

Improving Individual Development through Mindful Table Tennis Volunteering

Theme: volunteering, individual development, mental wellbeing

Defining the Issue

Volunteers play a vital role in the sport and physical activity sector, contributing to the experiences of participants in projects across the country. Volunteers themselves can also learn and develop skills through their experience, as *Kirsty* has found through volunteering in her local *Mindful Sport* programme.

Background Information

Kirsty learnt about the volunteering opportunities at Mindful Sport through her lecturers at her university. After reaching out to the programme lead, *Kirsty* learned more about the different sports on offer in the programme, deciding to volunteer at the weekly table tennis sessions.

Kirsty was attracted to the opportunity due to her interest in the sport industry, and the purpose of the programme – to offer opportunities to get active and social with peer-to-peer support and advice around mental health issues. Having struggled with mental health herself, *Kirsty* knew how people can be affected, so was keen to support the programme.



The Impact

Volunteering in the programme enabled *Kirsty* to meet new people whilst enhancing her CV and creating new contacts in the sport and physical activity industry

Kirsty feels her personal skills have developed as a result of volunteering, including having better communication with various age groups and increasing her confidence to independently deliver sessions

After her involvement in the programme, *Kirsty* gained a paid role within the council and was offered various coaching opportunities with external companies

Volunteering in the programme had a positive effect on *Kirsty's* own mental health, as the sessions create a supportive environment where she feels relaxed

For more information on bringing table tennis to your community, visit www.pinginthecommunity.co.uk

For *Mindful Sport*, search 'Bedford Borough Council Mindful Sport'

For confidentiality reasons, the participant's name has been changed

case study
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