



Finding Joy Your Way

It's that time of year again; twinkly lights, festive jumpers, and adverts full of smiling families and perfect roast dinners. But let's be honest, December isn't always easy. For many, it can stir up feelings of loneliness, stress, or pressure to be cheerful when that's not how we feel inside.

Here at the Recovery College, we know that everyone experiences this season differently. Whether you celebrate something, nothing, or everything, it's okay to take things at your own pace. You don't need to have a packed social calendar or a house full of decorations to make this time meaningful.

Instead, why not focus on what brings you comfort? That might be a warm cuppa, a walk in the crisp air, a chat with a friend, or simply curling up with a good book. Small joys count—and they're often the best kind.



We still have spaces available on some of our December courses, so if you need a breather from the festive frenzy, come and join us. No pressure, no judgement, just a space to be yourself.

Wishing you peace, warmth, and a December that feels right for you.



The College will be closed for the Christmas break from
Tuesday 23 December to Monday 5 January 2026



Spotlight On....



Grassroots Batley Dewsbury: Walking Toward Wellbeing

Grassroots Batley Dewsbury is a community-led organisation with a simple but powerful belief: good health and wellbeing starts from the ground up. By working alongside local people, they create welcoming spaces where everyone can build confidence, connect with others, and care for their mental and physical health.

Their activities are designed to be accessible and meaningful, especially for communities facing extra challenges. At the heart of their work is a commitment to mental wellbeing, including a popular women-led walking group.

  **Women-Led Walking Group** this supportive group offers a relaxed, friendly way to get moving and meet others. Whether you're new to walking or returning after a break, you'll be welcomed with open arms. Walks are free, lasting around an hour, with flatter, shorter routes suitable for all abilities.

Friendly walk buddies are always on hand, so no one walks alone.

• **When & Where: Most Thursdays at Starbucks, Bradford Road, Batley**

By walking, learning, and supporting one another, they're building a kinder, more connected community — one step at a time.



Walks are organised via WhatsApp. To join or ask questions contact:

07891 488191 or find them on Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/grassrootsbatleydewsbury?igsh=MTBoem43dzMwM2NnbQ==>

A Plan for Living Well

Do you ever feel like life has taken the wheel and you're stuck in the passenger seat? If so, it's time to grab the keys and get back in the driving seat of your life! Our flagship course, **A Plan for Living Well**, is all about helping you create your own personalised wellness plan so you can steer your life in the direction you want.



Together we'll explore:

- What wellness tools actually are (trips to DIY shop not required!)
- Daily habits that keep your wellbeing ticking over
- How to spot those early warning signs before things go off track
- What to do when life throws you a curveball
- ...and plenty more practical tips to keep you feeling your best

Our friendly facilitators don't just talk the talk, they've walked the walk. They'll share their own lived experiences and how wellness planning turned things around for them. And yes, they'll be cheering you on every step of the way. A previous learner summed it up perfectly: *"This course lived up to its name! It's by far the most helpful course I've done; it changed my life"*.

Important bit: To join this course, you'll need to have attended the **Information Session on 13 January** to make sure the course is right for you at this time. Ideally, you'll have also completed at least two previous courses or workshops with the College, and know the type of thing to expect.

We know this 8 week course is a big commitment, but as one learner said: "No pain, no gain." We'll work together, challenge ourselves, and create a safe, supportive space where everyone can grow. Still want to know more? Get in touch with the College and one of our facilitators will be happy to chat.



This potentially life-changing course starts on Tues 27 January at 1pm - 4pm at Folly Hall, Huddersfield. Don't miss out - book your place now!

Let's Get Physical: With a hop, skip and a jump!



Did you know that in the UK, over 70,000 people break their hip every year, and most of these injuries happen after a fall? For older adults, the outlook can be grim; **approximately one-third of people die within a year, and many never return to living independently at home.** Winter months bring extra risks with slippery paths and less daylight, so now is the perfect time to think about prevention, whatever our age.



The good news? We can take action now. While activities such as walking and running help, research shows that impactful exercises like hopping, skipping, and jumping are far more effective for building bone density. These movements create forces that stimulate bones to grow stronger, especially around the hips, the area most vulnerable to fractures. Now, we recognise that like us, you probably haven't done this type of exercise since childhood, so here's some top tips for us all:

Let's start small and build confidence:

- Begin with gentle jumps on the spot, holding onto a sturdy chair or worktop.
- Try hopping on one foot while holding support, alternating legs.
- Progress to jumping off a low step (just a few inches) when we feel steady.
- Just a minute or two, several times a week, can make a real difference.

Safety tips:

- Clear the space of obstacles.
- Warm up with gentle marching or heel raises.
- We may experience a little discomfort initially, but stop if you feel pain or dizziness.

Whatever our age or ability, adding a little bounce to our routine could help keep us strong and steady for years to come. Why not give it a try today?



Strengths in Action: how to use what you're good at every day!

Our lovely colleague, Trainee Clinical Psychologist, Kirsty has now moved on to her next placement, however she has kindly left us with a few more top tips!

Each of us has unique strengths - qualities, talents, or personal traits that come naturally and energise us when we use them. Positive psychology, the science of what helps people thrive, shows that identifying and applying these strengths in daily life can boost happiness, confidence, and overall wellbeing.

Discover your strengths

Start by reflecting on the activities that make you feel engaged, proud, or “in the zone.” These moments often reveal your natural abilities. You can also ask friends, colleagues, or family members for input - sometimes others notice strengths in us that we overlook. There are even short, free online questionnaires that can help highlight key strengths.

Use your strengths intentionally

Once you know your strengths, look for practical ways to use them every day. For example, if curiosity is one of your strengths, explore a new idea, read about a topic that fascinates you, or ask questions in a conversation. If kindness or empathy is a strength, reach out to support someone, offer encouragement, or listen without judgment. Even small actions, like taking the lead on a task that suits your skills, can make a meaningful difference in your day and those around you.

Notice the impact

Pay attention to how using your strengths affects your mood, energy, and sense of purpose. Over time, consciously engaging your strengths can help you feel more engaged in work, hobbies, and relationships. Challenges may feel less daunting because you're using tools that come naturally to you.

Try it this week. Pick one strength to focus on each day. Reflect on how it influences your mood, productivity, and connections.





Grounding Booklet - Get Involved!

Here at the Recovery College, we're excited to be developing a Grounding Booklet, a practical, inspiring resource that can be printed, shared with you, our lovely learners, used by facilitators across our courses, and even adapted for our website or YouTube channel. Our Recovery Coach, Nicky, is bringing this booklet to life – and we'd love it to be shaped by the voices and experiences of our Recovery College community. That means you! 😊

What is Grounding? Grounding is a simple way to bring yourself back to the present moment when things feel overwhelming, anxious, or disconnected. It helps calm racing thoughts and reduce stress by focusing on what's real and tangible around you.

Examples include:

- 5-4-3-2-1 technique – notice 5 things you can see, 4 you can touch, 3 you can hear, 2 you can smell, and 1 you can taste.
- Holding a comforting object or focusing on your breath.
- Listening to music or naming things in your environment.



Grounding can help you feel safer, more in control, and connected to the here and now. If you'd like to get involved then simply share your own grounding strategies, reflections, or creative ideas by email or hand them to a member of our friendly team.

 **Deadline: Friday 19th December**

 Email: Ckrecovery.wellbeing@nhs.uk

Your voice matters – let's create something amazing together! 💙

Contact us

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