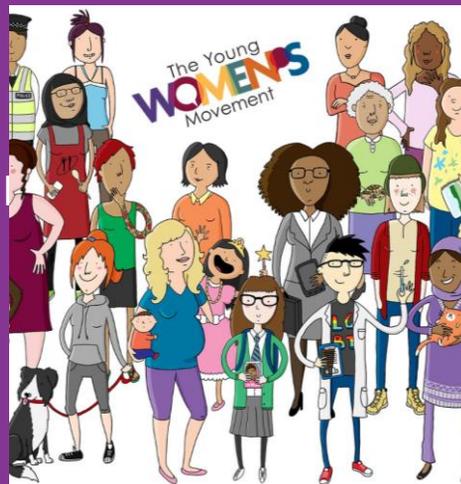


CASE STUDY: YWCA Scotland: overcoming personal barriers

Personal qualities are often cited as a remedy to personal barriers - BUT, it is very difficult to develop these qualities when circumstances feel against you. A supportive environment makes it more possible for women's leadership potential to be realised.

This case study is about a young woman who was referred to YWCA Scotland from a member of staff within the NHS Asylum Health Bridging Team. He heard about our Empowering Pathways for Women course at our YWCA Glasgow Centre and thought that it would be good a course for her to participate in to gain confidence and meet new people, as she was very isolated, new to Glasgow and had poor mental health.



Being able to volunteer and share with other women - with institutional support is one path to overcoming personal barriers

NH joined the EPW course at our YWCA Glasgow Centre in September 2018. When she first joined the group she was very quiet and had no confidence in herself and little self-esteem. During the first few weeks she started to join in with activities and talk to others in the group, which helped her to voice her opinions during conversations and discussions during the sessions. She met a few other young women from her country which made her feel good that she was not the only one there from Namibia.

By the end of the course NH gained confidence to contribute ideas and have her voice heard during the sessions, felt inspired by other women around her and gained self-esteem to continue to progress her goals. She spent time speaking to the other women in the group during the break and also met up with some of them after the session and outside of YWCA to socialise with them and explore their new city.

NH also attended the two-day Next Steps programme; which follows on after the EPW course. During this she expressed an interest in volunteering to support future participants on EPW. NH volunteered to support the EPW group from January to April 2019 and has enjoyed the opportunity. She has made lots of new friends and has learnt about different cultures and backgrounds from those she has met and supported in the group.

By volunteering with us she has gained experience of supporting a group and understanding what is involved in planning the EPW courses. Her confidence has grown and she is a lot happier in herself and always has a smile on her face. Despite having her own troubles in life NH encourages other women around her to attend the courses we deliver and supports them by listening to them and sharing her stories and positive experiences. She is non-judgmental of others around her and has a caring attitude.



Since volunteering with us NH has attended the NQ Level 4 Care Course run by City of Glasgow College at our YWCA Glasgow Centre and she gained NQ Level 4 SQA qualification in Care. She has also started volunteering with the No.1 Befriending Agency, where she volunteers to support and befriend elderly people. She also volunteers at a Youth Theatre once a week.

NH is currently an Asylum Seeker and is not permitted to work, but has a dream of becoming a nurse and to help other people. She hopes to get her status to remain in Glasgow soon, but is filling her time with volunteering and further learning opportunities to gain skills and experience whilst she is waiting for her decision. This is also benefiting her mental health and building her confidence and self-esteem to allow her to progress her life here in Glasgow.

Whilst participating in the EPW course NH completed an SCQF Level 4 Glasgow Kelvin College Community Achievement Award. By volunteering with us she progressed onto a Level 5 SCQF Community Achievement Award which she completed in April 2019. We are very proud of her and what she has achieved

“I feel more confident to speak to new people now and enjoy coming to YWCA. If I didn't come here and find out about what YWCA do I would still be stuck at home being bored and depressed and not wanting to go out and do things or meet anyone. Thanks for giving me a chance and hope I can volunteer again soon.”

