

# Improving wellbeing for those most at risk of self-harm and suicide in a prison setting



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

Dr Zoe Stephenson  
[z.m.e.Stephenson@bham.ac.uk](mailto:z.m.e.Stephenson@bham.ac.uk)

Andy Watson  
[director@geese.co.uk](mailto:director@geese.co.uk)

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# *Scratching the Surface* and *Journey Man*: A service evaluation



HMP Hewell (*Journey Man* - 12 men)

HMP Foston Hall (*Scratching the Surface* - 23 women)

## Evaluation design:

- ▶ Pre/post psychometric measures with participants (Beck Hopelessness Scale (BHS; Beck et al., 1974) and Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS; Tennant et al., 2007)
- ▶ Likert scale and open-ended response questionnaires for participants
- ▶ Post programme Interviews with participants
- ▶ Questionnaire for prison staff involved with the programme
- ▶ Focus group with Geese Theatre practitioners

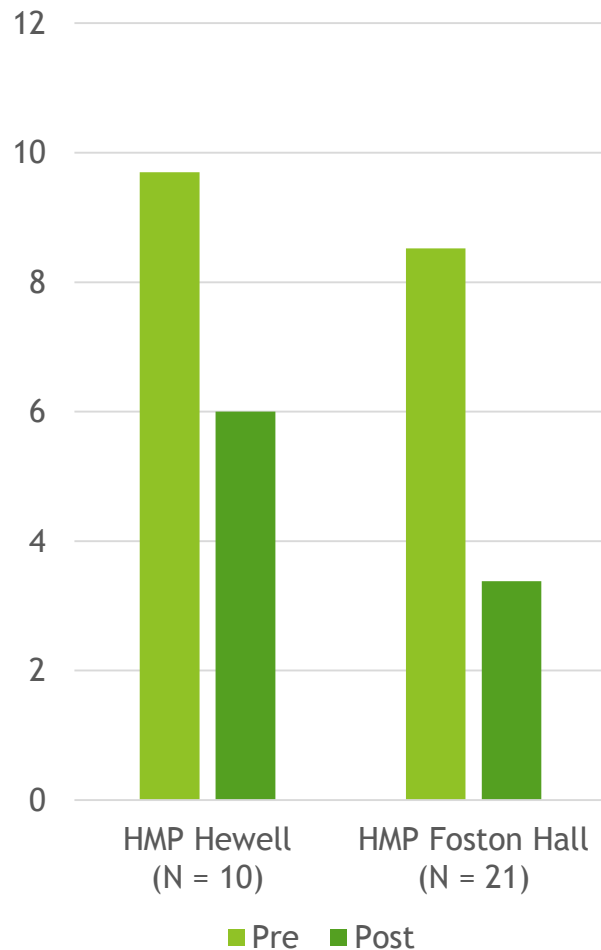
# Beck Hopelessness scale

- ▶ 20 true/false statements
- ▶ **Considered reliable/valid measure** (Bouvard, Charles, Guerin, Aimard, & Cottraux, 1992)
- ▶ **Example true/false items:**
  - *I look forward to the future with hope and enthusiasm*
  - *I might as well give up because there is nothing I can do about making things better for myself*
  - *It's very unlikely that I will get any real satisfaction in the future*



# Pre/post psychometric measures

## ► Beck Hopelessness Scale: Mean scores pre/post



**HMP Hewell:** Statistically significant improvement in scores given prior to ( $M = 9.70$ ,  $SD = 5.77$ ) and following ( $M = 6.00$ ,  $SD = 5.48$ ) on the hopelessness measure ( $Z = -2.68$ ,  $p = .007$ ).

**HMP Foston Hall:** Statistically significant improvements in scores on the hopelessness scale ( $t(20) = 5.58$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = 1.26$ ) between questionnaires completed prior to and following the programme ( $M = 8.52$ ,  $SD = 5.32$ ;  $M = 3.38$ ,  $SD = 4.08$ ).

# Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale

- ▶ 14 item Likert scale
- ▶ Considered reliable/valid (Stewart-Brown et al., 2011)

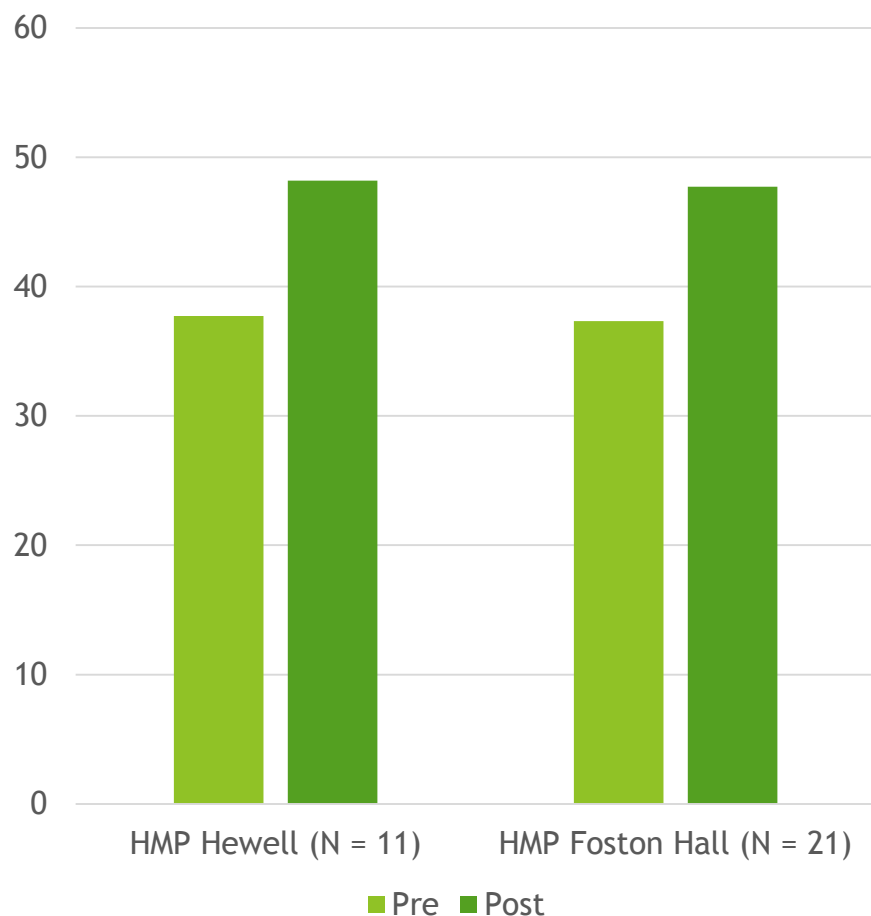
- ▶ Example items:

- *I've been dealing with problems well*
- *I've been feeling good about myself*
- *I've been feeling close to other people*
- *I've been interested in new things*



# Pre/post psychometric measures

## ► Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale: Mean scores pre/post



**HMP Hewell:** Statistically significant increase in scores gathered prior to the programme ( $M = 37.72$ ,  $SD = 9.75$ ) and following completion ( $M = 48.18$ ,  $SD = 8.76$ ) ( $Z = -2.50$ ,  $p = .012$ ).

**HMP Foston Hall:** Statistically significant increase in scores prior to the programme ( $M = 37.33$ ,  $SD = 9.70$ ) and scores following the programme ( $M = 47.71$ ,  $SD = 7.72$ ;  $t(20) = -4.50$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = 1.18$ ).

# Likert scale prisoner responses: HMP Hewell

- ▶ 100% strongly agreed that they would recommend the programme to someone else
- ▶ 100% agreed that they now feel better about themselves (63.6% strongly agree; 36.7% agree)
- ▶ 100% agreed that they enjoyed the programme (90.9% strongly agree; 9.1% agree)
- ▶ 100% agreed that using theatre and drama made the project more memorable (81.8% strongly agree; 18.2% agree)
- ▶ 100% agreed that they are now better at opening up to people (45.5% strongly agree; 54.5% agree)
- ▶ 91% agreed that they now have more confidence (54.5% strongly agree; 36.4% agree)
- ▶ 81.8% agreed that they feel they have now done something they are proud of (63.6% strongly agree; 18.2% agree)
- ▶ 81.8% agreed that they have learnt new skills (54.5% strongly agree; 27.3% agree)

