts, I must be unequivocal in what that will look and feel like? If I could imagine each criterion that would need to be present to attain it, it would give me a clear idea of what I must seek to fulfil it.

A mental image formed, of a prisoner (whose pronouns are he/him) emerging from the darkness of a corridor into a brightly lit exercise yard—a daily routine for as long as he can remember. He has to squint because of the glare, so it takes him a moment to fully comprehend that he's not walked into the yard, he's walked into freedom instead. It's that moment I'm seeking; that precise moment when the reality of his freedom hits home.

When I emerge, it will feel like one of my ancestors might have felt when cresting a hill after a hard climb to behold a spectacular new bountiful world full of mystery and promise.

I call it the FIFTH perspective.

Transformative power of music

RC Advanced Peer Laura

Music holds a unique power to uplift our spirits, and even help us navigate the challenges of mental health. By incorporating music into our daily lives, we can create moments that foster self-love and growth, allowing us to thrive despite any mental health obstacles.

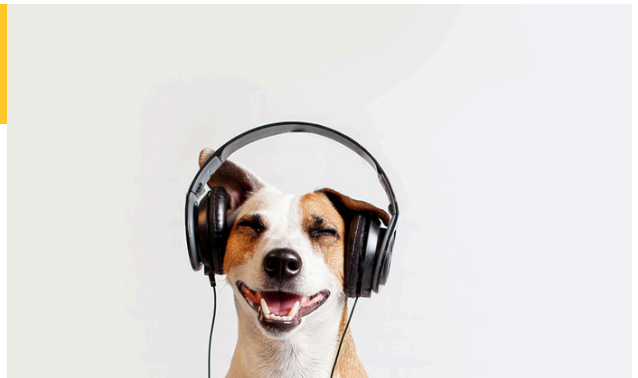
Here are our three tips on how to use music to enhance your well-being:

1. Create a Personalised Playlist for Different Moods

One way to harness the power of music is by curating playlists tailored to various emotional states. Take some time to explore different genres and songs, and compile them into playlists that resonate with specific feelings—whether it's calming melodies for relaxation, upbeat tracks for motivation, or soulful tunes for a reflective mood. By having these playlists readily available, you can easily access the right music to help you navigate your emotions and cultivate a sense of inner peace and self-love.

2. Use Music as a Mindfulness Tool

Mindfulness is a powerful practice that can significantly improve mental health and well-being. Music can be an excellent companion in your mindfulness journey. Try integrating music into your mindfulness routine by focusing on the sounds, rhythms, and lyrics of a song. Allow yourself to be fully present in the moment, letting the music guide your thoughts and emotions. This practice can help you develop a deeper connection with yourself, promoting self-awareness and acceptance.



3. Engage in Music-Making Activities

Actively participating in music-making can be a transformative experience. Whether you're singing, playing an instrument, or even composing your own music, engaging in these activities can provide a therapeutic outlet for your feelings. You don't need to be a professional musician to reap the benefits; the act of creating and expressing through music can be empowering and healing. By embracing your musical side, you can build confidence, reduce stress, and nurture a loving relationship with yourself.

Start small, a good way to start is to find a song that reminds you of a time you felt really good. Find it, there are lots of sites online that can help you to access this and listen and enjoy. Notice the effect it has on your mood.



The friend I have yet to meet

Contributed by Duncan, RC Student and Volunteer

A Matter of Perspective

I am hoping you are all enjoying this beautiful, albeit temperamental weather!



Apart from a wonderful cuddle from my best doggy friend I started the New Year hoping to follow Marvel's example. I am good at and well-practised in meeting people, am friendly, sometimes amusing, yet the step to actually befriending someone is often tricky and can sometimes make me a bit fearful.

Marvel was walking, with his human following behind, when he suddenly stopped and intently watched a group of people walking on the other side of the road. Marvel's tail was high and wagging furiously. Then a little black pug appeared, who saw Marvel and also stood still and looked back at Marvel, which all the humans found amusing.

The dogs barked at each other a few times, straining on their leads to move closer. Then came a dance of tentative steps in a circle, a few guttural sounds, flashing eyes, lip licking and then a head-to-head nose sniff, quickly followed by further sniffing and checking out each other's equipment in true doggy style.

