



AJANI
"It's Your Choice"

AGE UK ISLINGTON

APRIL 2023

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AGE UK EVALUATION 2023 AJANI

Who are AGE UK?

The Age UK network is a partnership of independent charities which includes national partners, over 120 local Age UKs, and hundreds of smaller organisations called Age UK Friends and Forums. Together, they provide a wide range of services to help people in later life throughout the UK.

We have known AGE UK Islington for quite a while, and we approached them at the start of 2023 to do our Ajani Mind-set course with them.

AIMS OF THE AJANI PROJECT – (AJANI IS AN AFRICAN WORD MEANING “HE WHO OVERCOMES THE STRUGGLE”)

PROACTIVELY PROMOTING BETTER HEALTH AND FITNESS.

PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES TO BE MORE ACTIVE.

MAKE PEOPLE AWARE THAT IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO CHANGE YOUR LIFESTYLE

CREATING AWARENESS OF WHY PEOPLE NEED BETTER NUTRITION.

INSTILLING IN PEOPLE RESPONSIBILITY, THE NEED TO TAKE ACTION THEMSELVES, AND TO THINK ABOUT THE CHOICES THEY MAKE IN THEIR LIVES.

CREATING A GROWTH MIND-SET MENTALITY.

WE HAVE:

- Built Confidence and Self-Esteem.
- Re-Energized people through fitness advice and classes, demonstrating simple ways to include exercise into their daily lives.
- Improved mental health, with awareness around a healthy lifestyle.
- Helped people understand more about how their bodies work.
- 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, we had a total of eighteen people attend, which was terrific. Age UK Islington did their own internal promotion for us, and we also provided them with a poster/flyer for their use. As the people came through AGE UK, they monitored the names and attendance.

This was the quote sent to me by the “activities coordinator” at AGE UK Islington.

“The participation was great as we had 18 attendees out of a target of 20. Unfortunately, due to GDPR, I won’t be able to provide their names.”

HOW DID WE DO?

This course, held at Sotheby Mews Day Centre in Islington, N5, was a terrific success. It was the first time we had worked closely with AGE UK Islington in this way, and we thank them for allowing us the opportunity to work with some of their users and staff. We already know them well through our monthly 40-page Health Pack that we develop and distribute (previously a 26-page weekly Health Pack developed through the original Covid Lockdowns).

Our contact at AGE UK Islington was Carmen – she is the “activities coordinator”. Our first piece of feedback was a message to her that said:

“Hi Carmen, I really enjoyed the Healthy Minds and body sessions, and I learned a few new things I would recommend it to anyone 60+ thank you for inviting me.”

We also asked Carmen to contact users afterwards to get more detailed feedback. This is what she sent to us.

ONE

“It is important to keep fit and to have a healthy diet. Thank you to Lawrence and the exercise trainer for the sessions, also thank you Carmen for arranging. I like to do simple exercises, which I could do at home. I enjoy the team works and decision-making with teammates. I feel more lively after the sessions and look forward to having further sessions in the near future.”

TWO

“Enjoyed the sessions with Lawrence immensely.

Was very informative and different which is good.

Gave you another perspective on how to think about resolving issues and reminded you about the things we do unconsciously every day of our lives.

The exercise sessions were excellent and could have been a tad longer.”

It would be good to have follow up sessions.

Thank you again.”

THREE

“It was really good participating with the sessions that Lawrence ran for healthy bodies and mind. It gave me motivation to exercise more and look after myself better with a healthier diet. It would be good if there were more events like these.”

FOUR

“I did enjoy the sessions and found them really interesting. It was such a shame I couldn't fully participate due to health issues but hopefully another time I could.

I think these sessions are of great benefit.”

FIVE

“Thank you for these health workshops. They were enjoyable- and food for thought”.

As you can see, our unique delivery style helped people look at how they were currently living their lives, and how some changes around nutrition, exercise, and mindset can make a difference. Each session of our course consists of chunks of different topics. Our normal course would involve four two-hour sessions. Each session starts with a mind-set game, lasting around 25-30 minutes, but normally with some kind of meaning to it. Then we do a stretch before heading to nutrition where we look at the makeup of our diet, not specific

foods, and how our bodies use them to stay healthy and active – like protein, carbs, fats, sugars, vitamins, minerals, water, antioxidants, etc. We have a break before some kind of exercise (each week is different from the others – HIIT, Circuit with equipment, Boxercise, etc. And we finish with a health/routine topic. It is great fun, informative, we laugh, but we also are direct.

AGE UK Islington have already asked us if we can come back and do more with their users.

Plus – extras: HMHB provide three Free exercise sessions a week, two Free health walks per week, a Free Zumba session every week. We also provide outings, and people on this course were invited to a Canal walk, a trip to Emirates Stadium (Arsenal FC) and a local history walk with Islington Walks, which we attended. We also have ongoing outings – in June we have a couple of theatre visits, a museum visit (Bank of England), and a comedy night. Our outings will continue over the summer.

Plus – evaluation: As we were working with AGE UK Islington clients, they preferred for us not to be contacting their users directly, and instead they would collate the evaluation feedback and pass on to us.

Plus – social media: HMHB promoted our social media to all participants. We asked them to join our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and maybe connect with our YouTube and Blog. We also discussed our 40-page Health Pack – and that we have PDFs for each of them online – and they can look back at previous copies. As HMHB, we promoted other organisations, such as Healthy Generations, who have over 60 local FREE exercise sessions of all kinds.

Finally, we also talked about mental health, stressing that if people are concerned about any issues to talk to medical professionals, such as their local medical practice.

THE FUTURE

HMHB felt delighted with the feedback and success of this Ajani course – as always, we learnt more about ourselves, as well as the needs of service users. It was an interesting dynamic to have a large number of people attend, and we were proactive in keeping the sessions positive, but also compassionate about the desire of some of our users towards information they need.

It demonstrated to us that we could not just deliver a professional quality course, but that we were able to handle multiple courses at the same time – as we were also working with other groups on different days.

It was the first time we had delivered a course to staff of an organisation alongside the users of that company.

It excited us even more to the potential of HMHB, Ajani and our ambitions. There must be space for smaller projects like us to work alongside people like the NHS and larger companies. Funding needs to be made available. HMHB has quite a unique delivery, which has garnered terrific feedback. And our course can work with mental health clients, unemployed clients, older clients, people in work, and more.