# Likert scale prisoner responses: HMP Foston Hall

- ▶ 100% agreed that they would recommend the programme to someone else (90.5% strongly agree; 9.5% agree)
- ▶ 100% agreed they enjoyed the programme (61.9% strongly agree; 38.1% agree)
- ▶ 100% agreed they have learnt new skills (38.1% strongly agree; 61.9% agree)
- ▶ 95.2% agreed they now have more confidence (33% strongly agree; 61.9% agree)
- ▶ 95.2% agreed that using theatre and drama made the project more memorable (81% strongly agree; 14.3% agree)
- ▶ 90.5% agreed they had now done something they are proud of (33% strongly agree; 57.1% agree)
- ▶ 85.7% agreed that they are now better at opening up to people (28.6% strongly agree; 57.1% agree)
- ▶ 81% agreed that they now feel better in themselves (33.3% strongly agree; 47.6% agree)

# Online prison staff questionnaires

Theme	1. Geese staff	2. How has it helped?	3. Perceptions of how it's received	4. Would you recommend it?	5. Suggestions
Sub-theme	1.1 Interactions and observations	2.1 Positive action	3.1 Completers	4.1 Support	5.1 Duration/availability
		2.2 Thought process change	3.2 Non-starters	4.2 How Geese differs	5.2 When?
			3.3 Drop outs	4.3 Insight	5.3 No change necessary

# Interview themes: HMP Foston Hall participants

1. Revelations	2. Why it works	3. A change for the good	4. Suggestions
1.1 Self-discovery	2.1 Practitioner skills and characteristics	3.1 'Just being me'	4.1 Duration
1.2 Lifting the mask	2.2 ...but Geese was different	3.2 Anger management	4.2 Who will it help?
1.3 I'm in control of my life	2.3 Group bonding	3.3 Taking action	4.3 Nothing but praise
1.4 Self-esteem and confidence	2.4 Different things to different people	3.4 Asking for help	
1.5 I can have hope	2.5 That's me, that is.../eye opening	3.5 Confidence and assertiveness	
1.6 Perspective taking	2.6 A safe space	3.6 Don't just take my word for it...	
1.7 I need help			

# HMP Foston Hall participants: Example quotes

- ▶ *...helps you see where you went wrong so you know where not to go. It brings a lot of things to light...It helped me see how I was going wrong...You get to know more about you on the course...I feel I know myself better. (P7)*
- ▶ *My self-esteem was at rock bottom and guilt and worthless, but during that week I learnt not to focus on negatives. There's a bigger picture and it's down to me which route I take; I can turn a negative into positive ... (P10)*
- ▶ *...didn't realise that I sometimes need a shoulder to cry on or a hug...Today I now identify that I do need help and support more in my life - more than I've ever realised ever before. (P3)*
- ▶ *...Like when staff said they thought I was gunna punch someone in the face last week - they said they had their hands on their alarms but then I didn't...All the people standing round started clapping and said 'you took control'. (P9)*

# HMP Foston Hall participants: Example quotes

- ▶ *They were like cool about it...there was nothing we couldn't do with them. We weren't pressured...I never liked group work before coz I had anxiety issues. They made me feel comfortable and brought me out of my shell. (P11)*
- ▶ *Sitting and talking doesn't get through to me but doing something fresh and original helped make me understand and they weren't droning on...It's right in your face and it's something you won't forget - it's so unexpected. Every little part was helpful and constructive in some way. (P1)*
- ▶ *Everyone related to different parts of it...Everyone took their own thing away from it. (P2)*
- ▶ *I never used to talk to anyone but now it's like I'll go to officers or friends with a problem and I'll accept help. They might understand. I self-harm to relieve pressure. Officers will come and ask how I am and I'll now tell them. (P7)*

# Interview themes: HMP Hewell participants

	1. Revelations	2. Why it works	3. A change for the good	4. Suggestions
	1.1 Lifting the mask	2.1 Practitioner skills and characteristics	3.1 Relaxation	4.1 Duration
	1.2 Self-discovery and awareness	2.2 ...but Geese was different	3.2 Anger management	4.2 Who will it help?
	1.3 Self-efficacy	2.3 Team bonding	3.3 Communication	4.3 Where in the sentence?
		2.4 Positivity	3.4 Confidence	
			3.5 See how I've changed...	
			3.6 Don't just take my word for it...	

