

# Overview

‘Off the Scales’ was co-designed with people who have lived experience of challenges with weight management and mental health problems. The content discussed in the sessions was developed based on the findings from our research.

## Why ‘Off the Scales’ is different from other programmes

The aim of ‘Off the Scales’ is to support you to make **positive** and **sustainable** lifestyle changes, which will improve your health and wellbeing, regardless of changes to weight. We recognise that for some people using the weighing scales to measure progress can be a motivating factor, however for others it can be a source of distress, trigger unhealthy behaviours and overshadow all the other positive changes that have been made. Therefore, the core principles of ‘Off the Scales’ are that:

### It is not weight centric

We will not be tracking weight or using BMI as a way to measure progress. Instead, we will be focusing on quality-of-life measurements and individual goals.



### It is not prescriptive

We will encourage you to make positive changes in your own health and wellbeing that are important to you and are not about meeting targets.



### It supports long-term change

Our focus is on supporting you to improve your relationship with food and physical activity so that you can continue to lead a healthy lifestyle even when you are no longer getting support from the ‘Off the Scales’ programme.

**“I would like general healthy eating advice without focus on calories. I want to be in a group with people who have experienced disordered eating and to connect with people who understand my struggles.”**

Real quote taken from our research

# Course content

Each week we will cover different topics. You will receive a booklet at the start of each session that will reflect the content covered during the session and will be yours to keep so you can look back on the information when you have completed the 'Off the Scales' programme.

## Session 1 – Finding your why

- The importance of 'why'
- Types of motivation
- Success & failure
- Dealing with setbacks
- Unhelpful thinking styles

## Session 2 – Understanding mindset

- Types of mindset
- Barriers to healthy living
- Relationship between thoughts, feelings and behaviours

## Session 3 – Emotional eating & dieting myths

- Types of hunger
- Emotional eating
- Dieting myths
- Diet culture
- Recognising progress

## Session 4 – Self-esteem & physical activity

- Understanding self-esteem
- Building good self-esteem
- Physical activity v's exercise
- Physical activity & mood

## Session 5 – Continuing the journey

- Revisiting your 'why'
- Finding balance
- Goal setting
- Next steps

## Session 6 – Review & peer support (optional)

- Opportunity to reflect on your learnings from Off the Scales and continue discussions with peers

**“I would like some peer support, but one that maybe wasn't just solely focused on weight. Talking about diets is really boring!”**

Real quote taken from our research

# FAQ's

We have compiled a list of initial questions you might have about attending our sessions. For questions that are not answered here, use the space on page 7 to make a note of them to ask one of our team.

## **Q. What if I can't attend every week?**

A. If you are unable to attend one week that is ok. Please let the facilitator know prior to the session. You will be provided with the relevant workbook for that session and can speak with the facilitator if you have any questions.

If you are unable to attend more than one session, we will discuss alternative options.

## **Q. What if I am not comfortable sharing personal information?**

A. While we will be encouraging open discussions related to the topics we are discussing, no one will be forced to share information if they are not comfortable to do so. We want the sessions to be a safe space so, as part of our group agreement, we will be asking people to respect confidentiality which means that any personal information that might be shared during the sessions is not shared outside of the group.

## **Q. Do I have to do the active breaks?**

A. Each session we will be including short breaks (5-10 mins) where we will try different activities to demonstrate the different ways you can increase your movement even over a short period of time. We know that everyone will have different abilities / limitations so where possible we will make adjustments as needed or provide an alternative activity.

If you are not comfortable joining in with the active breaks, that is ok. Speak with the facilitator to discuss any concerns.

## **Q. Will 'Off the Scales' help me to lose weight?**

A. The aim of 'Off the Scales' is to support you to build a better relationship with food and physical activity. As it is not a weight-centric programme, we will not be measuring weight at any point. A result of making positive lifestyle changes, such as eating better and moving more, might be some weight loss, but it is not the goal.

## **Q. Do I need to have specific clothes and shoes to do the active breaks?**

A. No, just wear loose fitting, comfortable clothes and flat, supportive shoes if you have them. The active breaks will all be low-intensity and can be adjusted to your level of ability.

# FAQ's

## **Q. What happens once the five sessions are finished?**

- A. You have the option of attending an additional session where you can have a review with the facilitator. This will also be an opportunity to build a peer support network with the other people who attended the sessions so that you can continue supporting each other after you have completed 'Off the Scales'.

## **Q. Will there be different people at the group each week?**

- A. No, it will be the same people attending the sessions each week.

## **Q. What do I need to bring to the sessions?**

- A. We recommend that you bring your 'Off the Scales' folder (which you will receive in session 1) to each session. This is so that you can put each new booklet you receive straight into the folder and are less likely to lose it. Having the folder with you will help you to look back on the topics covered in previous sessions if needed.

Any other resources that you might need during the sessions will be provided by us. If there is anything that you might require to support you with being able to attend and engage with the sessions, please make us aware of this prior to the first session and we will do our best to accommodate.

## **Q. What if I attend the first session but don't think that the programme is for me?**

- A. That is ok! We appreciate that this programme will not be suitable for or meet the needs of everyone. If you attend one or more of the sessions but are unsure about whether the programme is right for you, then speak with the facilitator. We can book in a review call to discuss alternative options that better support your needs and goals.

## **Q. How can I get involved with supporting the programme?**

- A. If after you have completed the 'Off the Scales' programme you would like to be involved with the delivery of the programme, speak with the facilitator to discuss possible opportunities such as peer facilitator and peer support roles.

If you are interested in being involved with the development of the programme and contributing to the overall shape of 'Off the Scales', speak with the facilitator who can discuss any current or upcoming opportunities and how you can get involved.

# FAQ's

**Q. What if I am unable to practice any of the suggested activities between sessions?**

A. That is OK! We know that life can be busy, and despite our best intentions we are not always able to get everything done. You are still welcome to attend the sessions with the hope that you will be able to practice the activities at a later date.

## Still have questions?

If you are still unsure about attending Off the Scales, make a note of any additional questions or concerns you have and get in contact with our team at the Recovery College who would be more than happy to discuss those with you.

You can contact the Recovery College on 01642 573924 and request to speak to the Recovery College team. If a member of our team is not available to speak with you immediately, leave contact details and we will respond to you as soon as possible. Please note that this may not be on the same day.

### Additional questions:

