



AJANI
"It's Your Choice"

CAMDEN PROGRAM EVALUATION

1 FEBRUARY TO 15 FEBRUARY 2020

PRESENTED BY: LAWRENCE CURTIS AND LUKE FLEMING

SHP PILOT PROGRAM EVALUATION

AIMS OF THE AJANI PROJECT

THIS PROGRAM WAS TO WORK ALONGSIDE KENTISH TOWN JOB CENTRE
WORK WITH CLIENTS TO BECOME MORE JOB READY FOR EMPLOYMENT
PROACTIVELY PROMOTING BETTER HEALTH AND FITNESS
PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES TO BE MORE ACTIVE
CREATING AWARENESS OF WHY PEOPLE NEED BETTER NUTRITION
INSTILLING IN PEOPLE RESPONSIBILITY, THE NEED TO TAKE ACTION AND TO THINK ABOUT THE CHOICES THEY MAKE.
CREATING A GROWTH MIND-SET MENTALITY; A “CAN-DO” ATTITUDE

WE HAVE:

- Built Confidence and Self-Esteem
- Re-Energized people through fitness advice and classes
- Improved mental health, pre-empting some issues, and helping people control their depression, stress and anxiety
- Helped people as they move into being “job ready” and “life ready” quicker, happier, and stronger
- Provided ongoing classes and events to maintain improvement
- Promoted a Growth Mind-set mentality with our unique delivery and fresh approach
- Created strong links with the service users, quickly developing trust
- Built awareness of the importance of choices, action, perseverance, listening, and behaviour

PREPARATION FOR THE COURSE

The funding for the course was provided by Camden Giving, a charity looking to provide money to small projects overseeing equity in the local community. We were encouraged to approach them by Islington Giving, which is overseen by the Cripplegate Foundation.

The funding was to work with the local Job Centre (Kentish Town), working with residents in the Somers Town area of Camden, to improve mental health, stress, and thought processes, especially with the HS2 project focused on that area, and the problems that was causing for the local community.

Lawrence and Luke approached, and met with, Nisar Shaikh, the “Department for Work and Pensions, Employment and Partnership Manager for the London Borough of Camden”, who then introduced us to Ejiro Ighovojah – the Disability Employment Advisor for the DWP Kentish Town Jobcentre Plus. She invited Lawrence and Luke to meet all the job coaches at the Job Centre at one of their meetings, where HMHB then presented the project to them. We were also allowed to come and spend over eight hours in the Job Centre and talk to people as they came in. We also chatted with Andrea Hughes, another Disability Employment Advisor at the Centre. This enabled us to build up numbers for the course.

The Job Centre were fully supportive of our objectives, and also encouraged us to get feedback on how people felt about the chance of employment at the end of the course.

Peter Simonson, the Referrals and Signposting Co-ordinator for the St. Pancras and Somers Town Living Centre (which is at the back of the large Francis Crick Institute, behind the British Library), had attended one of our pilot sessions in 2019, so using him as a contact we met with the manager of the Living Centre and obtained use of the venue for our course.

This Ajani three session course was held on consecutive Saturday afternoons – the 1st, 8th, and 15th February 2020.

THE COURSE ITSELF

We prepared at length for this course. It was the first one we had run using service users from a Job Centre, and we were anxious to demonstrate the benefits we know we could bring to their clients.

As this was three sessions, not the four we had provided before, Lawrence, Luke and Dean met several times to ensure we would provide the best possible guidance.

Each session lasted from 1:30pm to 3:45pm. We had eight attendees.

Each week we provided sessions between 20 and 40 minutes on Mind-set, Fitness, Nutrition, Exercise and Health/Routine. There is a great deal of interaction, and that determines the length of each section. We concentrate on making it fun and simple, interesting, but also memorable. Our unique delivery style, provides opportunities for everyone to contribute, whilst keeping a control on the proceedings.

This course went very smoothly. HMHB had also updated some of our content with new games and fun.

HOW DID WE DO?

The feedback from this course was sensational.

We adjusted our feedback forms so people could not leave just one word replies. Using guidance from other companies, as well as speaking with the Job Centre, it was important to get information on the different sessions, as well as an overall picture.

We asked people if they felt they had improved their confidence, energy levels, and even their fitness.

“Before, I was not in a good place. Just getting out of the house was a struggle, but having these scheduled meetings, and hearing tips especially on mindset, exercise and diet, got me into a rhythm that I hope I will be able to keep up.”

“Now I have said out loud what I want to achieve, I will make this happen. The course was fab.”

“I came without expectations, but was addicted to the amount of activities and learning opportunities provided.”

“A Life Changing Experience”

“Such a positive and supportive, practical and social upbeat experience.”

Kentish Town Job Centre asked us to find out if people felt better about the possibility of finding work following the course.

“I’m less fearful and more confident about looking for a job and returning to work.”

“It helps”

“I’m ready to start work as soon as possible”

“Work seems less daunting and more attainable now.”

