

SUMMARY REPORT FOR LONDON YOUTH WORKERS TRAINING (AWARDS FOR ALL FUNDED PROJECT)

Background

The aim of the project was to develop the Mindapples training programme to benefit disadvantaged young people in London. Working with our partners at London Youth, we designed a project to teach youth workers the key principles of our programme, and support them to use this material to support young people. By doing this, we hoped to increase the wellbeing and life chances of young people, and prove the model for expanding its reach and impact.

34 youth workers attended the full training and completed the evaluation. The training was held as two separate 2-day courses at London Youth's offices. Follow up materials were also provided, including a facilitators' guide with full notes on all the training materials.

Summary of findings

Feedback from the youth workers in the first sessions were extremely positive about the design of the materials, and the input we obtained from other partner organisations such as Action for Happiness really helped us to get the materials right. This meant, aside from some tweaks to the trainer notes, we could focus most of our energies on improving the design of the course itself, and the general guidance on running sessions. The course was reorganised to allow more time to discuss the content, with three modules on the first day and the final module the following morning. This was to ensure that all participants had time to discuss and digest the content, and still allowed time for them to practice delivering it on day two.

The facilitator guide underwent various changes to incorporate suggestions from the participants about ground rules and things to remember when facilitating sessions, and we incorporated a number of suggestions from participants on how to run sessions and specific tips on communicating the content. We also developed a session outline template for participants to use to note down how they'd used the content with their young people, which was co-designed with the youth workers and is now being used to help them share best practice.

The youth workers said it would help their young people, but also that they felt it helped them significantly too - that their wellbeing was important and that they had tools for supporting themselves, so that they could support their young people better.

Feedback from participants

All participants were given a questionnaire a month after completing the training. The summary results were as follows:

1. How many young people did you reach with any or all of the concepts?

Participants reached a combined total of 196 young people as a result of this training.

2. What format did you use?

5 used it in a formal session with a group (date/time/topic notified in advance)

6 used it as and when with individuals

4 held informal sessions with a group

1 used the Mindapples materials in 1-2-1 mentoring sessions

1 used it with friends and family (and said it had the biggest impact on themselves)

3. How frequently did you find yourself using the concepts in general conversation/contact with young people?

- *I often refer to the 'five things a day' that could cheer them up and frequently advise them to drink healthily or think about what they eat. For instance, the other day we made smoothies and I explained to them that bananas can boost their happiness. Having the training has informed me on how to give advice about positive mental health.*
- *I used some of the Love Your Mind concepts in two of my mentoring sessions.*
- *Sometimes, and older person*
- *Very frequently, I like to ask young people how they are feeling and why they are feeling that way. Whenever I am in conversation, I think about Mindapples and how my actions and moods affect others*
- *In general, I have been using the concepts quite regularly i.e. every day to a certain extent*
 - * *asking young people about a tv programme to start a conversation going.*
- *At the beginning often while it was fresh in my mind and then less often*
- *At least once every session*
- *Every day, several times a day when we first did the training. Now I would say it comes up every day for me but I would still share through conversations at least once a week*
 - Using it a lot with my colleagues, realising they are/may be in a certain mood therefore I can then navigate myself around it, make the office space better or worse depending on how I want to deal with it.*
 - There is an idea of wanting to just create a culture of sharing or reflection for our young people before we start a session.*
- *I have used this quite frequently in conversation with the young people I work with. I would say a couple of times a week at least.*
- *Gets you aware of things - go into office & pick up on people's actions etc.*

*Two of them often had conversations on whether they had any water
Comes up randomly, can be anything you do and something comes up.
Know what to say if someone has got something on their mind - there were a
couple of young people where every week she could see something was bothering
them. Can get them to start understanding themselves.
Helps with shut down questions like how's your day/how was school.*

