



Umbrella Yoga CIC

Health Your Way  
Third Sector Leaders

**Third Sector Leaders Kirklees is a charitable incorporated organisation, charity number: 11622592.**

## CASE STUDY: Yoga for Trauma Recovery

### SUMMARY OF PROJECT

In this project we offered yoga sessions to three groups: survivors of sexual abuse; adults recovering from brain injuries; the migrant community. The three groups were distinct, but most of the participants had lived through traumatic experiences and were dealing with the mental and physical consequences. Our yoga sessions were adapted to the groups and carefully tailored to be sensitive to their individual needs.

### WHO WAS INVOLVED?

The women who had experienced sexual abuse were approached via the **Kirklees Calderdale Rape and Sexual Assault Clinic**. These sessions were delivered in the Huddersfield Centre; they were extended to staff members of KRASAC as well.

The migrant community was approached through **The Welcome Mentors**. Sessions were delivered in a Huddersfield yoga studio; they were extended to adults living with mental health and isolation struggles.

The adults recovering from brain injuries were approached through **Headway UK**.

A total of 35 people took part in the sessions.

1 volunteer was involved in our programme.

### Feedback from Headway participants

*“I feel less stressed when I have done yoga”*

*“Quiet and calming. Reflective. This enables time just to ‘be’ rather than to be continually ‘doing’”*

*“I feel calmer and I have more energy”*



Feedback from migrant community:

*“They have been incredibly important for my mental health and I would be lost without them”*

*“Yoga has helped with tension, trauma release, fibromyalgia and migraines”*



### 3 THINGS WE ACHIEVED

- 1. Introduced people to a new way of coping with trauma. They began to appreciate how relaxing the body can help the mind to relax, and vice versa.**
- 2. Helped people develop their awareness and control of their breath. This is a powerful and accessible tool that is freely available to everyone!**
- 3. Established connections with new communities and groups. We now have an excellent partnership with all three organisations that we collaborated with. This will continue to strengthen both of our services.**



**Third Sector Leaders Kirklees is a charitable incorporated organisation, charity number: 11622592.**





## NEXT STEPS FOR PARTICIPANTS and ORGANISATION PARTNERS

- The KRASAC staff are very keen for our sessions to continue. However, participants were nervous about attending and we had several no-shows. The staff plan to spend more time encouraging and supporting the service users to engage with the sessions. We are also working with the staff to develop their own yoga practice, so they can accompany the service users to the sessions. We think that trust is key here. For the sexual abuse survivors, we may offer one-to-one sessions, until confidence and trust builds.
- The migrant community groups continue to have sessions available to them (online and in-person). Many have engaged with new groups, so continue their yoga practice regularly.
- The Headway sessions are now funded directly by Headway. These were very well attended and participants were keen for them to continue.

## OTHER LEARNING/FEEDBACK/COMMENTS

This has been a learning experience for us all. Although the groups were very different, they all had the common thread of being trauma survivors. The gentle, inclusive and encouraging approach was therefore key across groups.

We found excellent uptake in one of the groups (Headway), reasonable uptake in another (migrant community), but fairly poor uptake in the third (sexual abuse). We don't doubt the need for mind-body interventions in sexual abuse survivors – but we need to find another way to encourage and support the participants to engage. We are working with our partners to achieve this.

TSL Kirklees is the infrastructure support organisation for Kirklees, helping local charities, community and voluntary groups, and social enterprises grow, develop, and make great things happen that support local people and communities.

We take an asset-based approach to community-centred health and wellbeing and support local groups to create new offers and activities.

**Third Sector Leaders**  
Kirklees is a charitable  
incorporated organisation,  
charity number: 11622592.

