

## Celebrating 10 Years of Growth, Community, and Hope



*As we head towards the end of another successful College year, our Principal, Matt, reflects on 10 years of achievements*

“Ten years ago the world looked very different—and so did we. Our Recovery College was just beginning, built on a foundation of goodwill, passion, and the incredible generosity of volunteers. From the start, we knew we were creating something unique, something special. It’s been my privilege to witness this journey: from a small seed of an idea to a thriving, respected organisation that places equal value on lived experience and professional expertise.

At the heart of our College is a simple but powerful shift in perspective.

We’ve changed the dynamic between those receiving support and those providing it. Here, it’s never “us and them”—it’s just “us.” We all have mental health. We all face challenges. And we all have the capacity for resilience and recovery. Together, we support one another, drawing strength from our shared experiences, our collective wisdom, and our compassion.

Today, we’re proud to have nearly 1,500 learners. Our success has always been about the people. People like you. Each learner brings their own story, and together, we’ve built a vibrant learning community with growth, transformation, and mutual support at the core.

The true secret to our success? You. Your courage, your openness, your willingness to support others and embrace change. Thank you for being part of this journey. Please never underestimate the hope and positive impact you bring.”

**Save the date!** We’ll be celebrating **10 years of the Recovery College** on the **afternoon of Wednesday, 3rd September**—a special event to reflect, connect, and celebrate everything we’ve achieved together.

**We’d love for you to join us!**



# Spotlight on Kirklees Success Centre



*This month we hear from our long-standing partner, **Kirklees Success Centre**, who offers some excellent learning opportunities - through the Recovery College and elsewhere!*

“Hello! We are Kirklees Success Centre and we deliver courses in partnership with the Recovery and Wellbeing College, mainly from the Mirfield and Dewsbury venues. You may have already met some of our lovely tutors – Caroline who delivers **Steps to Success** and **Rise & Redefine**, Heather who delivers **Write Time for Wellbeing**, and Jane who facilitates **Dare to Dream** and **Empower & Inspire** (Peer Mentoring). You can find details of all our upcoming courses with the Recovery College on the RC website:

[View all courses - C & K Recovery College](#)

Kirklees Success Centre is part of Kirklees Council's Adult and Community Learning service and we deliver our free courses in a number of venues across Kirklees, including libraries, community buildings and schools.



Our courses are informal and fun and are a great starting point for you if you are returning to learning, want to build your confidence and skills or just want to get out and meet new people. We can help you to think about your next steps which might include further courses, volunteering or employment. Some of our most popular courses include training people to volunteer in schools to support children's learning, no prior experience is needed for this. It's a great way to make a difference and build your confidence.”



You can find more details of KSC's courses on their website:  
[Kirklees Success Centre | Kirklees Council](#)  
or on their Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/kirkleessuccesscentres>

Or you can call them on 01484 234153 (leave a message) or email:  
[success.centres@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:success.centres@kirklees.gov.uk) for more information

# Someone Like Me

## Life Changing

In this 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of our Recovery College, learner and volunteer, Marina, has been reflecting on 10 years of her own experiences, and shares her poignant story about how being involved with the College changed her life.



*"Life Changing..."*

*...That is what I would say if someone asked me to define my Journey with the Recovery College.*

*I was at my lowest with my mental health, from hospital to going home.*

*Then luckily I heard of the Recovery College.*

*I remember my first day, I was so anxious I almost didn't go, but now I am so thankful I did.*

*Mindfulness was one of the first courses I did, the first of many... Understanding Anxiety, Managing Emotions and so on.*

*Though I found my spark in the creative courses.*

*From someone who was hiding behind my long hair and hardly speaking. Now I'm not as quiet and I don't have long hair to hide behind.*

*It is thanks to the Recovery College that I made it this far, from a nervous and anxious learner, to a volunteer enjoying co-facilitating and helping out.*

*Also, I went back to College, and got my English, Maths and did a level 3 course.*

*Wow did it change my life - 'thank you' doesn't quite seem enough.*

*Just from attending the Recovery College, where I felt welcomed, heard, understood. Inspired.*

*Calderdale and Kirklees Recovery College - Changing lives, inspiring hope."*

# Let's Get Physical

## Standing Tall: The Importance of Posture

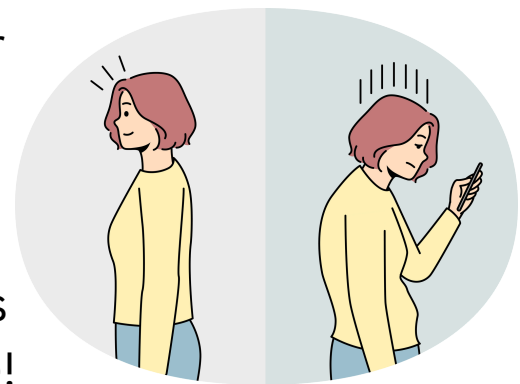
Did you know that your posture can significantly impact both your physical and emotional health? It's true! Good posture isn't just about looking confident; it's about feeling confident and healthy too. When we maintain proper posture, we align our bodies in a way that reduces strain on muscles and joints, preventing pain and discomfort. But the benefits don't stop there. When your body is aligned, it can improve your breathing, which in turn can enhance your sense of calm and focus. Good posture can also improve mood, reduce stress, and boost our overall sense of wellbeing.