- *So far I managed to use the concepts in one session only as previous to that, and straight after the training course, I unexpectedly had to go away on business and then had to take a few days off for personal reasons.*
- *We did a structured session within a drop in covering the steps to wellbeing. At the end the young people created their 5-a-day lists which we will refer back to at a future session.*
- *Quite often for my first few sessions*

4. How much do you think you will continue to use them?

- *We still have lots of the sessions that we want to use and we will plan to use some of the material at our residential that we run in the summer. I will certainly use some this year and will most likely run more sessions next year too. Informally I think we will use the information all the time, particularly in regards to the emotion wheels, creating calm environments and increasing motivation.*
- *We used some of the concepts to explore some of the areas my mentee would like to work on. We will very likely be using some of the concepts or relating to them throughout the duration of the mentoring programme.*
- *More often*
- *I will always use the material. I am very mind conscious as it is. I am going to do a session very soon.*
- *I will definitely continue to use all of the tools as they are very useful*
- *I would like to use them increasingly*
- *The more I use the tools and get familiar with them*
- *Dependent on where the environment or opportunity comes up.
Definitely at the beginning of each staff training.
Once a term at least, but more informally in conversations with staff & young people.*
- *The master your moods - moods and emotions has been one that has stuck with the groups I work with, this has been influenced by myself in delivery. This is one that has stuck in particular, "what mood did you wake up and how many/what emotions have you felt since"*
- *I am planning to make the concepts discussed in the training part of my regular practice, gradually implement them whenever appropriate and relevant, in both groups and individual sessions. I am also implementing them in my personal life*
- *I will continue to use them (1) as a follow up with that group (2) introduce new concepts (3) work with other groups of young people*
- *Feeling more informed on these topics has given me confidence to use them more often, so as much as appropriate.*

5. What concepts did the young people find most useful?

- *The young people benefitted from articulating different emotions through acting. They enjoyed relating food to emotions. They thrived off understanding the three factors that contributed to motivation. They enjoyed learning that 'small bites' can improve their day e.g. drinking an extra glass of water or two.*
- *What seemed to stick the most with my mentee was the idea of your '5 a day' and she was extremely motivated to find out what her 5 things were that she can do to feel better and to write them on the apple. I think what she liked the most was the card apple that she can then carry around and it's her little thing.*
- *Mindapples - 5-a-day*
Managing emotions for better results
Exercises with photos/pictures
- *The apples. Young people enjoyed writing emotions and scenarios that explained moods and actions that cause different moods*
They also liked filling in the apples and understanding how their friends feel.
- *Managing moods & emotions I found worked best with the young people - and stress*
- *What is mental health?*
Unconscious mind.
Things that affect us.
Mindapples.
- *Moods and emotions along with pressure & stress*
- *That mental health is as important as physical health and it shouldn't be negative, vs healthy for your mind.*
5 for your mind, what people do for their mind.
Framing for staff being aware of what their young people have been up to for the day, how do we make each other aware of the room, or other staff members.
- *I still haven't applied it to a formal session that has had prior notification. So this is a clear gap I can see that I am looking to address. In terms of our young people it is difficult getting them to discuss their mental well-being in general but keep working on it.*
- *For now, as I only managed to have one session, interest and focus have been on the mind and meaning of 'mental health'.*
All the young people that attended demonstrated quite a lot of interest, and a degree of self-awareness on the topic - that generated a good debate and reflection, even those that normally engage less participated to the conversation. We went through what they thought about it, they all agreed that there is a negative connotation around the term 'mental health' and that because of that they don't normally feel comfortable talking about it. It was very positive to seeing them slowly opening up to it and hear them talking about how the term 'mental health' should be changed to something like "emotional wellbeing" (quote) in

order to promote openness and awareness that "everybody needs to take care of it" (quote).

- The idea of recognizing what is good for our mental health in the same way we do our physical health

Phones/devices and their impact on sleep

The ways other people influence us and we influence them so therefore why positive associations are important.

