





supporting women to make change

ROUTE TO RECOVERY PROJECT: YEAR ONE

"I would like to thank you all as I really felt like I was improving in myself and with the skills I have learnt so far I can move forward.

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Project Highlights	2
3.	Our Approach	3
4.	Our Participants	4
5.	Outcomes	7
6.	Learning and Next Steps	9
7.	Appendix One: Interim External Evaluation of Year One	12
8.	Appendix Two: Case Study One	14
9.	Appendix Three: Counselling Report 2021/22	16

1. Introduction

Route to Recovery (R2R) is a four-year intervention programme funded by the National Lottery's Community Fund which offers tailored activities to 240 of our most vulnerable women within the Kyra Women's Project. The programme will work with 60 women each year who are:

- struggling with their mental health;
- living with domestic abuse; or
- struggling to rebuild their lives post domestic abuse.

The R2R project supports the woman to create an individual pathway through the various courses, support services and activities at Kyra that will enhance their wellbeing, whilst empowering and enabling them to recover.

These activities include: quiet drop-ins to socialise, courses on self-development and domestic abuse, counselling, back-to-work mentoring, coaching, expert advice on IT, finances and legal issues, alongside all the other social and wellbeing activities on offer at Kyra.

This report covers the first year of the R2R project, between 1 March 2021 and 28 February 2022, focusing on the design, implementation, outcomes and learning that will be carried forward into future years of the project.





2. Project Highlights

YEAR ONE: ROUTE TO RECOVERY

In year one 326 women joined Kyra and 56 R2R. On R2R, 5 have completed their journey, 38 have completed 50% or more of their actions. 26 attended one or more R2R quiet drop-ins. 46 sought support for mental health, 31 for domestic abuse and 22 for both.

GOALS WORD CLOUD



FEEDBACK

"I didn't realise what an impact this place would have, its life changing already, and you can see that in the other women too. It does feel like a safe space."

"Thank you once and again for your kindness and support. I'm a completely support person now!"

"I began to understand and realise things I hadn't realised before. It was a step forward to do that. I knew what abuse was but not how complex, all the underlying things."

HOW I FEEL QUESTIONS

We ask each woman to rate how she feels against a series of statements (7 = very good, 1 = very poor):

AVG. AT ENROLMENT AVG. IMPROVEMENT*



Self-esteem 2.52 (+1.58) = 4.1



Loneliness 2.61 (+1.50) = 4.11



Positive 3.30 (+1.25) = 4.55



Involvement 3.77 (+1.83) = 5.6 in my



Mutually 4.18 (+1.25) = 5.43 supportive relationships



Life is worth 4.36 (+1.58) = 5.94 living



Managing 3.05 (+1.42) = 4.47 your emotions



Planning for 3.36 (+1.17) = 4.53 the future

*improvement reported by participants who have completed a mid-point or end review by 6 April 2022.





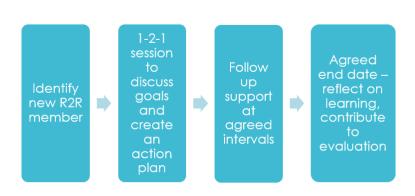




3. Our Approach

Our R2R project is designed with a holistic approach in mind, we create a bespoke pathway through the support on offer at Kyra for each project participant; meeting one-to-one to design a goal and create an action plan for every woman to follow, with support available throughout their journey – see flow chart below.



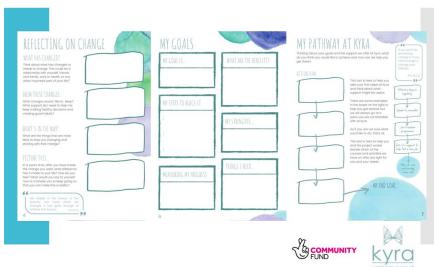






Each of the participants on R2R takes part in an initial 60-to-90-minute one-to-one appointment with the Project Manager to establish what their support needs are and to create a bespoke action plan. We have created a workbook to guide this conversation.

We go through a few exercises to reflect on change, measure how they feel currently, set a goal to work toward at Kyra, and create that action plan. The Project Manager then signs them up for the activities or courses that have been agreed together, and we decide on how to stay in touch and measure their progress at Kyra.



