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AJANI
"It's Your Choice"

BRICKWORKS PROGRAM EVALUATION

9 OCTOBER TO 30 OCTOBER 2018

PRESENTED BY: LAWRENCE CURTIS

BRICKWORKS COMMUNITY CENTRE PROGRAM EVALUATION

AIMS OF THE AJANI PROJECT

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.

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
- Created strong links with the service users, quickly developing trust
- Built awareness of the importance of choices, action, perseverance, listening, and behavior
- Developed connections with other groups that have helped our participants

NUMBERS ATTENDING

Overall, nine different people attended this course over the dates – although not all came to every session due to outside requirements such as doctor appointments, other medical engagements, and family issues.

It was all ladies this time, which was interesting. We also had a couple of people who were quite raw to a mental health situation that was affecting them quite deeply. We were able to pass them on to other agencies that could offer the help they required, and we know that had an effect on them – we will mention that later on in this report.

HOW DID WE DO?

This course was adapted to accommodate a different category of user. This was Healthy Minds, Healthy Bods first course with a Community Centre base, and the first where the service users could have been going through any issues. Before, HMHB had only worked with substance recovery clients, with great success. We therefore tailored this course so it concentrated on all situations, and didn't focus just on recovery.

In a couple of ways, this turned out to be a really important development, and one which we know affected two lives in a particular way. Two of our ladies were going through tough times, and had not actually looked for any outside help. I have been asked to only use first names in this report.

Claire, was very raw to a family break up. It had hit her hard, and she was not coping well at all. Privately, she mentioned suicide, and that she was struggling to find a reason to live. HMHB is a very positive group

environment, and she said that the mindset part of the delivery had helped her. We have a game that involves creating a television type advertisement for a product – which in this case was a breakfast cereal. She actually said that she “was not here for fun”, but half an hour later she was laughing along with everyone else, contributing to the group, and was central to the production.

HMHB was able to direct her to Icope, and also encouraged her to ask for counselling. She confirmed to Lawrence of HMHB, that the mindset games helped her to decide to actively seek help, and we know from Icope, although they quite rightly could not give us direct information about her case due to data protection, that she had attended their services. We believe that we could have, and clearly we have no direct evidence of this claim, stopped her committing suicide, which if it was the only outcome from this course would still have made it all worthwhile.

We also met Claudette, who was a lovely lady, aged around 60. She had turned to drink as, following a move to the area, she had lost direct contact with her family and was quite lonely, and used to pop into the community Centre as it was local just to stop her isolation. I am really glad to say that she came to three of our sessions, and we were able to put her in contact with Better Lives (an integrated drug and alcohol service delivered by Camden and Islington NHS Trust, who offer a free and confidential support service), and we know she attended. We know she still goes to the Brickworks Community Centre, but it is great to know that we facilitated that connection – and again this has had a big impact for her.

The rest of the group were not at such immediate risk, and everyone participated well. HMHB encourages interaction, and we were very happy with the feedback.

We have had a couple of the ladies attend our Free Fitness Sessions which we run at the Sobell Centre. One of these ladies, Carolyn, also now attends the Eagle Project – through our invitation. They are a peer support group in Islington, who have either been through some kind of treatment for substance addiction (drugs, alcohol or food), or have been closely associated with others in the same boat).

We were welcomed by Brickworks Community and they reported they were happy with the service we provided.

REVIEW

	This Program	Future Programs
Length	We had four sessions, all on Tuesday mornings, between 10am and 12pm.	We have found that four to seven sessions are ideal, depending on the needs and outcomes of the organization we are working with.
Content	Each week we completed sections on the four main subjects: Mind-set/Routine, Health, Fitness, Nutrition	This program proved our adaptability, and how fluid we are depending on the make-up of our users. We were also able to adapt on the day.

	This Program	Future Programs
Attendance	With this kind of program, where we were working with a community centre, and not an organization as such, it is down to us to monitor and encourage attendance	Continue to improve contact, working with keyworkers where relevant. Need to get work mobile number. Also, must ensure we keep a register.

Plus – handouts: On this program we intended to give handouts most week, with a file for people to collect all the paperwork. Due to printing issues, we gave them out in one go. Future programs, we will ensure that we do provide all relevant handouts on the appropriate week. In fact, we have already addressed this by having all handouts professionally printed, and have used Vistaprint to supply HMHB folders.

Plus – extras: HMHB provides a free fitness session at the Sobell Centre on a Saturday morning, provided by Better Islington free of charge – amazing I know – and at least two people have come along to these from this course. Providing on going opportunities to improve daily exercise is fundamental.

Plus – evaluation: We improved our feedback evaluation, but this can continue to be adapted as we move forward. Sadly, nobody was keen to do any video feedback, but that could change.

Plus – social media: We need to get everyone on our social media from week one instead of waiting till the end of the course. Anyone without an email address we will get them set up. People can be reluctant, but I do know people look at our Facebook and blogs.

THE FUTURE

HMHB feels that we succeeded in successfully running this Community Centre Ajani – we certainly learnt more about ourselves, as well as the needs of service users. It was an interesting dynamic, and we are proactive in keeping the sessions positive, but also compassionate about the desire of some of our users towards information they need.

It showed we can do shorter courses, but also deliver a professional quality course.

It was the first time we had come across people going through dramatic depression, but using our own history, experience, and networking, were able to direct people appropriately.

It did excite us to the potential of HMHB, Ajani and our ambitions. We just need more finances and security. We thank the Cripplegate Foundation and Islington Giving for allowing us the finance to complete this course.