We asked people if their understanding of mindset had improved, and how they felt. We have encouraged service users to understand how they decide on choices they make, and to look at how they can make “better choices”. This involved using quizzes and games, where they had to come up with answers on their own or as a group, as well as take part in group activity.

“I need to interact with people more to get advice, and stay positive”

“My mind has lifted and I am so relieved about not having to go through this alone.”

“Positive thinking makes all the difference”

“The Passion of Ajani comes through. The people embody the spirit of the Ajani approach. I feel more positive about how I deal with situations”

For nutrition, we asked if people had a better understanding now on why it was important to eat healthier, and review our diets. We concentrate more on the make-up of nutrition – protein, carbohydrates, sugars, fats, vitamins and minerals – and the nutrient components driving metabolism. We do this with visual and practical aids, as well as encouraging group discussion and interaction. There is an onus on the responsibility of the individual to look after their diet.

“The nutrition was interesting. I liked the Simple Guide handout very much”

“I never realized just how important it was for my body”

“I have cooked my first meal for myself” – this client has ADHD and confessed he had never really cooked in his life. “I am now curious about cooking”. HMHB is over the moon with this feedback. To think we have influenced someone so much that they have adjusted their routine in this way is remarkable.

“I have never really thought about what I need to eat to stay alive. This has been a real eye opener.”

“Luke and Lawrence made it so easy to understand. They didn’t try and tell me what to eat.”

For exercise, HMHB wanted to introduce people to various moves they can do at home or outdoors, that were simple to do, but also would help them raise their energy levels and improve their fitness. From a mix of “arms, core and legs” exercises, through to cardio and boxability (movement and flexibility using boxing gloves and pads). We wanted to make it fun. We will talk about our gym studio sessions after the quotes.

“Even if it is just five minutes waling, something is better than nothing.”

“I am going to start building up my muscle strength.”

“Stretching is easy and really helps.”

“Just starting up is the hardest part, but I can do it.”

“It really makes a difference to me”

Seven of the group have now attended at least one of our weekly gym sessions. In partnership with Better Gym, Healthy Minds, Healthy Bods organizes three FREE gym studio sessions in Islington and Camden at this time. They have said they expect to keep attending.

Saturday morning at the Sobell Centre (Islington) – 9am every week.

Tuesday morning at Highbury Leisure Centre (Islington) – 9:30am every week

Thursday morning at Pancras Leisure Centre (Camden) – 9am every week in Feb and Mar 2020 (although we are hoping that they will allow us to continue afterwards).

We asked the group “if you were telling someone about our Ajani course, what you would say? Would you recommend it?”

“It can help you to find motivation.

“You can meet new people, and get different perspectives on life.”

“People that really want to help you.”

“I learned very useful and practical instructions on what to do”

“Boosts up your desire to do things.”

“I feel much more positive at just keeping at it.”

“I loved the personal, authentic, upbeat style of Lawrence and his group.”

“The mix of subjects really kept me engaged. Everyone chipped in.”

“Lawrence and his team are such inspirational, warm, uplifting people. It gets an energy permeating in the class. I loved the metaphors used in the presentations.”

“You would be silly not to. It builds you up, it’s energetic, but full of useful information. It’s not dry, and the people you meet are from all walks of life.”

“So Much Fun!!!”

REVIEW

	This Program	Future Programs
Length	Three sessions. Each Two hour and a quarter hours.	We feel four or five sessions are our best, but funding for this made only three available. With seed funding we can provide even more options.
Content	Each week we completed sections on the four main subjects: Mind-set/Routine, Health, Fitness, Nutrition	We will start with a quick review of the previous week to see how people remember what we did. We are already looking at ways we can introduce more fun and knowledge.
Attendance	Attendance was good. The Job Centre did not know of us, so it was a little difficult pushing the course. The Living Centre was a suitable venue	Continue to improve contact, working with keyworkers where relevant.

Plus – handouts: On this program we gave out handouts with an HMHB Ajani printed folder for people to collect all their paperwork. It was commented on that it looked very professional. Quality is important if you want people to believe in you and your project.

Plus – extras: Many on the course have been attending out Thursday fitness session at Pancras Leisure Centre. We have also had attendance at the two sessions in Islington. I am delighted to announce that three of the group will be signing up with the Rebalance Weight Management Program, run by Aquaterra in Islington and Camden using the Better Gyms. This is a free 12 week course, where you get access to on-going sessions at the gyms as well as some class work around weight management. Lawrence himself did the course last year. Two others on the course had already completed it.

Plus – evaluation: We improved our feedback evaluation, but this can continue to be adapted as we move forward. We are hoping to get some video feedback too.

THE FUTURE

We are looking to sign up to the Dynamic Purchasing System, so we can offer our services to Job Centres around London. This is dependent on seed funding. HMHB is meeting with the Lottery in March. We also have another Camden course in the Regents Park area in March, as well as an Islington one. We just want to continue on. This extraordinary feedback can only help with that.