R2R participants can access all the activities and support on offer at Kyra and as a snap-shot at the end of last year we saw an average of around 200 members attend the activities at Kyra each week. We started to run activities in-person again after 12 April 2021 and continued to offer online and hybrid options for members who were shielding/vulnerable and unable to attend in person. Examples of activities we provided over 2021-22 at Kyra can be found in the table below.





Courses	Specific Support
- ESTA (Enhancing Self-esteem to	- Counselling
Achieve)	- Coaching
- Freedom Programme	- Rose Group (for 18–25-year-olds)
- MODA (Moving on from Domestic	- Back to work mentoring with Action
Abuse) note: course run by IDAS	Towards Inclusion (ATI) and LEAP Project
- Time of our Life Club (50+) part of the	- ICT support
York Mind Activities Programme	- My Money Matters – financial advice
- Loss Group	- Foodbank vouchers
	- Solicitor consultations
Social Activities	Wellbeing Activities
- Kyra Voices	- Mindfulness Course
- Cookery Course	- Capacitar Course
- Poetry Group	- Sound Meditation Course
- Creative Writing Course	- Walking Group
- Art and Craft Group	- Writing for Wellbeing (course run by
- Open Arms Drama	University of York lecturer supported by
- Weekly drop-ins	students as part of a placement)
- R2R quiet drop-ins	

"I didn't realise what an impact this place would have, its life changing already and you can see that in the other women too. It does feel like a safe space."

We are careful not to replicate services and work closely with partner organisations who offer specialist support for domestic and sexual abuse, substance misuse, financial or housing advice, mental health or carer specific support, referring members to them when appropriate for more targeted interventions.

Our project steering group consists of local partner organisations, Kyra Trustees to ensure congruence with Kyra's strategy and Kyra volunteers, who offer advice and challenge to the internal Kyra project team. The steering group met twice during the first year, and next year we will be adding project participants to the group. We have appointed an external evaluator, Jane Mackay, to provide independent analysis.

4. Our Participants

"I'm feeling the best I've felt in a long time. Before I couldn't function, with family and friends I couldn't interact. Before it was all black and white but now I can see colour. Before I used to take everything on, now I say no. You can only do so much. I took this from the 50+ group, that was brilliant."

When enrolling as a Kyra member we offer all eligible women the option to join R2R if they disclose that they have experienced domestic abuse (current or past) and/or poor mental health.

Last year we enrolled 326 new members at Kyra and 56 of them chose to join R2R in the first year of the project. Of the 56 on R2R, 46 let us know they wanted support for mental health, 31 for domestic abuse, and 22 expressed both those needs.

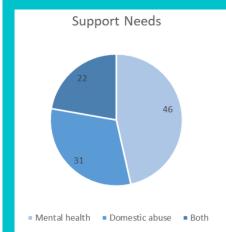


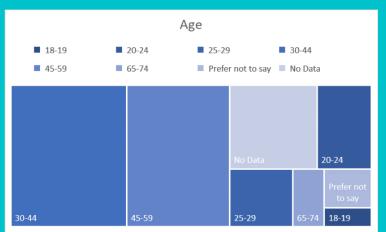


PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

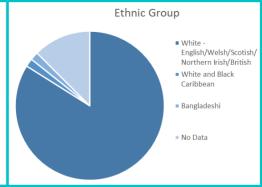
Of the 56 women enrolled on R2R* we found the majority identified their ethnicity as being White British (83.93%), 60.71% fell within the 30-44 or 45-59 age groups and 41% identified as being employed/self-employed and 28.57% as unemployed. Interestingly, while 46 of the 56 participants stated they needed support with their mental health, only 6 classed this as a disability/medical need when enrolling at Kyra and a further 3 disclosed PTSD.

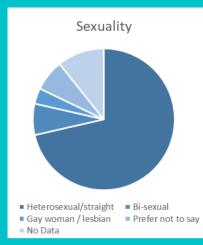
*Please note: some participants opted out of providing Equality and Diversity information.













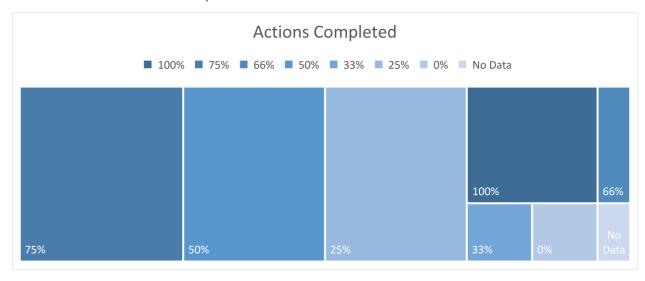




Participants set an individual goal to work towards and we have created a word cloud to capture some common words and phrases. The most commonly used words relating to goals were 'self' (18), 'confidence' (16), 'esteem' (13) 'work' or 'career' (12), 'relationship(s)' or 'people' (10).



Each R2R participant creates an action plan with the Project Manager and this consists of a number of different actions based on their needs and the goal that they have set, usually consisting of 3-4 courses or activities. By the end of year one 8 participants had completed 100% of their actions, 15 had completed 75%, 2 had done 66% and 13 had completed 50% of their actions.



"I feel like things are starting to fall into place. I'm moving house to a place of my own where I can have my cat back, my job is going well, I've been offered more hours. I can still get low or frustrated but am not spiralling out of control, the self-esteem and Loss groups help with that. The courses you do are brilliant, I try to do as many as I can. There's always somebody here you can talk to, and you're good at getting back to me by email. I've got a couple of people I got close to in ESTA and Loss Group too."





5. Outcomes

"I've been discharged from mental health support for the first time in years. For my goal, that is what is happening, that is what it feels like. I've been here such a short time. Now I feel like a person again, things have changed so much. I'm getting on, I feel looked after and supported and know I can reach out and did when I needed debt help."

As part of the R2R project we established a series of targets to work towards to measure progress in delivering the project. Please refer to the table below for information about each target and delivery against each one to date.

Target	Progress
Over four years, 240 women will take part in R2R (60 in year one).	We enrolled 56 women in year one, against an annual target of 60. There was a period when we were not actively recruiting during year one, as we designed the project materials and approach, so the 56 that were recruited joined between June 2021 and March 2022.
20 local people will work as formal volunteers to help deliver the programme (5 of them new volunteers).	Over the first year of the project we have had 44 active volunteers within Kyra. We recruited and trained ten new volunteers last year and we have nine more currently in training.
48 members (20%) will progress to volunteering, training or work	Two participants have progressed to employment while on R2R, 10 have been referred for work-related mentoring/support at Kyra on our Action Towards Inclusion (ATI) or LEAP (Learn, Explore, Action, Progress) projects. Two were not eligible for our internal support and were referred to York Mind for an in-work coaching programme. Four R2R participants have expressed an interest in volunteering at Kyra after their support ends.
72 members (30%) will become more engaged in their community	When measuring how participants feel, 75% reported an improvement and we saw average scores for 'Involvement in my community' increase from 3.77 to 5.6 (+1.83). We also asked at mid-point or end reviews if participants felt they were part of a supportive community and 100% agreed. One said: "Definitely 100% It's welcoming and safe. I've had a lot of counselling and therapy but here at Kyra it is absolutely wonderful. I have trust, it feels like a family."
120 members (50%) will become Kyra 'helpers'	At the mid/end point reviews, 58% of members had helped at a session by supporting other members, making drinks, clearing up after activities and so on.





Target	Progress
	"I've met with other members after ESTA ended as a mutual support, we went to have a coffee as we thought it would be nice to stay in touch and continue that support for each other. I'm also going to bring in some items for the Christmas fair to help with fundraising."
Kyra will collaborate with 6 local voluntary, statutory and business organisations to deliver the project	We have collaborated with: IDAS (Independent Domestic Abuse Service), York Mind, Peasholme Charity, Survive York and North Yorkshire, Refugee Council, York Racial Equality Network, Ways to Wellbeing social prescribing team at York CVS, Local Area Coordinators at City of York Council, York and Selby IAPT, Changing Lives, Refugee Action York, York Women's Counselling Service.
6 community campaigns will help recruit women on the project	We have not had a shortage of referrals in year one and so our outside recruitment has been more limited, but we have started to work with specialist charities to try to recruit more women who are underrepresented among the R2R participants, including BAME, LGBT, carers and disabled women.

