

Dundee Recovery College: Our reflections July 7 – August 5 2014

Introduction

The Dundee ADP substance misuse forum was the prime mover behind the idea of hosting of a recovery college in Dundee. They invited the SRC to make a presentation about the college model. This presentation was attended and enthusiastically supported by local recovery activists. Dundee ADP came back very quickly and booked the next available recovery college slot for July 2014.

- We received 27 applications to attend college: 5 applications came from areas far out-with Dundee and 2 from those Dundee based applications did not meet the entry criteria.
- We accepted 20 applications and 17 students confirmed and attended the entire college experience. Four students came from Castle Huntly open estate; this is the first time we have had SPS based people in recovery taking part in Recovery College.
- All 17 students graduated the 10 day course; 11 from Dundee City, 4 from Castle Huntly and 2 from Angus area and 13 Recovery Commitments were made.

The Recovery College Syllabus

The majority of the programme is delivered by people with personal lived experience of recovery from addictions and a specialist skill set. The ten day programme includes Steps to Excellent, an internationally recognised and certified 4 day personal development course, media and presentation skills, recovery community development, recovery community maintenance and network building and a local area workshop.

The Initial Recovery Impact

'These are the benefits Recovery College brought to my personal recovery'

- Hope
- Focus
- Determination
- Friendships
- Understanding
- Self Confidence
- Faith
- Found myself again!
- Strength in numbers!
- Positive creative energy
- Raised my awareness of the recovery communities that exist already
- Knowledge
- Inspiration
- Coping skills
- Something to look forward to.

'The College has benefited my friends and family in these ways'

- They were amazed at my positivity
- My family was proud of me for the first in years
- My family and friends have seen me in a different light- positive happy and fun to be around again. I am enthusiastic and have positive energy!
- Family is happy that I continue to build on my recovery in such a positive way exploring different and challenging avenues.
- My son will have a more positive mum and very soon a drug free recovery activist mother!
- My kids have a beautiful positive role model as their mother who is emotionally with them again!
- Friends have inherited a positive fun loving companion again
- Educating friends so I can speak about recovery.

'The College benefited my community/ Dundee in these ways'

- Awareness
- People in recovery helping people in recovery!
- We are self motivated, positive beautiful intelligent human beings again!
- Drug free person walking about
- Putting on recovery events
- Less drug related deaths
- Determined and committed people
- Given me loads of ideas to create a recovery community in my area
- We become visible in our positivity
- Helped raise awareness that recovery is happening
- R&R café is growing bigger every day.

Later impact: The recovery 'bounce'

The following Recovery Commitments were made by Dundee Recovery College students:

- To maintain and guard my recovery jealously and aid my fellows in recovery when required
- I want to help with the recovery walk
- I am going to college and moving into my new flat so am fully booked for commitments!
- Maintain my sobriety and contribute to recovery in my area as the opportunity arises
- To keep striving forward with a little help from my friends and to support whoever needs it
- To finally finish off my methadone and help others in recovery by starting a group
- Staying abstinent and help others in recovery and start a recovery group
- Starting own weekend group!!
- Set up action group in Montrose and Arbroath
- Keep up the good work I am doing and stay true to myself
- Keep attending SMART and raise recovery awareness. Go inpatient September and come out drug free Woo HOO!

Finally... SRC Reflections

The Dundee Recovery college success can be attributed to many factors; the degree of local preparedness, the rising number of recovery activists in Dundee and the growing interest in recovery approaches in the city. We were delighted to have an opportunity to work in Dundee in partnership with the ADP substance misuse forum.

The new syllabus, trialed in Lanarkshire, was a roaring success in Dundee. Students have been well grounded in positive psychology, the research and practice context for building long term recovery in the community, as well as the current shared learning from the recovery communities in Scotland. We commit to updating the syllabus and keeping the most up to date learning available for students at the Recovery Colleges.

It is clear that students are ready and off to form new recovery action groups in the Dundee area. The launch of the Recovery Initiative Fund 2 this week will facilitate those start ups with seed funds. There is also an opportunity for the ADP to work in partnership with its college graduates who showed a deep interest in the idea of ORT, Recovery and Me events and local support group.

This was a thoroughly satisfying and rewarding experience for the SRC team. We are grateful for it, thank you.

Kuladharini
12 August 2014