# HMP Hewell participants: Example quotes

- ▶ *the course made me look at myself in so many ways. I related to the four masks. You had to be really honest and really explain why the masks fits you. (P10)*
- ▶ *The individual work showed the old and new me - all positive things were listed. I'll leave all the bad stuff and keep all the good stuff... (P3)*
- ▶ *I didn't realise before. I've seen different parts of me doing situations. I lose my temper quickly but it gives other options how to deal with situations...I can lose my temper quick but I can look at the role play and see it building up. I got to practice - I'm not gunna learn over night. (P2)*
- ▶ *...It showed me how I was bad. It made me realise I did that and it was bad and that I've got to get out of it...Always in life it's gunna be hard, but it's always my choice. (P7)*

# HMP Hewell participants: Example quotes

- ▶ *They [practitioners] were brilliant actors. They actually cared - that's what was different. They was interested like. Not just because it's job. (P10)*
- ▶ *I've spent a lot of years in prison and seen other people do courses and done them myself. This is the best course I've done - it's had a bigger impact than any others...I came on the course with a reputation - staff didn't think I'd do well but they got interested when I changed. (P2)*
- ▶ *I'm not normally comfortable with that type of thing but it helped to see why I did stuff; I found it challenging...They obviously thought a lot about it and structured it in a good way. There was always something that helped someone. (P1)*
- ▶ *Me and the lads had just got to learn that it's not a weakness to ask for help. Before thought don't show weakness and don't cry...I learnt how to be honest with myself and others and don't be afraid to ask for help. (P10)*

# Links to existing 'what works' literature

- ▶ Creating a 'safe space' and a supportive group environment (Yalom, 2005).
- ▶ Achieving a good therapeutic relationship between participants and practitioners (Kozar & Day, 2012).
- ▶ Guiding participants through a coherent sequence of elements which map on to the process of behavioural change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983; Stephenson, Harkins, & Woodhams, 2013).
- ▶ Considering the issue of responsivity to the needs of offenders (Andrews & Bonta, 2010), i.e. GT programmes tailor content to the needs of the individual through the provision of individualised pieces of work (Baim et al., 2002).

# Links to existing ‘what works’ literature

- ▶ Considering the issue of readiness to change (Ward et al., 2004) and, within this, the issue of motivation to change (McMurran & Ward, 2010).
- ▶ Addressing internal and external ‘barriers to change’ in individuals (Burrowes & Needs, 2009) through the use of applied theatre techniques.
- ▶ Adhering to GLM principles (Ward & Stewart, 2003) by placing an emphasis on positive factors and attainable future goals.
- ▶ The use of role play (Hudson, 2005).
- ▶ The use of key GT applied theatre techniques and exercises (Baim, 2007; Baim et al., 2002; Blacker et al., 2008; Harkins et al., 2009; Harkins et al., 2011; Watson, 2009).

# Conclusions

- ▶ Findings indicative of programme being beneficial for prisoners by addressing areas such as: self-esteem; confidence; positivity; self-efficacy; anger management; and communication skills.
- ▶ Programmes were innovative yet incorporated a range of techniques grounded in previously identified '*what works*' literature (e.g. cognitive behavioural theory, social learning theory, role theory, responsivity, good lives model principles, readiness to change factors, the process of behavioural change, group cohesiveness, and good therapeutic relationships).

*'People are generally better persuaded by the reasons which they have themselves discovered than by those which have come into the mind of others'*

(Pascal, Pensees)

# Recommendations

- ▶ Geese Theatre programmes made available as an optional treatment programme in more prisons across the UK.
- ▶ Programmes made available for female sex offenders.
- ▶ Programmes become embedded within individual prisons in order to address logistical issues involved with programme recruitment and delivery.
- ▶ Need for further research to address methodological limitations (e.g. larger sample; longer follow-up period; additional outcome measures).

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