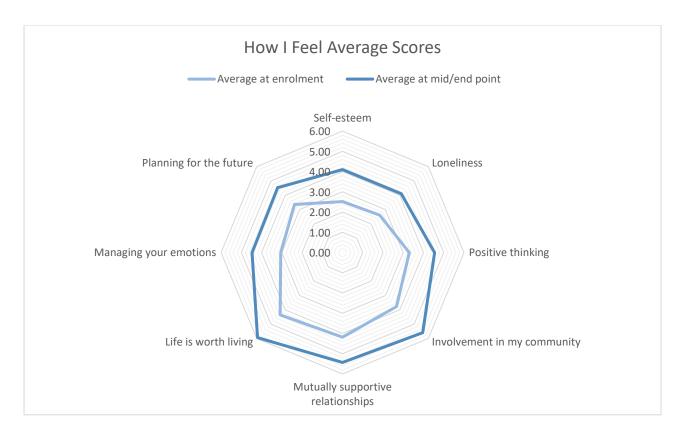
We also measure how each participant feels about various aspects of their life, asking each woman to provide a score for a series of statements in relation to themselves generally (not necessarily how she feels on that day). The rating scale is 1-7, with 7 being very good and 1 being very poor.

Item	Average score at enrolment	Average improvement by mid/end point	Average scores after mid/end point
Self—esteem	2.52	+1.58	4.1
Loneliness	2.61	+1.50	4.11
Positive thinking	3.30	+1.25	4.55
Involvement in my community	3.77	+1.83	5.6
Mutually supportive relationships	4.18	+1.25	5.43
Life is worth living	4.36	+1.58	5.94
Managing your emotions	3.05	+1.42	4.47
Planning for the future	3.36	+1.17	4.53

"I'm getting there. I had eight of ten counselling sessions and that was all I needed. I never really believed in therapy but it was brilliant. Until you deal with the old wounds you can't move on. I was like a decorator painting over cracks, when really I needed to take all the plaster off and start again."







We have seen improvement in the average scores for each of the areas of the participants lives that we have measured, but there were a few areas where the improvements were not reported by all participants. 25% of participants reported worse scores for 'Mutually supportive relationships' and 16.67% for 'Planning for the future'. We also saw 33% report no improvement in 'Self-esteem', 'Positive thinking' and 'Life is worth living' and we are looking into options to introduce additional activities or support to address these needs in year two.

"People have noticed a change in me, in my level of relaxation. I've improved my calmness going about day-to-day things. My friends and partner have noticed I'm more relaxed than I used to be. Because I buried a lot of stuff before doing MODA, I used to just go through days from A to B. Now I can do things and feel a bit more relaxed about myself and what I'm doing. MODA was tough at first but once I got into it, it was good. My anxiety was high at first, but when I felt I could talk a bit more with the other women my anxiety got less and less. I began to understand and realise things I hadn't realised before. It was a step forward to do that. I knew what abuse was but not how complex, all the underlying things."

6. Learning and Next Steps

"I found Freedom a bit overwhelming. I was starting to understand what had happened but it was a lot all at once. I thought I'd made sense of it all but I didn't, I pushed it down. I want to do it again after the ESTA course, that's what my counsellor said would be best, to do it when I'm ready. It really put me back, I didn't think it would hit me so hard. I guess I hadn't dealt with it before."





As the project has progressed we have shared challenges with the steering group and with their support and advice, developed plans to address the areas as in the table below.

Challenges	Solutions
Attendance: in the earlier stages of the project, we saw lots of non-attendance at appointments.	We now send additional reminders to women about their appointments, for both the 1-2-1 appointments and the R2R drop-ins. We have also purchased a text messaging service to allow us to send reminders in that format. We also found that identifying members earlier on in their journey at Kyra to invite them to join R2R was helpful in ensuring better attendance.
Progress: waiting lists for some courses and activities are longer than anticipated, so actions were not being completed quickly.	The pandemic put pressure on resources as we had to reduce numbers attending courses to allow distancing and provide longer breaks between timetabled activities for deep cleaning and to minimise contact between members moving between various activities on site. Many R2R participants request to join our ESTA (Enhancing Self-esteem to Achieve) course for example, which we were unable to adapt to run online, and some of these activities developed long waiting lists. We have sought additional funding to provide more counselling hours (see additional detail under Counselling below) and have trained more volunteers to deliver our ESTA course to meet the demand.
Caseload: as R2R participants were waiting to access courses, they were then not progressing their actions at the rate anticipated.	We have sought advice from partner organisations on the project steering group as to how to manage a larger caseload whilst ensuring meaningful interaction with project participants. Regular updates are sent to all R2R participants to let them know about new/upcoming activities and to invite them to join the R2R and regular Kyra drop-ins to stay in touch with us.
Counselling: in our bid we requested 12 funded counselling places. The demand has been far higher among R2R participants with 36 of 56 (64%) requesting this support.	Our counselling team are providing pro bono support and seeing women on R2R beyond the 12 funded places. Six decided against taking up the offer of sessions or withdrew after a few sessions. We also saw 8 R2R participants receive counselling elsewhere, often due to specialist therapy being needed to address issues such as sexual trauma. In total, 44 of the R2R participants sought counselling either through Kyra or another organisation, in year one. We are seeking additional funding and have allocated some of our reserves to pay for more counselling hours to try to reduce the length of our waiting list. We also took the decision early in 2022 to close the counselling waiting list and informed partners to try and work our way through the list, but it has remained open for referrals for women who enrol on the R2R project.
Training: Kyra mainly provides follow-on support after more	As the level and complexity of support needs has increased, we have looked at undertaking additional training to better support our members. The Project





