

# Thurrock Recovery College STUDENT NEWSLETTER



Artwork by Louise  
RC Student

## In this month's *Springtime Strength* issue:

- Yoga taster sessions
- Articles from our RC Students, RC Lead & RC Co-ordinator
- Community updates

# Spring: A Season for Small Steps



By Patrizia Pessenda  
**RC Lead**

You know that feeling when you step outside one day and suddenly realise the air doesn't feel quite as cold anymore? Or when you spot that first little flower poking up through the ground and think, Oh hey... things are changing? That's the magic of spring—and honestly, it's such a good reminder for all of us.

Spring has this gentle way of saying, **"Take your time. Grow when you're ready."** Nothing out there rushes. Trees aren't panicking about getting their leaves back. Flowers don't pop up all at once. Everything just quietly does its thing at its own pace. And I think there's something really comforting in that.

It reminds us that progress doesn't have to be loud or dramatic. Sometimes strength looks like simply getting through a tough morning, or choosing to step outside for five minutes of fresh air, or sending that message you've been putting off. Little things add up. **Tiny steps are steps.**

And let's be honest—Spring also gives us a bit of a mood lift. Longer days, a bit more light, that sense that the world's waking up again. Even opening a window and letting in a breeze can make everything feel a bit lighter. It's like nature's subtle way of saying, **"You've got this."**

What I love most, though, is that spring doesn't expect perfection from us. It's totally fine to be a work in progress. To grow unevenly. To have days where you're blooming and days where you're still just a seed under the soil figuring things out.

So maybe this season can be our little reminder that we're allowed to start again, take things slowly, and find our own kind of strength—soft, steady, and completely ours.

Here's to brighter days, gentle growth, and feeling a little more like ourselves again.

# Springtime Strength

By Lauren  
RC Student



We all take our strength from different things and Springtime is the perfect time for renewal, growth and transformation. **“You are the greatest project you’ll ever work on. Restart. Reset. As many times as you need to, just don’t ever give up on yourself”.**

Growth doesn’t always feel easy but life is so changeable that sometimes we don’t even realise it is happening. As life returns to plants and flowers and the lighter evenings come in, nature can encompass the strength we take from what surrounds us. It can represent a time for joy and happiness after what can seem like a hard and cold winter. Spring can be described as an awakening of such as flowers start to bloom, awakening ourselves to new possibilities.

The longer days, lighter evenings and seeing beautiful blooms around us reflects a time for us to bloom too as we look forward to the Summer. “Maybe the next chapter is about seeing all of the seeds you’ve planted flourish beyond your imagination” and we may not feel ready to grow but being ready isn’t really a feeling, it is a decision. It is okay to choose yourself and do whatever you need to do to follow your own path.

“You aren’t lost. You’re just in a stage of life where your old self is gone but your new self isn’t born yet. You’re in the midst of a transformation”. I see Springtime as a transformative time in nature and it can also be a transformative time for us. Things feel brighter when the sun is shining and there is beauty around me. “If you see beauty in something, don’t wait for others to agree” Sheridan Gamal. That may be seeing beauty in your surroundings or in the people around you, encourage your friends and be kind to them and yourself. Sometimes we forget we need to take care of ourselves too!

“If you spend your time chasing butterflies, they will fly away. But if you spend time making a beautiful garden, the butterflies will come. Don’t chase, attract” and as a final reflection I believe anything meant for us won’t pass us by and our strength will naturally attract the right things. Butterflies are a beautiful metaphor for finding our wings. They have a transformative period too. **Take your strength from whatever you need to, keep going, even when things feel difficult, it is all part of the journey. Believe in yourself and you are already half way there!**

# ARTWORK



Artwork by Louise  
**RC Student**

When Winter lingers, the world can feel quiet, heavy, and still. Trees stand bare, the days are shorter, and life appears paused. Yet beneath the frozen soil, something important is happening, roots are strengthening, seeds are preparing, and growth is quietly gathering momentum.

