

Ecotherapy Mentoring at St Nicks.

One-to-one mentoring support is available to everybody who is enrolled on an Ecotherapy group at St Nicks. If you are feeling stuck, or finding something difficult, mentoring sessions could help by providing a space to talk things through.

Our sessions are pre-booked and last up to one hour, taking place either in the Ecochalet or as a 'walk and talk' around the nature reserve. The overall duration of mentoring support and how regularly we meet will vary from person to person; we will agree this with you on an individual basis. In the spirit of our Ecotherapy programme, we will use the sessions as an opportunity to connect with nature, providing a listening space alongside gentle encouragement to notice the nature around you.

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a two-way process where your mentor offers a supportive, non-judgemental space for you to work through difficulties, enabling you to set and achieve goals, explore challenges and make informed decisions about how to handle situations. A mentor is an independent, trusted person who will listen and use their experience to inspire, encourage, guide and motivate you towards goals.

Your mentor can help you to:

- Talk through a challenge or issue
- Identify goals and find ways to work towards them
- Gain new perspectives and consider different approaches
- Explore potential solutions, make informed decisions and act upon ideas that are generated.
- Increase your confidence

Sometimes, learning what something *is not* can be as helpful as learning what it is. This is particularly true for mentoring.

Mentoring is different from therapy or counselling. A mentor is there to listen and reflect but not to solve problems or give advice. Mentoring works best when there is an undercurrent of positivity; our goal will be to help you to think about moving forward and making progress, rather than dwelling on past issues and troubles.

Also, a mentor is not a support worker and mentoring does not involve making decisions for you or undertaking actions on your behalf. We are well connected to other mental health and wellbeing services and can help you to refer to other organisations for specific, more intensive support if needed.

Mentors occasionally suggest things that could feel hard to hear; sometimes learning to see things from new perspectives can be a starting point for bringing about positive change. We will always use this type of mentoring in a gentle and appropriate way.

We recognise that times can be tough, and while therapy and counselling have a deeper focus on difficulties and what has happened in the past, mentoring is designed to be a positive, proactive space, steering you towards goals, decisions and actions... all in the beautiful surroundings of St Nicks.

For more information about our mentoring programme, chat to one of our team when you are onsite or contact us by emailing ecotherapy@stnicks.org.uk.