Challenges	Solutions
targeted intervention; we are not a crisis service. But we have found the level of need increase among our members.	Manager and Administrator completed Mental Health First Aid and Mental Health Awareness Training (respectively). The Project Manager and four members of the counselling team also attended training on 'Understanding and working therapeutically with survivors of sexualized trauma(s)'. We have also arranged some additional training for our volunteers in Neurodiversity. The Project Manager will also attend training in 'Carers Awareness' and 'Bystander Intervention' in April 2022 to cascade that learning amongst volunteers at Kyra.
Diversity: our R2R participants are not reflective of the diversity in the city and wider region.	We have begun to reach out to representatives of various local organisations who might be able to help us promote the project to women that may benefit within their own membership/client groups. Examples are: York Racial Equality Network, Refugee Council, City of Sanctuary, Refugee Action York, York Traveller Trust, York Disability Rights Forum, and York Carers' Centre. We will seek their advice on any adaptations necessary and look to implement them to encourage more diverse women to access the support at Kyra.
Support needs: scores on some 'How I feel' statements have not always improved as expected.	As mentioned on page 9, there are some areas that we are measuring where we feel scores are not improving significantly for all participants. There are also some gaps in provision that have been explored in conversation with members, volunteers and staff and so we are looking to develop a series of workshops to address the following topics: - Positive thinking - Boundaries - Goal setting / planning for the future - Forming and maintaining good habits - Self-care
Sharing learning: as part of our bid, we committed to share our learning.	We are excited to have been accepted to share our learning from the project as part of York Festival of Ideas in June and will be presenting a talk titled: 'Route to Recovery for women who have experienced trauma.' The talk will be hosted online to allow for anyone interested to attend, whether local to York or not.

"The first two weeks I found really hard, but I'm doing ATI at York Mind and the mentor there said to keep going with it. After that week I feel a lot better, like I turned a corner. I learned about having boundaries, I hadn't ever had boundaries before. They talked about learning bottom lines from your parents and I never had that. And the exercise on goals, opportunities and obstacles was good - often the obstacle is your way of thinking."





7. Appendix One: Interim External Evaluation Summary of Year One

Route to Recovery - Interim Evaluation Summary - March 2022

Evaluation activity to date:

- Focus group x 1 (2 attendees)
- Online Survey (15 responses)
- 121 interviews x 1 (2 more in progress)
- Case Study complete x 1 (2 more in progress)



Analysis of the focus groups and online survey is complete. The content of the focus group and the online survey was identical; comprising of 9 open questions and an additional 'ripple effect' reflection and visioning exercise.

Once Yr1 participant data is received an annual report will be compiled, combining service data with the qualitative outcomes of the evaluation activity.

Overall feedback for the service from participants is exceptionally positive. There are clear themes of excellent outcomes and impacts of people accessing R2R. Predominantly these are:

- Kyra is supportive, safe and non-judgemental.
- Kyra and R2R are unique and vital. The 'everything under one roof' variety of support is particularly highly valued.
- Women are enabled to make significant changes, internally for themselves (e.g. mental health, confidence, self-esteem) and externally in various areas of their lives (e.g. work, family, relationships).
- Respondents speak about the long term and preventative benefits of R2R, noting that life would be very difficult if they had not received the support.

It is also worth noting that 100% of respondents described the enrolment and joining process as easy, straight forward and positive. Also, there is repeated positive feedback about the impact of the R2R project manager with many respondents singling her out for praise.