### **Mental Health Often Works in the Same Way**

We tend to imagine strength as something visible. Confidence, productivity, resilience under pressure. But real mental strength is often built during the quieter seasons of life, when things feel uncertain, slow, or even difficult. Just like nature in Winter, the mind sometimes needs time beneath the surface before it can grow again.

Spring reminds us that renewal is not sudden. It is gradual, patient, and natural

### **The Hidden Strength of Difficult Seasons**

Periods of anxiety, self-doubt, or emotional struggle can feel like setbacks. In reality, they are often part of the process of strengthening the mind. When we face challenges, whether in relationships, personal growth, or life transitions, we develop emotional muscles such as patience, self-awareness, and compassion.

Just as a tree grows stronger roots to survive storms, we can develop inner stability by navigating discomfort rather than avoiding it.

Strength in mental health is not the absence of struggle. It is the ability to move through it.

*Continued on next page...*



## Growth Happens in Small Shifts

In Spring, the change is subtle at first. A slightly warmer morning. A few green buds appearing where branches were bare. A longer evening of sunlight. It may begin with small moments:

- Choosing to speak kindly to yourself
- Taking a walk when your mind feels crowded
- Sharing a worry with someone you trust
- Noticing that a difficult feeling eventually passes

These small acts may seem insignificant, but together they create momentum. Over time they build resilience, the psychological equivalent of new leaves unfolding.

## Strength Is Also Softness

Nature in Spring is not rigid or forceful. It's flexible, adaptive, and alive. Flowers bend in the wind, trees sway rather than resist.

Mental strength works in a similar way.

True resilience is often about allowing yourself to feel emotions rather than suppressing them, asking for reassurance when you need it, resting when your mind is overwhelmed.

Accepting that growth takes time.

Strength is not always pushing forward. Sometimes it is allowing space for healing.
































## Strength in Bloom

Positive mental health is not about being happy all the time. It is about developing the inner strength to navigate life's Seasons, the winters, the storms, and the springs that follow.

And like nature, we are built to grow. Sometimes growth is invisible. Sometimes it is slow. But with care, patience, and compassion for ourselves, the mind like the world outside, will eventually bloom again.

# Upcoming Courses

## April 2026

Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		
<b>30<sup>th</sup> March – 3<sup>rd</sup> April</b> Half Term Week 1						<b>2</b> Recovery Café 10:30am-1:30pm Brentwood 		<b>3</b> Good Friday		
<b>6<sup>th</sup> April – 10<sup>th</sup> April</b> Half Term Week 2						<b>9</b> Recovery Café 10:30am-1:30pm Brentwood 		<b>10</b> Recovery Café 10:30am-1:30pm Grays 		
<b>13</b> Understanding Depression 11am-1pm Grays 	<b>13</b> Newsletter Meeting 10am-11am Chafford Hundred 	<b>14</b> Food and Mood 11am-1pm Corringham 		<b>15</b> Yoga for Everyone 10am-12pm Aveley 	<b>15</b> My Rested Self Relaxation 11am-1pm Grays 	<b>16</b> Visualisation for Relaxation: The Garden 5:30pm-6:30pm Online 		<b>16</b> Recovery Café 10:30am-1:30pm Brentwood 	<b>17</b> Explore, imagine, Be 11am-1pm South Ockendon 	<b>17</b> Recovery Café 10:30am-1:30pm Grays 
<b>20</b> Understanding Depression 11am-1pm Grays 	<b>20</b> Hope and Wellbeing 12pm-2:30pm Grays 	<b>21</b> Food and Mood 11am-1pm Corringham 	<b>21</b> Mindful Walk 1pm-2:30pm Chafford Hundred 	<b>22</b> Yoga for Everyone 10am-12pm Aveley 	<b>22</b> My Rested Self Relaxation 11am-1pm Grays 	<b>23</b> Visualisation for Love, Kindness & Compassion 12pm-1:30pm Online 		<b>23</b> Recovery Café 10:30am-1:30pm Brentwood 	<b>24</b> Explore, imagine, Be 11am-1pm South Ockendon 	<b>24</b> Recovery Café 10:30am-1:30pm Grays 
<b>27</b> Understanding Depression 11am-1pm Grays 	<b>27</b> Hope & Wellbeing 12pm-2:30pm Grays 	<b>28</b> Food and Mood 11am-1pm Corringham 	<b>28</b> Mindfulness Practice 5:30pm-6:30pm Online 	<b>29</b> Yoga for Everyone 10am-12pm Aveley 	<b>29</b> My Rested Self Relaxation 11am-1pm Grays 	<b>30</b> Progressing with Visualisation: The Ocean 1pm-2:30pm Online 		<b>30</b> Recovery Café 10:30am-1:30pm Brentwood 	<b>1 May</b> Recovery Café 10:30am-1:30pm Grays 	