- *Highlighting the things to do to maintain a healthy mind*

6. How did you relate this training to anything else you've done with the young people, and would you say this training addressed any particular gaps?

- *I related the training to the vegetable garden we are making. I explained the benefits of being outdoors to their mental health and eating healthy food.*

The motivation training also contributed to our work on employability. It addressed a gap in understanding how to get them into the workplace as having motivation is certainly a key factor for this.

- *One of the areas for development that my mentee identified early on, was to manage her emotions. She gets easily overwhelmed by situations where she feels she can be told off because other people are misbehaving. She also gets quite nervous if she has to do anything in front of a group, like performing or even speaking up in class.*

We looked at the three parts of the brain, and discussed what they each are useful for. We then looked at the elephant and the jungle to explore what are the external things that can affect how she feels (good or bad) and our next step is to explore what 5 things she can do in order for her to manage her emotions.

- *Some young people have been victims of bullying so explaining to the group the differences between moods & emotions helped them to be more aware of how they are feeling, so by understanding themselves they thought of others.*
- *Everything I do with young people/adults I have related back to the training and found everything very useful to use*
- *Really relevant for 1:1 work with young people to help guide them through issues*
Addressed gaps in young people's understanding of how to look after themselves and recognise the impact of the world on them & them on the world.
- *It teaches you how to be more inclusive in your practice, to be mindful of others.*
Makes you more aware
- *Absolutely.*

Mostly the reflection element for the teenage range so when they have been 'upset' or 'angry' which is when I would have most contact with them.

When they are smaller, 7-10 yrs old I found I would talk about 'what happened during the day', how are you feeling, shaking out your sadness, ask them to give it to me.

- *As the most frequent use of this for me has been an informal off the cuff session with individuals I haven't put together any materials. I have used the 5 a day*

concept along with master your moods and point to yourself, point to your mind and what's mental health and physical health.

- *Ties in to general youth work which is about personal development.*

Can't think of a comparable tool to this.

Used this as a tool for young people who need to explore their anger or how they feel about themselves. It fills a unique gap.

Likes that this is grounded. Don't need to know too much to use it, not scared of it.

- *Most of the young people we work with have experienced some 'mental health' issues in one way or another, I either personally or in their families/friends. I think this training was useful to address a complex topic in a simple/approachable and practical way. The layout supports the increasing awareness, normalising the concept and offers ideas for individuals to develop their own "mind care kit" to -empowering them from the start of the process.*
- *We often discuss healthy lifestyle choices (e.g. directory risk taking physical activity) but this brought together those concepts in a way that demonstrated their impact on mental wellbeing, giving a fresh perspective*
- *Used examples relating back to previous activities, sports, education etc.*

7. What exercises did you design to put the concepts across, and how would you advise someone else to do it?

- *Acting*

Art

Breaking concepts down into bitesize chunks

Using sensory activities that involve physically doing things to improve our mental health like going outside and making smoothies.

- *I showed her the drawing of the three parts of the brain and she made her own version of it whilst we were discussing what each part meant.*

Afterwards, she made a drawing of an elephant and drew herself sitting on top of it. We did add some big leaves that represented the jungle. Whilst she was drawing and colouring, we discussed what the elephant and the person riding the elephant meant in relationship with the three brains we had discussed earlier.

Once the drawing was ready, we brainstormed and discussed different things that affect her moods. She started with specific things that affected her mood negatively, and we progressed onto discussing wider more general things and acknowledging that there are also a lot of things that can affect your mood positively.

We then looked at the components of the jungle in more detail and discussed whether it is easier to try and control the jungle or the elephant.

- *I used post it notes to get young people to write moods and scenarios, they put them into a box, we shuffled the box, they picked one out, acted what they said and the group had to guess what they were acting out.*
- *I related the exercises to tv programmes i.e. Eastenders, so the young people could relate better too.*

I would advise other people to find something that the young people are interested in and base it around that.