### Simple ways to improve posture:

- **Mind Your Sitting Habits:** Whether you're at a desk or relaxing at home, make sure your chair supports your lower back. Sit with your feet flat on the floor and avoid crossing your legs. Keep your shoulders relaxed and your back straight. If you find yourself slouching, take a moment to readjust and sit up straight.



- **Stand Tall:** When standing, distribute your weight evenly on both feet. Imagine a string pulling you up from the top of your head, elongating your spine. Keep your shoulders back and your chest open. This not only helps with posture but also boosts your confidence!



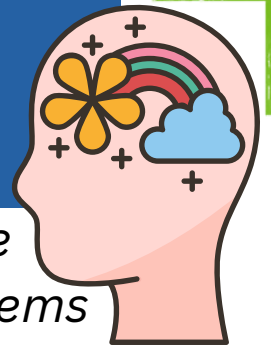
- **Stretch Regularly:** Incorporate simple stretches into your daily routine. Stretching helps to relieve tension and keeps your muscles flexible. Try shoulder rolls, neck stretches, and gentle twists to keep your body limber and aligned.



Remember, improving your posture is a journey, not a destination. Small changes can make a big difference over time. So, stand tall, sit mindfully, and stretch often. Your body and mind will thank you!



# Love to Learn: Positive Psychology



*The College is lucky to have the support of Trainee Clinical Psychologist, Kirsty, who'll be sharing some gems of wisdom with us over the next few months. Here she talks about Positive Psychology, and how we can all use it to improve our lives!*

## 5 Simple Ways to Build a Happier and Healthier Life

Positive psychology is the scientific study of what helps people and communities thrive - focusing on strengths, wellbeing, and what makes life feel meaningful. It offers practical, evidence-based ways to support our wellbeing, and they're often simpler than we think. Here are five small but powerful habits that can help build a happier, healthier life.

### 1. Savour the good

Take a moment each day to notice something pleasant. It might be a cup of tea, a smile, the sun on your skin. Pause and take a moment to think about how these things make you feel. Research shows that savouring boosts mood and helps rewire our brains for joy.

### 2. Practice gratitude

Jot down one to three highlights of your day or things you're grateful for, no matter how big or small. Over time, this helps shift attention away from what's missing and towards what's meaningful.

### 3. Connect with others

Positive relationships are key to wellbeing. Think of someone who lifts you up and reach out to them in some way. Send a kind message, ask if you can video call, or arrange to meet for a coffee.

### 4. Use your strengths

Do more of what energises you. Whether it's creativity, curiosity, or kindness, using your strengths boosts confidence and purpose.

### 5. Move your body

Physical activity – even a short walk – can lift your mood, reduce stress, and support mental clarity. Why not get creative and search for a dance tutorial on YouTube, or visit a local gym class with a friend?

**Top tip:** You don't need a full lifestyle overhaul! Start small and try one of these this week and notice how it feels, then try out another.

Stay up to date, follow us on our socials



## From Learner to Peer Worker: Finding My Voice and My Place



“Looking back on my journey as a peer worker, I’m filled with gratitude and pride. It’s been a path of growth, learning, and connection — one that started with uncertainty but has led me to a role I truly love.

I began as a learner at Barnsley Recovery College, unsure of where it might lead but open to the possibilities. Becoming a volunteer was the next step, and it was through those early experiences that I began to find my confidence. I developed the skills, understanding, and empathy that would eventually help me apply for — and be offered — a role as a Kirklees peer worker at our own wonderful Recovery College!

Some of the courses I took along the way made a real difference. They didn’t just teach me — they transformed me. And now, having the opportunity to bring some of those courses to the College here, to pass on that knowledge and continue learning from a whole new group of people, has been nothing short of amazing.

One of the most unexpected joys has been meeting people from a completely different town and being accepted just as I am — full-on Karen from Barnsley, dialect and all! I’m not someone who usually finds change easy, but the welcome I’ve received in Calderdale and Kirklees has been so warm and genuine that it now feels like home.”

“This role has become more than just a job — it’s a calling. I hope to continue working with incredible individuals, sharing stories, supporting each other, and growing together until the day I retire. Because honestly, I can’t imagine wanting to stop doing the thing that I love.”

### Contact us

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