

# LIGHT BOX THE HAPPINESS PROJECT REPORT SUMMARY

Light Box is a Community Interest Company, that provides 'Happiness Workshops' for the wider Bristol community. The workshops are designed to reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues, increase resilience, and to help people make tangible improvements to their lives. Rather than focusing on illness, The Happiness Project presents mental health in a positive light: as an exciting, empowering social phenomenon and on a continuum on which we are all placed.

Between April 1st and June 30th 2011, 51 workshops and two 10-week courses were held in Light Box's shop, located in The Galleries in Broadmead, Bristol. There were 482 attendees in this 3-month period.



THE GRATITUDE TREE IN THE LIGHT BOX SHOP IN THE GALLERIES, BROADMEAD.

## PROJECT AIMS

The aims of Light Box's Happiness Workshops are closely aligned to the national and local mental health agenda:

- Promoting mental health
- Preventing mental illness
- Providing an early intervention facility
- Supporting people with mental health problems

A guided approach to evaluation was taken. This involved training and mentoring provided by Willis Newson/UWE through their Knowledge Transfer Partnership. As a result of this professional evaluation, Light Box has developed a robust internal evaluation framework that is appropriate to all Light Box projects and is feasible to implement and sustainable in the longer term.

**FEEDBACK** A limited selection of the results. Results are described in detail in the full report.

**REDUCING STIGMA:** 79% of the general public respondents felt that the workshops had helped them see how mental health applies to all of us. *'Very refreshing approach to mental health. More please!'*

**EMPOWERING:** 75% of respondents felt empowered by the experience of participating and 89% planned to take action as a result of attending. *'I'm glad I came to this workshop again as it has given me the inspiration to carry forward with what I intend to do.'*

All of the 13 case study participants showed an improvement in their well-being scores, as measured by the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS). The average WEMWBS score changed from 42.1 at pre-test to 49.8 at post-test, indicating an average change in score of 7.8. (Scores are to be interpreted with caution due to limitations in the evaluation design. See full report)

## CONCLUSION

The workshops have been shown to provide an effective, solution focused approach to supporting mental health and well-being. Participants found the workshops engaging, enjoyable and of practical benefit. Following attendance, the majority of participants felt empowered to take action to improve their well-being, and participants saw the project as a useful resource. This supports the case for the project's continuation.

*"Light Box has opened my eyes to my own creative potential"* Participant