When asked what one thing participants would change about the service, the most common response was that it would be beneficial if activities / groups could be provided later in the day, or into the early evening. Also, the majority of respondents said they would like to have more opportunities to meet other R2R participants.

The final survey question asks members for a final message for Kyra and below is a selection of responses:

"Kyra has helped save me. I'll always be grateful. It's the one place in York I feel truly safe"

"A really big thank you for letting me be part of a fantastic project for women"

"Thank you for all the support, I don't think I would be here without it"

"Thank you for being a vital support service to the women who need you"





"Just wish to thank the staff at Kyra for all their support and to continue doing what they are doing. They are doing such a fantastic job in helping women make a new start and become whole again, to be themselves, gain back confidence, be able to openly talk without judgement. Excellent work!" "Without Kyra I wouldn't have even taken the first step"

"Thank you! I feel grateful to have come across Kyra and everywhere needs a Kyra. Thank you for keeping it accessible to all women by not charging for your services as I know I would have struggled to benefit from the project otherwise"

jane@jemackay.co.uk

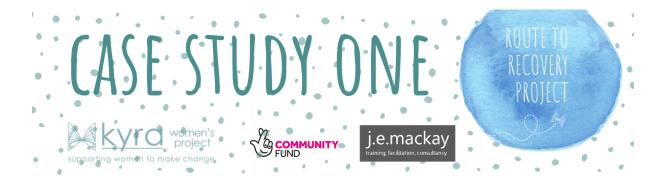
07799 141136

n 🔽 @iemackav





8. Appendix Two: Case Study



Before joining Kyra, I was in a mess. I didn't know who I was or what I wanted. I knew I needed help but didn't know what that was.

I never understood the idea of being kind to yourself and I constantly beat myself up about things. I was my own worst enemy. On the surface, I was a happy, smiley person but, underneath, I was full of self-doubt and it became exhausting wearing a mask all of the time.

I had spent my whole life trying to be the good daughter but it was never enough. My mum never showed me any affection and I lived in fear of her during my childhood. I had suffered with anxiety and depression from my teens onwards.

Without getting the help from Kyra, I think I could have been on antidepressants for the rest of my life, without them ever helping me to feel better. It's a bit like constantly filling up your car with petrol and wondering why it still won't go, when actually the problem is a flat tyre.

I phoned Kyra and made an appointment and met Anna. She was so lovely and welcoming. She made me cups of tea, passed tissues when I got upset and listened without judging me. She then told me about the courses that Kyra offered that would be of benefit to me.I was not pressured into anything and Anna helped me to enrol on the Route to Recovery programme.

My first course was ESTA which is about increasing self-esteem. It ran for 10 weeks and I was nervous about going as I didn't know what to expect. There were two volunteers running the course and they were welcoming and put me at ease. I found the first class upsetting but I remembered Anna saying that the course could make me feel emotional and, if so, to take some time out. One of the volunteers checked I was okay and I went back in. Each week we covered a different topic and we were given handouts.

The week we learned about 'irrational thoughts' completely changed my life. I realised that the critical voice in my head wasn't mine but it was my mum's. It made me question why I was giving so much headspace to this person who has never supported me or praised me. This critical voice in my head was all I'd ever known and was the reason for my self-sabotage and anxiety.



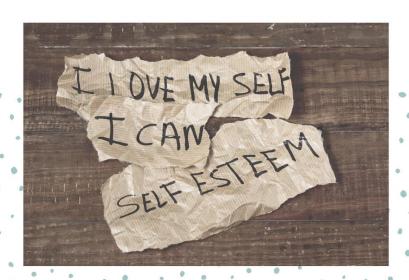


Without the ongoing Route to Recovery support, I could have flicked through the courses in the Kyra booklet and picked things that might not have been right for me. I had a review meeting with Anna and this was really helpful as I could see how much progress I was making and what I could do next. Because of the benefits of ESTA, I no longer wanted to do MODA or have counselling and it was okay to change my mind. I went on to do Mindfulness and had three sessions of coaching instead.

When I joined Kyra in August 2021, I had no sense of self and no boundaries because of my upbringing. By January 2022, I knew who I was and what I wanted. I have learnt to ask for help. I have more resilience and inner strength. I have found the inner peace that I never had and I am optimistic for the future.

