



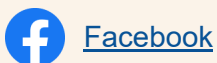
All the college staff and volunteers wish you a happy holiday time and happy new year!

In this month's edition:

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Message from Kerry Wilkes - Principal

As we near the end of our Autumn Term, I want to say huge congratulations to all our students that have succeeded in attending and completing the courses. It has been a challenging time for many and we thank you for persevering and engaging with us in this new digital way.

The team have worked hard to develop a new and exciting prospectus for next term and we are pleased to announce that we are now **open to new students**. To ensure the safety of our students, whilst adhering to current guidelines, we will again deliver all **of** courses online next term.

This term we would like to welcome a new team member - Ivy and our psychology student, Jasmine. I'm sure you will all enjoy getting to know them both better in the new term, as they will be facilitating some groups and courses. The highlight of my term has been delivering the 'Building Confidence' course and completing new student inductions. The feedback we have received from these sessions has been great, but I would also like to remind you to complete your feedback for any sessions you attend, as it is vital to ensure we continue to develop with our students in mind.

I would like to say a huge thank you to all our staff and volunteers who have worked really hard to ensure The Recovery College continues operating during this difficult time. We know the holiday season will be a little different this year, so the team will be offering 'Recover Together' sessions over the Christmas period. Dates and times are detailed in this newsletter.



We would like to wish you all a safe holiday period and look forward to seeing you in the new year!

Kerry

Coping with Christmas



If you struggle with your mental health over the Christmas period, here are a few tips for you:

- **Embrace and accept it** - no matter how much you try to ignore Christmas, there are reminders in the shops, on the TV and radio, it is everywhere you look but try to give in to it and join in, maybe buy some decorations from the Pound Shop.
- **Plan, plan & plan** - don't wait for Christmas Eve to think about what you are going to do, start planning now and it will give you things to look forward to.
- **Make Christmas day "Your Day"** - plan lots of your favourite activities, eat your favourite foods and buy yourself a present then wrap it up and open it on the day!!

- **Make plans with those you care about** - If you can't be with your loved ones in person, then plan a Zoom, Skype or WhatsApp video call or just arrange a catch up call on the day.



Alternatively, you can join the Recovery44 College for a coffee and chat on the following days.

Joining details on Zoom:

Meeting ID: 850 3996 1986

Passcode: 448715

MONDAY 21st December	11.00am – 12pm 2.00pm – 3.00pm
TUESDAY 22nd December	11.00am – 12 noon 2.00pm – 3.00pm
WEDNESDAY 23rd December	12 noon – 1.00pm
TUESDAY 29th December	11.00am – 12noon 2.00pm – 3.00pm
WEDNESDAY 30th December	11.00am – 12noon 2.00pm – 3.00pm
THURSDAY 31st December	12 noon – 1.00pm

Staff Story - Lisa

Hi I'm Lisa! I'm one of the college facilitators at The Recovery College and I have been working with the team for just over 12 months now. I enjoy being part of a passionate staff team I have learnt so much about students journeys and how the college has helped them and also learnt some new things myself.

One of thing I enjoy is getting outdoors and exercising and at this difficult time with what we're all going through as a nation now is even more of an important time to get active, I love to be outdoors and walking helps me to find moments of peace in a hectic world, I love take notice and appreciate the seasons changing when I'm outdoors.

I'm also enjoy spending time with my family and love to cook with my son as I think it's important to keep ourselves well through healthy foods and exercise one of the courses I co-deliver is on food and how it can affect our mood it's so lovely to hear students say I have inspired them with eating better after doing the online course. I know the COVID pandemic can be deeply stressful, but it also gives us the opportunity to take notice of the things we typically take for granted. We often forget that gratitude plays an important role in lowering our stress levels and can boost our mental health and physical health.

I for one am so grateful for the extra time I have been able to spend with my son right now who is growing up so quickly. I'm grateful for being able to slow down and reconnect with old friends who I don't often see this has given me great happiness to re-connect and I've also taken more notice of the nature around me.

What one thing today are you grateful for?



Volunteer Story - Darren

My name is Darren, I am in the process of becoming an official volunteer with The Recovery College. My first experience of The Recovery College in 2016 was not successful and I only completed one year and didn't re-enrol in the Autumn of 2017.

In October 2019, The Kaleidoscope Plus Group lost their funding for their community service and so I returned to the college. I immediately felt like the place had changed completely and felt a lot better - there was more commitment to the students whilst providing a better service. I started with the walking group in the community once a week and went on to complete the Planning Our Wellbeing (POW) course shortly after signing up; every college student is encouraged to complete this course when joining the college.

In 2020, I started a couple of courses but unfortunately the coronavirus pandemic prevented these from going ahead in a face to face environment. I have since re-started one of the courses on Zoom. When we went into lockdown, the college staff took advantage of the new technology to start running some taster sessions. I took full advantage of the chance to reconnect with the college in lockdown and meet friends old and new and this term have signed up for more courses to do with the college.

My process to become a volunteer is going through the necessary stages and once it is completed, I hope to help the college in whatever capacity they want me to. My expertise is in administration work and I would like to promote autism in a positive way throughout the college as I was diagnosed with Asperger's in 2017. I also want to help promote the positivity of the college whenever I can through the marketing group, development group and by contributing to this newsletter.

When not involved with the college, I enjoy spending time with family and friends (sticking to the current guidelines over coronavirus whilst doing that). I prefer to be active so walking mostly at this time, I do relax with television and especially classic sitcoms especially Last of the Summer Wine. I have also recently had a new beagle puppy called Lenny and he is definitely keeping me busy!

If anyone is reading this and uncertain about joining the Recovery College or uncertain of joining a course/group for the first time, I can only offer this advice: the college offers a fantastic service, has friendly staff and volunteers throughout who are passionate about the job they do. Students bond over the courses and do become friends. In these times when there is so much uncertainty, the college could be the outlet you need to help during the uncertainty and beyond.

A Winter Poem

When snow is falling.
It looks like it's dancing.
Swirling all around.
Before silently settling on the ground.

Leaving a blanket of white.
Giving a Dickensian sight.
Children having a snowball fight.
Screaming in delight.

If you are feeling really bold.
Go for a walk wrapped up against the cold.
Hearing the snow crunch under your feet.

When you get home have a hot drink in front of an open fire and life's complete .

Santa visits at this time of year.
He now drinks milk instead of whiskey or beer.
Because he now fears.
The police will charge him for being drunk in charge of reindeers.

You can still hear the sound.
Of the wildlife that's still around.
Crows robins blackbirds and the occasional foxes call.
Perhaps winters not too bad after all.