Marvel, being the 'gentleman' he is, rolled onto his back and allowed the pug a closer inspection. Then he jumped up and both dogs started running in circles, excitedly wagging their tails and bottoms, barking occasionally while their humans just about held onto their leads while the walk continued until the road eventually gave way to an open field where the leads came off and the race began! Who could run faster in a circle, or a straight line, or chase a ball more successfully? Then they were panting, exhausted, lying in the grass side by side. I swear they were both smiling!

There you have it: how to meet the friend we have yet to meet.

Friendship is not bound by who we are, what we do, or how much 'street cred' we have, it IS about how we show our humanity to other people. Whether we are willing to take a chance, give a real impression of who we are without the mask (e.g. Marvels' doggy language of rolling on his back and saying -this is me). We may not sniff each other but we can say "Hi ", shake a hand, and look another person in the eye, smile and gradually say, "this is me".

In friendship. Marvel and Duncan



Perspective: A Recovery College

We thought this might be a good time to look at what a Recovery college is, and their perspective of Recovery and Mental Health.

The heart of The Recovery College is the principle of co-production, where individuals with lived experience of mental health challenges work alongside health trainers to create a nurturing, inclusive, and educational environment.

This model encourages a sense of community and shared understanding.

The foundation of a recovery college is built upon the belief that everyone has the potential to thrive, even while living with mental health challenges. We aim to provide a broad spectrum of courses and workshops that are specifically co-designed to support individuals with their recovery and well-being.

As courses are co-created by people who have experienced mental health issues first hand it ensures that the content is relevant, empathic and practical. From my own experiences, alongside the feedback we received, this empowers students and provides them with the tools to manage their own journeys.

Health trainers play a crucial role in recovery colleges, acting as guides and mentors who bring professional expertise and support. Their collaboration with individuals who have lived experience enriches the learning process, creating a balanced and holistic educational experience.

We work to create a transformative and safe space where individuals can learn to love themselves, grow and thrive, despite their mental health challenges.



Meet Mandy (pictured above)

Mandy is a Health Trainer at The Recovery College and she has a beautiful horse Princess who will be celebrating her 10th birthday in July this year.

Mandy enjoys her time with Princess, and this connection has helped her with her recovery journey, not only through her connection with her horse, but also with the other horse owners she shares a space with. It is amazing what a community is able to do in supporting good mental health.



My 16 year yoga journey

My name is Diana Finch-Keran, founder of Holistic Diana Keran Yoga. I'm a 500-hour Yoga Teacher, Meditation Teacher, Gut Health Consultant, and Certified Yoga Life Coach, dedicated to guiding others on their unique and fulfilling journeys.

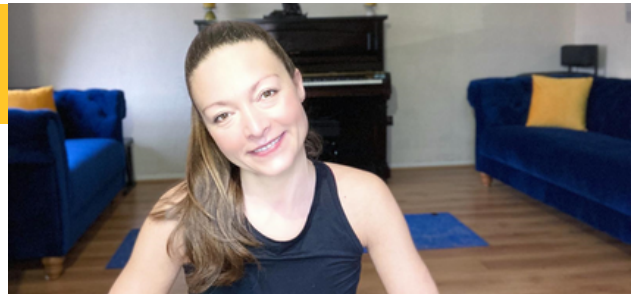
My own path began in the high-stress world of corporate life, where I was overworked, anxious, and constantly exhausted. As my yoga practice deepened, I discovered a profound need for balance in a world that pulls us in countless directions.

Sixteen years ago, amidst the chaos of career demands and motherhood, yoga became my sanctuary. It offered a lifeline through the whirlwind of deadlines and nappy changes.

This transformative experience ignited my passion to share yoga's healing power with others.

With over 700 hours of training, I learned that yoga is more than physical postures; it's about union and wholeness. I now share this wisdom with the world, providing tools to navigate life's complexities. My mission is to offer a straightforward, no-nonsense approach to wellbeing, empowering individuals to find balance amidst chaos. Through simple yet potent techniques, I create sacred spaces that guide others towards peace and clarity.

For those juggling too much, I offer techniques to de-stress, tap into inner guidance, and align with a deeper purpose. Rooted in simplicity, intuition, and love, my journey invites everyone to embrace a holistic approach to wellness and self-discovery.