# Thurrock Hub



**Groups in the pipeline...**

Thurrock Residents Only

## Register your interest:

### Artful Dodgers

Intermediate art group, bring your own project.  
A space to share your love of art with others!

### Crafty Crochet

A space to meet new people and give something back to Mind through the crochet creations you make!

### Kind in Mind Neurodiversity Group

A gentle and sensitive space for neurodivergent individuals to meet like-minded people.

[peers@tbmind.org.uk](mailto:peers@tbmind.org.uk)

01375 391411

**152 Bridge Road, RM17 6DB**

Thurrock Residents Only

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p><b>10am-12pm</b></p> <p>Stepping Stones Gardening Group</p> <p><b>Open to referrals</b></p>	<p><b>10am-12pm</b></p> <p>Stepping Stones Gardening Group</p> <p><b>Open to referrals</b></p>	<p><b>10:30am-11:30am</b></p> <p>@Mind Online Group</p> <p><b>Open to referrals</b></p>		<p><b>10:30am-12:30pm</b></p> <p>Connected Minds</p> <p><b>Open to referrals</b></p>
<p><b>10:30am-12:30pm</b></p> <p>Creative Calm</p> <p><b>Open to referrals</b></p>		<p><b>12:30pm-2:30pm</b></p> <p>Colour &amp; Connect</p> <p><b>Open to referrals</b></p>		
<p><b>1pm-3pm</b></p> <p>Companionship Group (Paid service)</p> <p><b>Open to referrals</b></p>		<p><b>1pm-2pm</b></p> <p>Nature in Mind Walking Group</p> <p><b>Open to referrals</b></p>		



## Did you know...

Regular movement boosts your mood, lowers the risk of chronic diseases and increases your energy – making it an essential part of your routine for overall wellbeing!



## Where to find local activities



### Free & Low Cost Activity Booklet

Scan the QR code to check out low cost activities in Thurrock to get active – everything is under £5 a session or completely FREE!



### Find Your Active Thurrock Facebook Group

Scan the QR code to follow us on Facebook and keep up to date with local activities, seasonal events, special offers and many more ways for you to get active in your community!

## How to share your activities

### Do you offer a physical activity in Thurrock? Then get in touch!

We will promote your activities for free!  
Together, let's help Thurrock to be more active!



**Contact:** [Melissa.Huggins@thurrockcvs.org](mailto:Melissa.Huggins@thurrockcvs.org)



**Together**  
productions

# Together Create

**Making art together. Making change together.**

Activities for you and your family to get creative together. Create shared artworks, boost wellbeing, meet new friends and make a difference

Sing

Make

Free  
snacks!

Inspire  
change

Meet new  
people

**Join us for weekly visual arts sessions:**

**Landsowne Primary Academy, Tilbury - Wednesdays 3-5pm**

**Welcome to the UK, Grays - Thursdays 10am-12pm**

*Sessions run w/c 12<sup>th</sup> Jan - w/c 23<sup>rd</sup> March except w/c 16<sup>th</sup> Feb (half term break)*

***Book your FREE place via our website (see below)***

Learn new textile techniques from around the globe as we create a pop up community art space. Whether you're a beginner or have lots of creative experience, come and discover new skills, make friends and become part of something special.