- *I used the materials but would like to get bitesize materials and create materials*
- *Moods and emotions helping them to look into the mirror to understand themselves then they can learn how to look after their minds.*

Games: know your group and make it fun

Also did pressure and stress

- *I haven't designed anything new but I have however had it on my mind so much, helping me make healthy choices and manage myself, in turn affecting everyone around me.*

5 a day for your mind (5 fingers on your head, mindapples salute) for staff training

Mindapples at a group for parents with mental health issues and their children support group

- *I have shared this with the coaching team. I haven't used the presentations in sessions yet.*
- *For the first session a group discussion was arranged, with the intention of talking about the mind and the meaning that 'mental health' had for the young people attending corner and also present either the "How to master your mood" or "Handle pressure" there are concepts (as particularly relevant to the group) to leave them with some useful individual reminders/tools to take away with them.*

In the end we focused on the mind and the meaning of mental health, as it generated a good conversation and offered the group an opportunity to start being vocal about a subject that the majority don't normally discuss. We agreed to pick up on "moods" and/or "pressure" in the next. The those I will definitely use the visual aids and exercises I had prepared, for example: Mapping your mood - adapted from Thayer (1996), and stress factors/sign of stress/view, and how we respond to pressure.

I think that depending on the audience, I would advise to start by discussing mind and meaning of "mental health" with the people they have to engage. Although I believe all the modules can be used as standalone pieces and in different orders, I think covering the baseline of the audience at hand would help not only to gauge where group is with the subject but also enable the following sessions to be specifically tailored and prioritise to the audience needs. Having said that I think that, on a 1 to 1 basis, ad hoc discussions on specific concepts would work equally well.

- *Interactive workshop where young people contributed their ideas. This is the structure our group enjoy so it worked for them.*

I would like to use the concepts more visually in a future session as I tried on my training day

- *I used a PowerPoint presentation and used lots of discussions*

I would advise someone to use what would best suit the audience, young people's learning needs.

8. How did you use the presentation and other support materials provided, and what else would have been useful?

- *I used the information and then broke it down into manageable chunks with more pictures.*
- *See 7*
- *I haven't yet but I am planning to take information and make my own session*
- *I mainly used the small booklets as I found them more useful to use*
- *Used the presentation – as was and had another computer on hand with presenters background info to support me*
- *It was all useful but it's how you use it for your group*
- *Apples - used them all*
- *Posters, brilliant to frame a workshop, displaying in the office, a reminder to me & staff in the office*
- *Reflecting/sharing the booklets - great to reference*
- *Just need to read up on more information so I am prepared for some of the questions which test my knowledge on the subjects.*
- *To help me plan and prepare for the session, I used everything that was given during training. I outlined the key points I wanted to raise to begin with, printed information and selected a few slides to visually support the information/ tools and positively frame the discussion.*
- *Following the first session, I am now also considering getting the group to work together on creating their own mini manual on the subject, starting maybe from the 'mental and physical impact of stress', and 'how to reduce the symptoms'.*
- *I will also suggest they try Mindapples app.*
- *I used the booklet to extract key points then presented with flip chart allowing the young people to add their ideas. They are also filled in their apples/5-a-days.*
- *I would like a copy of the PowerPoint on computer as the presentation looks really eye-catching and booklet is small to enlarge*
- *I used bits of the presentations to make my own shorter Power points.*
- *We spoke about their shared forum to share resources during training this would have helped.*

9. When it came to passing on the concepts, did you find there were any gaps in your understanding that the training you received could have addressed?

If so, what were they?