I think it was the right time for me to reach out for help. I referred myself in to Kyra and I wanted to be there. I did do a lot of work in my own time and did a lot of reading and took screenshots of helpful words and images. If I ever get to a bad point, I can go back and look through my notes and handouts and find something useful.

I wish more people could be taught about self-esteem. I had spent my whole life thinking I was broken, as I'd always looked for external validation. Having self-esteem means I don't put up with bad behaviour from others anymore; I call it out. I've stopped trying to be the good daughter. I now concentrate on being good to myself.







9. Appendix Three: Counselling Report

Route to Recovery Counselling 2021/2022

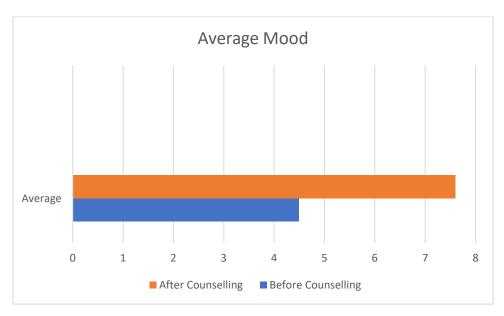
The funding for counselling 12 clients was received in 2021 and four counsellors from the Kyra Counselling team were each assigned three clients. The presenting issues were mental health and/or domestic abuse. Clients were requested to give a final evaluation and feedback so we can monitor our service and continue to improve. We asked our clients to evaluate their ability to do every-day tasks, mood, confidence and self-esteem as well as overall satisfaction.

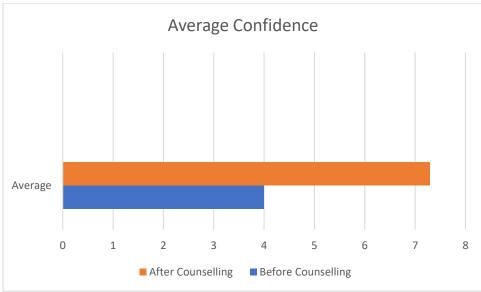
The average improvement scores from the clients who provided feedback are listed below: -

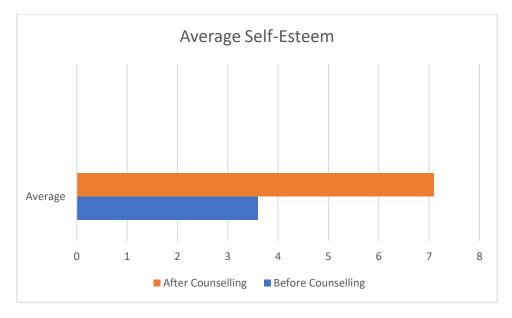








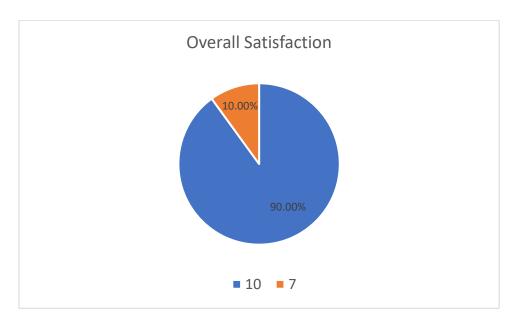








The overall satisfaction with their counsellor: -



Finally, qualitative feedback was also requested and is given in the table below: -

C1	"I am so grateful for Ann's support, it got me through a really tricky time and has given me ways of managing situations/relationships better. Thankyou Ann you are a "gooden"."
C2	'you have helped me a great deal – I have been able to talk about things I have been unable to say before and I can now speak to my partner better'.
СЗ	"This is exactly what I needed to help my mental wellbeing and move forward with my life. The space at Kyra is lovely and the flexibility offered with Zoom when the restrictions were in place and then coming face to face was fantastic."
C4	"You have helped me a lot through a very difficult time. You helped me deal with my problem and I just did it. I feel much stronger after all my sessions. You showed me techniques to deal with my stress and I just felt stronger and was able to deal with the bad things in my life'
C5	"My circumstances changed during counselling and finding the new situation very difficult."
C6	"You have helped me feel better about myself and more confident by giving me someone to talk to."
C7	"I better understand my emotions and learned the skills needed to deal with them."
C8	"Good to talk things through and safety in knowing I can sign up again."
C9	Great improvement but no comments.
C10	"Counselling is necessary to improve your quality of life"