Free taster session then small suggested donation per term.

Free subsidised spaces available. No experience required. All are welcome

Sign up at [www.togetherproductions.co.uk/events](http://www.togetherproductions.co.uk/events)  
Find out more: [hello@togetherproductions.co.uk](mailto:hello@togetherproductions.co.uk)  
or message/call us on 07378 968443



# The Recovery Café

Weekly 3 hour sessions

**The Recovery Café is a safe and social space where existing and new students can meet to talk about mental health related topics and find out more about Recovery College and other Inclusion services.**

## Course information:

The Recovery Café is a welcoming and informal space to:

- Connect with peers and share experiences
- Participate in wellbeing talks
- Explore recovery-focused courses and activities
- Meet others who understand the challenges of mental health recovery

## Reasons to join:

- To feel less isolated and more supported
- To enjoy a sense of belonging within a non-judgemental community
- Opportunity to register with Recovery College & book onto courses to support your wellbeing



## Contact us:

 01375 898 680

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

 [recoverycollege.inclusionthurrock.org](http://recoverycollege.inclusionthurrock.org)

**Meeting:** Waves Coffee Shop

**Date:** Every Friday

**Times:** 10:30am-1:30pm

**There is no need to book to attend the Recovery Cafe. Please note this is available to attend during term time only.**

Inclusion Thurrock is provided by <sup>NHS</sup>inclusion - a specialist service of Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (MPFT), working with Thurrock and Brentwood Mind and Essex Partnership University NHS Trust.

# Free mental health, wellbeing and employment support for people in Thurrock.

*Inclusion Thurrock offer a wide range of services including:*

- Inclusion Thurrock Talking Therapies
- Recovery College
- Inclusion Thurrock Psychological Therapy Service
- Thurrock IPS Employment Service
- Early intervention in Psychosis (EiP)\*
- At Risk Mental State (ARMS)\*

*\*This is ran in partnership with EPUT*



We offer **free** mental health support to those who are looking to access talking therapies, employment support or simply a safe space to learn more on how to live a happier, healthier life.

## To find out more:

 01375 898 680

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

 [inclusionthurrock.org](http://inclusionthurrock.org)

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



# Get That Job!

Get That Job is a 3-week program designed to equip you with the essential employability skills needed to land your ideal job. Whether you're just starting your career or looking for a fresh start, this course covers key topics such as CV writing, interview techniques, and job search strategies.

**Week 1:** CV Writing

**Week 2:** Job Searching

**Week 3:** Master effective job search strategies  
**Interview Skills & Preparation**

Boost your confidence and ace your next interview with expert tips and mock interviews.

You don't have to commit to all 3 sessions—feel free to attend the ones that work best for you!



## Enrol Now!

[www.tacc.ac.uk](http://www.tacc.ac.uk)

01375 372476

Inspiring futures through  
lifelong learning

## Colour & Connect

A safe space to colour, chat, and  
take a break from it all.

No art skills needed—just come  
as you are!

Every Wednesday

12:30pm - 2:30pm



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

 **mind** Thurrock and Brentwood

Registered Charity No: 1106451

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

## Connected Minds



EVERY FRIDAY

10:30am - 12:30pm

Come and join us in a warm and  
welcoming space where we chat, play  
games, do colouring and uplift  
each other!

Call 01375 391411 for more information

 **mind** Thurrock and Brentwood

Registered Charity No: 1106452



## SCAN ME

Scan the QR code below or visit  
**[www.recoverycollege.inclusionthurrock.org](http://www.recoverycollege.inclusionthurrock.org)**  
to read more!



### Contact Us!

**Email:** [Thurrockcollege@mpft.nhs.uk](mailto:Thurrockcollege@mpft.nhs.uk)

**Call:** 01375 809 708

**X** @ThurrckRCollege

**f** Inclusion Thurrock Recovery College