

Shape Your Future

Newsletter #06: Aug 2024

SHAPE
wellbeing

This is your Newsletter. We're trying to make it relevant for you, so let us know what you think. Even better, would someone like to be the editor?

AMBASSADORS

When you filled out your membership form you may have thought about becoming an ambassador. Only Gold members can become an Ambassador. We're running a free workshop on Sunday 1st Sept from 9am to 11am for anyone who is thinking about it. To be an Ambassador you have to really believe in the power of Shape to help people Shape Their Future. You will do this through passive promotion: talking about Shape when asked, wearing and using the merchandise. Also some active promotion: Forwarding on social media posts (or making your own up), supporting in workshops, perhaps running your own groups (like Mens/Ladies Clubs), putting up posters, handing out leaflets. There is no pressure to meet targets or to be anything other than be yourself and promote Shape in any way that suits your own style. You will get training and merchandise to support you plus you'll get commission and discounts if you sponsor someone onto a workshop. Reach out to one of the team if you're interested.

Craig Owen



I have been involved with Shape since 2019, actually I was one of the first Diploma Course graduates. Since joining Shape I have advanced to be part of the Development team and also serve as a Supervisor, Reflective practitioner and hold a diploma in CBT.

Outside of Shape, I am an entrepreneur with various businesses including a gymnasium. I have been involved in fitness and health for over 20 years and have previously competed in many bodybuilding contests. I have also served in the Royal Navy, where I progressed to Leading Hand (Naval equivalent of a Corporal).

I am now very passionate about mental health and enjoy helping others to overcome any issues they may be having and am always looking to better my education and understanding of mental health issues. I also run a free men's mental health club in Tenerife where I aim to break the stigma of men being able to talk.

Members Moments

Natalie shares a list of 20 things from her anti-bucket list.

1. Hurtful self-talk.
2. Fad diets.
3. Worrying what other people think about me.
4. Facebook stalking.
5. Judging others.
6. The two bags of wool I have collected.
7. Diet Coke.
8. Taking photos for social media.
9. My need for self control.
10. Chocolate.
11. Excuses.
12. Making unrealistic goals.
13. The box of clothes that are too small for me.
14. Shouting at my children.
15. Ironing.
16. Taking everything too seriously.
17. Explaining why I'm a vegetarian to others.
18. Doubting myself.
19. Biting my nails.
20. Trying to be someone I'm not.

Each one of these comes with some great reflections. I wonder which ones, if any, strike a chord with you. Or perhaps you have some of your own. Let us know.

What else is going on?

Workshops

The ASC course has been amazing, as usual. Look out for the video testimonials on social media. Some great comments. Just BIAT A and BIAT B to go.

The next SYF workshop is on 8th, 15th & 22nd Sept. If you know anyone who might benefit from this, use your membership to give them a discount and book in August to get the early bird.

Wellbeing Centres

We're now looking at additional properties in Monifieth - between Dundee and Arbroath.

The Wellbeing hub at Arbroath Community centre has taken another step forward and we are to do a presentation to Angus Council to secure this really exciting project.

Your view?

What would you like to see? Wellbeing advice? Real life case studies? Members stories? Self-Help tips?

What else would you like to see? If you want to submit something, feel free to send it in. Maybe you'd like to see more pictures...

A year and a half ago, I was a mess. I don't mean a mess like I needed a good shower, I mean a complete train wreck of a person. To give you some context I wrote a poem called "I Want To Die".

My health was poor, my mental health was at an all-time low, I was a half-hearted parent, a quarter-hearted wife and a ghost. I had nowhere to go, and any light at the end of the tunnel had been extinguished.

Then someone saw me in my self-dug pit and threw me a rope. What was the point? I ignored it. I told myself that the climb would be too long, or they would drop me halfway through, even the top wouldn't exist. But this person didn't give up, they kept hitting me with the rope until I just took hold of it just to stop them. The rope was a course called 'Shape Your Future'.

I turned up the first morning, pen in hand to keep the pretence that I was going to make the most of my gift, yet I knew it wouldn't help me. How could anything help?

I learnt all about Shape Wellbeing's Seven Key Principles. I never realised how much I needed them. Each principle they spoke about, shined a little light on the footholds of this rope. Most importantly, there was a team of people who were encouraging me to climb. These people were different. They weren't judgemental, they used empathy and compassion to build my trust, they were honest and genuine, they accepted me for who I was, they noticed I needed help and they were there. Cheering me on.

