

Charlene's Story

“ Sometimes you don't need to say anything, but the team at Feathers know you so well they can tell you you aren't okay. ”

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Four years ago, I had a heart attack.

My mental health went downhill. After lockdown money was tight, and I was looking for a cheap gym membership or classes. I wanted to get back on my feet and try and get on top of my mental health.

I was searching on Facebook, and my friend had posted that she wanted to try out a class but didn't want to go on her own. I offered to go with her, and that's how I found out about Feathers Futures and the free Clubbersize class.

We attended the class, and we were made to feel welcome. That's how my journey with Feathers started. I attended class every week and made friends, my fitness level improved and so did my mental health.

After a few weeks, I started attending the class by myself.

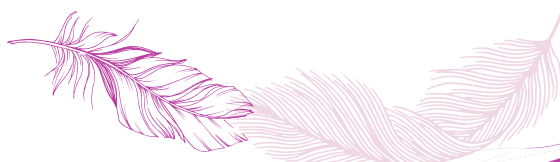
I then started attending coffee mornings at Feathers Futures. After the coffee mornings, I started going to all the different groups. I completed two amazing courses: Own My Life and It's All about Me. I learnt so much about myself and learned to deal with my past.

I was given a fresh start.

Sadly, my mum passed away, and straight away, I was put on the counselling list. I was fortunate and only waited a few weeks. I was given 12 hours, 1 hour each week and then it was extended for another 6 weeks. Again I was given a new start.

If it hadn't been for the help I received from all the staff at Feathers and my counselling, I think it would have been a different story from what I am telling you today. All the staff and volunteers at Feathers are amazing and every person knows you on a different level.

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We aren't treated like we are a nuisance. We are treated with respect and dignity.

I feel safe. It's like a little family. We can leave our problems at the door and be ourselves or we can talk and share any problems or concerns we have. Feathers Futures have created a nice friendly and safe environment for all us ladies. We have control of what we do inside those walls.

There are rules in place to protect each one of us, but we have no formal agreements on what we have to do. We can sit and chat over a cuppa or join in with the groups available to us.

Feathers Futures is the only place I have gone which has allowed me to be me. It's helped me grow.

Stuff I held onto I was able to leave behind because for once I had people behind me who believed in me.

I'm now volunteering for Feathers Futures which I love. I have hours which I have chosen but there's no pressure to come in if I can't do it. I've been able to access courses and training and I've been given the chance to run the walking group for the ladies.

I'm able to come and go at Feathers Futures which has given me a purpose in life. I have a routine and stability now.

My mental health is on track. I eat better. I sleep better. I've even gained confidence not only in myself but in life. Stuff I would have doubted in the past I don't anymore.

None of this journey would have been possible without Feathers Futures. Each day is different, each conversation is different but the one thing that stays the same is we all have Feathers Futures as our safe space. There's a lot of women who attend Feathers Futures because we all grow together with no judgement or stress.

We are allowed to be free.

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*I feel safe.
It's like a little family.
We aren't numbers at
Feathers we are people.*

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