

# GAMH CALM project

Case study November 2014

## Impact of Mindfulness & Complementary Therapies



### Mildred (name changed)

#### Reasons for Referral

Mildred is 74 year old living in sheltered housing who was referred because of a range of health problems, caring role, and a breakdown in relationships with family and friends:

- Depression
- High blood pressure
- Isolation
- Caring for an older relative with Alzheimer's

*'I was constantly tense, anxious and sore in my whole body, particularly in my feet.'*

#### CALM Input

- 6 complimentary therapy sessions
- 8 Mindfulness group sessions

#### Impact

- Increased social networks & setting up own social groups
- Improved mental health & wellbeing
- Improved physical health – blood pressure is normal now
- Improved family relationships
- Continuing Mindfulness practice independently of the project

*'The mindfulness opened me up again. I went from being entirely closed from anyone and everything, to being more comfortable with myself again.'*

*'I've made friends through doing it.'*

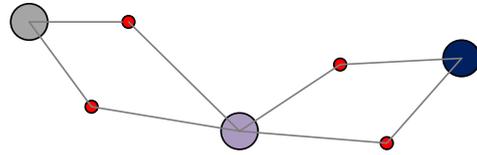
Mildred's confidence, resilience and wellbeing has improved and she is socially engaged. She is a proactive member of her tenants committee and positive relationships with friends, family and the community. **(See Network Map below).**

## Mildred

### Key

Mildred  
Sister  
Aunt

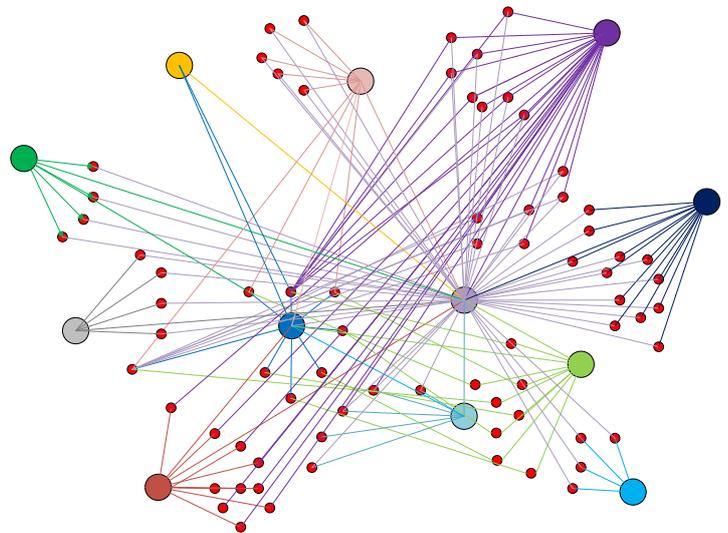
### Before CALM involvement



### Key

Mildred.  
Calm Project Mindfulness group held at project ability.  
Trust Housing Association (Tenant Committee).  
Other Housing Association  
Sister.  
Ex Husband.  
Aunt.  
Modern Art Gallery.  
Russian Café.  
Social Events – Lunch, Tea and Coffee, Shopping, I.T classes, Mobile phone workshops etc.  
Day Trip.  
Knitting Group.

### After Calm Project



*'I have surprised myself by coping with stress in a more successful way.'*

*'Down from two happy tablets to one' [antidepressant medication].*



**“Coped with recent hospital procedure in most positive way.’**

### **Comments about mindfulness & therapies**

**“I have thoroughly enjoyed and benefited from it.  
I wish more people could have the experience.”**

**“The massages were wonderful, so enjoyable, so relaxing.  
After the treatment I would have a good sleep and wake up feeling renewed.”**

M attended the Calm Project 8 week mindfulness course at Project-ability. She found the venue to be really interesting as it has a wide range of leaflets about what's on in Glasgow, art galleries, Russian café and the space we used for teaching has lots of art work in progress.

**‘The mindfulness opened me up again. I went from being entirely closed from anyone and everything to being more comfortable with myself again.’**

She was very struck by the mindfulness teacher Audrey, who she found to be very single minded and passionate in her communication with each person in the group, very respectful of each persons view point and very good at managing the group. She found the mindfulness very helpful to her.

**“Down from two happy tablets to one” [antidepressant medication]**

M enjoyed in particular the loving kindness meditation that she found challenging at first, because it asks you to focus your attention on someone you find it easy to love and also someone you don't. M found this meditation very helpful in her relationship with her sister and found that over time, by incorporating mindfulness into her life and with regular practice her relationship and communication with her sister has become immensely better. She can even see it beginning to affect her sister positively. It has also improved her relationship with her ex husband. She also finds it very helpful when looking after her Aunt and finds that she can be much more patient and compassionate. She is recommending it to friends, family and ex colleagues who are finding life difficult and stressful, who have seen how much mindfulness has helped her.

**“It has enabled me to be much more in the moment in my reactions with others. I've made friends through doing it.”**

## **Improvements in Physical Health**

With regard to her health, M's blood pressure had always been worryingly very high even with medication, 240/80. Since having therapies and doing the mindfulness course her blood pressure has been at a normal level consistently which she and her GP are very pleased about.

She has a regular mindfulness practice and meditates during the day and last thing at night in bed. She is also using mindfulness when she is with her aunt, with friends and family and with the tenant committee that she is now on.

## **Ripple Effect**

When M began to attend the mindfulness course, three other residents from Trust also began to attend.

## **Social Networks**

She has now become good friends with 2 of those people, one of whom she attends a knitting group with and other social events within the residency. The other is 99 years old and often pops in to see M for coffee and M helps to accompany him, as he walks with a stick, to the mindfulness group and also to the Calm Project day trip to Samye Ling, which she attended on September 12<sup>th</sup>.

M was also instrumental in bringing a small group of people together after her mindfulness course finished, who met at the Modern Art Gallery once per month. Calm project had suggested that this might be enjoyable and beneficial and 5 people attended regularly to discuss how their practice was going and also for the social side.

M has also become very good friends with a lady from another sheltered housing association in Patrick who attended the same mindfulness course as her and they have become firm friends meeting about twice per week for coffee, or visiting places.