I slowly climbed the rope.

So today, from out of my pit, I will share a poem I have written about the seven key principles. The ways of being that I strive every day to implicate in my life.

I look back on that time and I am so grateful that I have come so far in such a short time. I hope they can help you on your very own journey.

Take care,

Tori x

Victoria Eden is still struggling to write a biography for herself. She is a mother of two children but doesn't want that fact to define who she is. She wants to write that she is a poet and writer but worries that she is still not good enough at either to put that. So, I guess she is a woman who is still trying to find herself. She explores her own identity through writing, painting, music and poetry. She wants to help and inspire others like she has been helped and inspired. She wants to add to the beauty in the world so it's a little bit better for her children. Most of all she wants to find herself, then she's not lost for words when writing a biography.

Follow her on social media for poetry and publications

She cried through the night
She felt so alone.
She knew not where to turn
Or where was her home.
She got through the days
Surviving, not living.
She felt tired, defeated,
Exhausted from giving.
One day she was honest,
Enough was enough.
She opened her eyes
To her life, which was tough.
"I cannot keep fighting like this!"
She exclaimed.
"I need to do something
To not feel the same."
She constantly hurt herself
With her own words.
She pushed herself down
And refused to be heard.
So that day she tried
Compassion instead.
She surprised herself
With the things that she said.
She looked at her feelings
And the thing she called life.
And said "that must have been
difficult
With all that strife."
She finally looked
At the feelings she felt,
And was empathetic
To her own self.
She stopped doing things
That didn't feel real.
She only did things
With a genuine feel.

She finally saw
What she wanted for her,
she took those steps
For self growth to occur.
She looked in the mirror
With hate and disgust,
And saw only a girl
Who she didn't trust.
But she learned to stop judging
Herself, day by day.
She practiced it often
And soon found her way.
She had been through so much
Which had led her to now.
It wasn't fair
But she managed somehow.
She accepted what happened
Wasn't in her control.
Moving forward she knew
How to reach for her goals.
She noticed her feelings
Had been eating her up.
It had all been too much
She was about to give up.
But she practiced these skills
And noticed a change.
Each day growing stronger
No longer the same.
Now she sleeps better,
And holds her head high.
She believes in herself
Her confidence flies.
With seven principles
Her outlook has changed
With each step forward
Her future is shaped.

Student Life

I'm doing my Masters in Counselling at Abertay University in Dundee. This course specialises in Pluralism as an approach. Simply put, this more or less means that there is no one approach that is right for all clients and that a collaborative approach will be helpful. For example, this might mean that one client really benefits from CBT and another might be better off working within Person Centred approach.

What is evident is that while Shape is grounded in the PC style of counselling, we focus on what is right for the client and working together. A lot of our modules draw on the basic principles from quite a lot of the main theories such as Pyschodynamics, Person Centred, CBT, and we also draw on Motivational Interviewing and a range of other tools. However, we try to stay away from being overly reliant on being specific about which theory is being used because we have adopted our own approach. Specifically, the 4SP which I find myself using all the time on my MSc and the 7KP's which to be honest, have now seeped into my DNA and so are never far away. But I'm not perfect, and occasionally old habits can rise up again if I find myself in a particularly demanding situation. It's not about being perfect though, it's more about having the tools to be aware and empower myself to change. One thing I've learned is that it's absolutely fine to make micro changes rather than leaps. But I will take a leap if I think I can.

One thing the MSc does is to be quite theory heavy and research focused. I like that, so that's lucky. I need to do my own research in year 3 (currently in year 2, and I wonder if it could be about some aspect of Shape. But that's for another time to think about. For now, I'm just glad to have passed and get through into second year.

What else is going on?

Case Studies

This expandable space is for you to share what you think might be useful for others to know. Always be mindful of confidentiality and ensure details are anonymised.

For example, are there clients that have been really helped? Or the opposite clients where you could not make any real headway. Have you found a way to work that is helpful, or maybe something you tried that did not work out well.

A Day in the Life

This expandable space is for you to tell us what you get up to. Maybe you're busy with a job and fit in Shape stuff around that. Or you can just share some aspect of your life, like what it's like in the summer holidays with kids. Why your partner drives you daft. How you relax and restore your body battery.

Opinion

This expandable space is for you to voice your opinion on anything you think would be relevant. Or have a rant about something. For example, what would you put in Room 101?

'6'

'9'