Meet Diana (pictured above)

Pose of the Week: Tree Pose (Vrksasana)



Benefits:

- Enhances physical and mental balance
- Strengthens legs, ankles, and feet
- Opens hips
- Promotes focus and inner calm

How to Practice:

- 1. Start in Mountain Pose:** Stand tall with feet together, arms by sides.
- 2. Shift Weight:** Transfer weight onto your right foot.
- 3. Place Foot:** Bring left foot to inner right thigh, calf, or ankle (avoid the knee).
- 4. Find Balance:** Press foot into leg, lengthen spine, and bring hands to prayer position at heart or extend overhead.
- 5. Breathe:** Focus on a point, taking deep breaths.
- 6. Hold:** Stay for 5-10 breaths, then switch sides.

Inspirational Quote:

"Stand tall and find your roots, so you can grow towards the light."



Upcoming Courses

Course	Date	Time
Mindfulness Practice	Wednesday 3rd July Wednesday 10th July	1:30pm-2:30pm
Mindfulness Walk	Wednesday 3rd July	10am - 11:30am
Yoga for Everyone	Wednesday 17th July	10am - 12pm

Community connections

**EVERY WEDNESDAY
IS A WELL-BEING DAY**

hosted by
THE FLOWERS COMMUNITY GROUP

**AT THE FLOWERS COMMUNITY HALL
(PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS LIME CLOSE HALL)
IN LIME CLOSE, SOUTH OCKENDON**

EVERY WEDNESDAY FROM
10.30 A.M. UNTIL 12.30 P.M.
THERE'S A SUPPORT GROUP SURGERY

FROM 1.30 P.M. UNTIL 2.15 P.M.

IT'S **Oomph!** TIME

REPRESENTATIVES FROM VARIOUS
ORGANISATIONS MAY CHANGE
FROM WEEK TO WEEK.

THEY MAY BE FROM:
HEALTHWATCH
THE ALZHEIMERS SOCIETY
FIBROMYALGIA UK
THURROCK CARERS
COMMUNITY HEALTH
THE RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT TEAM
AND OTHERS

OOMPH IS GROUP-LED
IT MIGHT CHANGE WEEK TO WEEK.
THE GROUP DECIDES
IT MAY BE LIGHT EXERCISE,
(SITTING OR STANDING), GAMES,
LINE DANCING OR WHATEVER THE
GROUP FANCIES ON THE DAY.
**OOMPH IS FOLLOWED BY DRINKS,
BISCUITS, AND A GROUP CHAT**

**INFORMATION ABOUT LOCAL SERVICES
SUPPORTING COUNCIL TENANTS WITH BUDGETING, BENEFIT, & DEBT ISSUES**

Tenancy Sustainment & Managing Rent Arrears
Benefit Claims / Entitlement / Issues ~ Fuel Poverty and The Cost-of-Living Crisis
Budgeting Advice / Income Maximisation / Advice on Reducing Expenditure
Under Occupancy and Advice on the Downsizing Process ~ Debt Advice
Water Charges Reduction Entitlement / Applications ~ Council Tax Benefit Entitlement

**IF WE DON'T HAVE THE INFORMATION THAT YOU NEED, WE'LL GET
IT FOR YOU, OR ARRANGE A REFERRAL.**



Thurrock Art Society founded
in 1970, is now based in
Orsett. We meet to paint and
draw at the Orsett Churches
Centre (attached to the
Wellcome Church) most
Friday evenings from
7pm-9pm

New members of all abilities
are always welcome. Contact
us for more details at
thurrockartsociety@gmail.com

**Summer Art
Exhibition**

Saturday 13th July 2024
Between 1pm - 4pm

To be held in the Orsett Churches
Centre
(attached to the Wellcome Church)
High Road, Orsett RM16 3ER



Entry is **FREE**

ALL ARTWORK FOR SALE

Please come along and support
Local Artists



NOTICE BOARD

If you have completed a 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' course, we would like to invite you to join others in sharing your experiences.

Join us for a reunion.

Thursday 11th of July
10AM-11:30PM
Grays

You said, we did...

You said that we didn't include the time of the courses in the previous edition. **This has now been rectified.**

You said that you loved the Mindfulness Walk so **we have decided to do it again** on Wednesday 3rd July at 10-11:30am at the Chafford Hundred Gorge.



Reminder

If you are interested in contributing to the newsletter we would love to hear from you, please contact us to arrange attending our next informal meeting.

Meetings are held regularly in and around Thurrock.

The venues offer accessible facilities and free parking on site.

Contact Us!

Email: Thurrockcollege@mpft.nhs.uk

Call: 01375 809 708



Scan the QR code to visit our website and find out more!