



Community Action Project

Back To Life



Community Action Partner

Timebank

Aim: Back to Life aims to combat the social isolation often faced by young men with mental health support needs by matching them with volunteer mentors of a similar age.

Role: The volunteers will be mentors, who are expected to guide, offer support and friendship to another person during a time of transition. Volunteer mentors are expected to spend an hour a week with their mentee, they will provide support, signpost and empower their mentee to do things for themselves. All the relationships are different and some will be more informal than others, but befriending and building trust is at the heart of all the relationships. You might find yourself practicing job interviewing techniques, or just meeting up to play a game of pool and have a chat.

It is an all male mentoring scheme at the moment, so they are looking for men with a mature outlook. Ideal volunteers are people with good communication skills, excellent listening skills, non-judgemental, open, understanding and reliable. An ability to empathise is important, no experience is necessary but some grasp of the issues surrounding mental illness is helpful. Also a large number of our client group are from BME backgrounds so we're looking for volunteers from those groups to provide positive role models that the mentees can really relate to.

Training: There is an initial day's training, providing an introduction to the project, basic mentoring skills and mental health awareness. Once matched with a mentee, you will be in regular contact by phone and there are support meetings with other volunteer mentors. We also arrange top-up training sessions in response to issues raised by the relationships.

Location: Various venues across London dependent upon mentee.

Times: Volunteering times are flexible, however it is helpful if you can meet your mentee on weekdays rather than in the evening or weekend, as Back To Life can then offer more support.

DBS: This project requires a DBS disclosure via Community Action office.

Other: The project has accessibility and will be open to discuss travel expenses being reimbursed.

Application: All volunteers must be registered as Community Action volunteers. To do so, visit <http://www.rhul.ac.uk/services/volunteering/register.html>

Royal Holloway
University of London

