

Simon's story

"If we go into a situation with other people or experience something, right there you've changed your life or path, even with the smallest thing."

Background

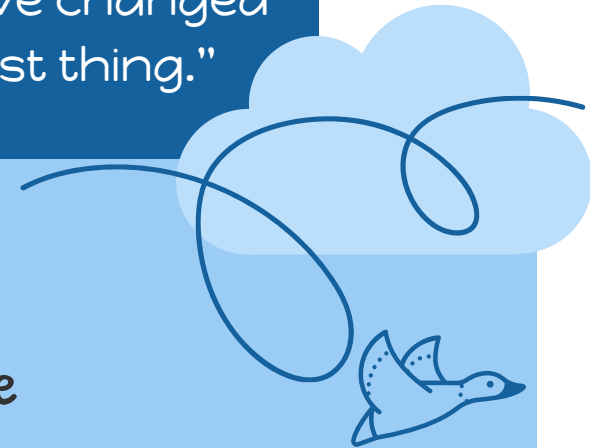
Simon has complex mental health issues and was struggling to find support. "I have found it extremely difficult to get any actual help, or find any programmes, or get into them. Either you're on a massive waiting list, or you don't get in." He liked how the programme approached used nature as a tool to support mental health "I think it was just something from it affirming the link between mental health and alternative things like looking at nature".

What has changed for Simon?

Simon reflects back on his time and sees this as a good time period in his life "Just to be treated with respect." It also acted as a reminder to use nature as a tool to support his wellbeing "for myself, it was just a reminder, and the value of it, and if I can at all get into nature." Participating in the programme also gave Simon hope that mental health services are going to improve.

Simon's experience

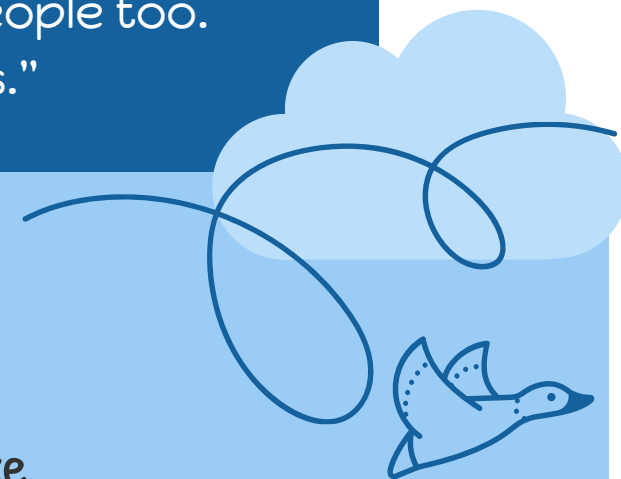
Simon felt the programme was delivered with respect and empathy "There was a lot of respect, which I find doesn't happen very much with people with mental health issues". He felt it wasn't rigid in its design and this made him feel welcomed, and more open to be himself "There was an ease to it that was quite lovely. It wasn't all very stringent."



Lisa's story



"It was very exciting that it was done in nature as well as meeting other people too. Those were the main things."



Background

Lisa struggled to make connections and socialise with people which made her feel very isolated. The thought that the programme was delivered outside in nature helped ease her anxieties "It involved outdoor activities and this would break the ice with the other people, not just being in one room, talking." Lisa was referred into the programme by her Peer Support Worker.

What has changed for Lisa?

Lisa feels this programme has helped her socialise with other people and has since joined a walking group "I started to go with a walking group so I will see new places and speak to other people." Lisa has also started to introduce self care practices into her daily life "The course has made me feel more compassionate with myself, not being so harsh on myself is a good step to take!"

Lisa's experience

As the weeks went on, Lisa felt more comfortable "I felt more comfortable in the group, more relaxed." speaking with others in the group. Focusing on nature made a huge difference to Lisa. It helped her take part and reduce her anxieties "It made a lot of difference, absolutely, you feel more in connection with nature."