



**IT'S MADE ME
LESS OF AN
ANGRY PERSON**

**well
together**

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In school, when I was younger, I was in isolation all the time. If I was agitated, sometimes the table wouldn't be staying, or a chair. One time I kicked a chair across the classroom, so I ended up in isolation, but that didn't work for me because it's hard to sit still. I wanted to go outside.

Everyone in my class knew that I was one of them people who will always help you, I will always stand up for you. But the teachers didn't understand what to do when I got agitated.

When I came to youth club, I liked how nice, polite and respectful the staff were, and they made us feel welcome. They understood me, and they would listen to what I needed to say. Coming here has changed me because I don't get agitated as quickly. I've learned walking away from the situation is the best thing for me. It's best to let me calm down, then I will come back. When I was younger, I was loud and energetic, and at the club they wouldn't mind. They would say to me, "Would you like to do this, or this", and they would give me options. They would speak to me and see what's up, what's going on in school, and see if I'm doing well or if there's something they could do to help. I felt happy because I knew I had someone I could trust. Even if they were doing something else, they would make time for me, they always helped me. They care about everyone.

Now I volunteer at the club on both days, and I'm there to help the children have fun, and make sure they're happy and safe. Volunteering here has made me feel like I have to be more responsible for the younger children so they don't want to act up, or anything, when they are here. Like, sometimes when other people misbehaved, they would want to join in because they would get the attention. But the thing is, I figured it's a good idea to show them that's not a good way to get attention, so I just said to them, "You shouldn't really be naughty just so you get attention, if you want attention then just ask one of us to do something with you, like play badminton, or play football, or something like that". I'm always there for them. I've seen them growing up.

I'm happy to be volunteering here, it's made me less of an angry person. It's made me think about stuff before I do it. The staff always gave me advice if I did something wrong, and I'd learn from it, so I'd be happy. The staff are always really nice and polite, they speak to you and make your day a bit better if it's been bad. This place keeps you fit too because you are running around a lot. It's much better when you do a lot of exercise; we play football, play tag, stuck in the mud.

The children always say, "Are you coming next week?", and I say, "Yeah", and they are always really happy, because they know someone wants to see them and isn't just leaving them. They always want me to sit at their table and speak to them - that feels good. When the children go home, some of the parents come up to me and say, "My child is really happy with you, thanks for helping them all the time". I've had that so many times from parents. I feel really happy with that, because obviously it's making a change, and I'm glad they are happy to come back every week.

I started at the club's allotment when I was 14 and now I work there every Saturday. I like the outdoors. When we first went we had to clear it all, we dug it all up and turn the soil upside down. We made the long beds with wood and brackets, they showed us how to do it. We had to measure out what we wanted, and we sawed the wood. I've learnt all different stuff like woodwork, how to plant seeds, and we've grown peas, tomatoes, cucumbers, courgettes, raspberries, rhubarb, lots of things. We eat some of the food we grow, we cook with it and sometimes we take it home. Two weeks ago we cut up some rhubarb and boiled it up with water and then we mixed it with some yogurt, it was really nice. My favourite thing I've eaten that we grew are the beefsteak tomatoes.

It's just nice to have a place where you can go to make stuff and make everyone happy that's down there, be outdoors, do everything that I want to do instead of just sitting indoors, writing on a piece of paper, like at school. Since I left school last year, I sometimes don't know what day it is. The only time I know it's a Wednesday, Thursday or Saturday is because it's the youth club or the allotment days. In summer they do a 9am-3pm session and that's always good.

Because I don't have a job, coming here gives me something to do. My family are happy about me coming here. If I'm just sat at home playing FIFA, I get bored, so I'd rather be doing this. With the allotments and the youth club, I'm busy most of the day. The manager here is always happy to speak to me. Now I know all the staff at the community centre too. I get help with applying for jobs. I don't mind what job, I want to be put back on my feet.

I'm looking forward to being happy, being out and about, making sure I'm not going back in a classroom. I don't mind if I'm cooking, I like practical things. I did GCSE in food tech and got a 9 in my cooking part. I'm looking for an apprenticeship. I'm looking forward to the future.





To help us understand the impact of Well Together, for organisers and attendees of funded activities, we have used storytelling as a component of our evaluation framework. Storytelling is an approach based on the Most Significant Change technique that has been used by the Old Fire Station since 2017, who now offer training and support to partners across Oxfordshire.

The Well Together stories are being gathered from organisers volunteering or working for a range of groups and organisations, and from the people who take part in the activities provided by groups. They are being collected in 2025 by the Well Together programme team who have been trained as story collectors.

By telling their stories, participants taking part in this approach, have the chance to reflect on what has changed for them through their involvement in providing activities and / or participating in them. How has it affected their life? Why has it been important to them?

The stories were recorded, transcribed and then edited down to two pages each - aiming to use the teller's own words, retaining their "voice" and reflecting the teller's insights into the impacts and the significance for them.

*For more information about this methodology, and to read stories collected from a range of other projects visit the Old Fire Station's website dedicated to this approach:
[Storytelling: Human-friendly evaluation](#)*

With thanks to our story tellers

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