- *None that come to mind*
- *I kept it quite simple and used a very straightforward concept, so I didn't really feel like I needed to have much deeper knowledge. I used this with a year 6 student.*
- *The amount of information was hard to remember and so exploring topics was challenging as I did not remember everything.*
- *No*
- *No*
- *There is a lot to pick up not many gaps but within concept there is a bit for everyone it just needs breaking down in bite sizes according to your setting*

- ** lack of time or opportunity to deliver or plan, having bitesize materials to use*
- *Print outs, like the apples are amazing*
- *Maybe the mood grid to be able to print out*
- *Possibly a template or bullet points on subjects. But I understand this is what these two groups are working towards to find out what works and what not so much.*
- *No, nothing that can't be improved with further individual reading and practice. I think the course was great in conveying the message and laying down the basis for a more reflective practice. It helped making me personally more aware of where I am with the subject myself, also highlighted the level of preparation needed to be able to had present it to others in a clear and informative way, and how to create a safe place for the group.*
- *As I only tackled the basics, I kept myself within my comfort zone.*
- *I will be able to answer the more fully when I address further concepts.*
- *No.*

10. What other issues or gaps can you think of which Mindapples might be able to help you address in the future?

- *A section on improving self-esteem.*
- *I think it would be very useful to have activities and games that could be delivered 121 or in groups to introduce some of the concepts.*
- *Young people who are in need of recognising themselves , young people who are using youth clubs could all use mindapples and benefit from the info.*
- *Not sure yet*
- *One page information on key concepts for other leaders to use*
- *Forum amongst users*
- *It might have been useful to have at least one group refresher/catch up session once a year, to share experiences and practice. Or may be an online forum to share articles or whatever information we think could be relevant to others on the matter of mental health?*
- *I would like to know more about developing resilience*
- *Working with young people with specific needs*
- *Training around working with those with mental health issues.*

11. How likely would you be to recommend the Mindapples training to someone else in your role?

10 "definitely would recommend it"

2 were "likely to recommend it"

12. Who else/what other roles might benefit from it in your opinion?

- *Definitely more workers that work with people with learning disabilities e.g. schools*
- *Training professionals - who work with youth & non-youth groups*
 - *teachers*
 - *child minder groups; parent/parenting groups; family groups; women's groups; men's groups*
 - *social workers/health*

- Teachers, parents
- Teachers/mentors
- Schools; youth workers; social workers; parents; mentors
- Teachers, parents
- Parents - especially who have trouble at school, in 'life', so that they can understand themselves, the affect they have on their child & in turn help their child
- Curriculum/teachers - allowing talking/sharing to happen at school
- Everyone!! - to better their quality of life
- I feel teachers would benefit from this and schools if this is an option as the earlier we learn these subjects the better.
- I believe everybody would benefit from this training. In fact I believe it would be of great benefit to start sharing, to some degree, with individuals from a young age in order for it to become part of the growing up process, and promote taking care of the mind as a normal thing to do rather than a reminder/review lesson to pick up later in life...
- All practitioners who work with other people - my colleagues, friends and family have found it interesting as well as the young people with whom I work.
- Teachers

13. Have we missed anything? Is there anything else that you'd like to add?

- More physical activity. Examples of how others have presented their work.
- No
- No
- A forum for users to share their views
- Examples of how it would work in a youth setting; before you deliver to youth workers, go and deliver in youth settings
- If it is for young people, to take some of the heavier stuff out & create more activities/bite size materials.
- Thank you again for the course and apologies for my not being able to attend the follow up date. I have found this really interesting and used in coach's notes, however I have been told for confidentiality reasons I am unable to share so I hope I have provided enough information.
- Session plans
- Examples of how people have done it.
- After each module give the bitesize takeaways - breaking it down into these was hard.
- 5 ice breakers for each, 5 things that help, or session plan.
- Certificate for everyone.
- Thank you for the training :-)
- Thank you for the opportunity!
- None

Conclusion & next steps

The project was a broad success in terms of equipping the participants with useful tools that they felt would benefit young people.

The recommended next steps will be:

1. to support participants to use the materials on an ongoing basis, particularly building a community of practice and regular ongoing check-ins;
2. to evaluate the interventions delivered by the participants to see if they benefit young people; and
3. to test the same materials with other professional groups, within and beyond the youth sector, particularly teachers and parents.