



Evaluation of the Mindful Exercise Project

March 2003

Commissioned by the College of Chinese Physical Culture



The project was evaluated by

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Executive Summary

The Project

The Mindful Exercise Project is using an innovative and challenging programme of holistic exercise. It is developing the learning potential, health, fitness and life skills of disadvantaged people through a balanced mix of fun and training, which incorporates movement, dance and gymnastic-based exercise.

The Project commenced in July 2002 and is scheduled to end in March 2003. Well-qualified tutors of the College of Chinese Physical Culture (CPC) are facilitating the Project in various community-based organisations in North East Derbyshire.

The aim of the Project is to give people without basic or key skills who have not participated in learning for some time and who have no or low levels of qualifications the opportunity to improve their life styles generally and to enhance their employability.

The Evaluation

This evaluation is a summative individual impact assessment. It assesses the impact of the Project on the individual from the perspectives of the individual, her/his carers and the CPC tutors, who are delivering the course. The assessment comprises data from the College of Chinese Physical Culture (CPC) as well as information gathered from semi-structured interviews, which the evaluator carried out with the participants, carers and CPC tutors. The evaluation focuses on the impact of the Project on two main target groups: a) adults over 45 and b) people with learning disabilities.

The Outcomes

The Project is having a real and holistic impact on the participants' physical, emotional and mental development, which is being observed by the participants themselves, the carers and the CPC tutors.

• *Adults over 45*

The adults who are participating in the Mindful Exercise Project are developing their skills to 'self-appraise'. They are making significant and positive changes in their attitude and behaviour towards themselves and others.

• *People with Learning Disabilities*

The participants with learning disabilities are making significant and positive changes in their physical, mental and emotional development.

• *Life Skills*

The Mindful Exercise Project is having a powerful impact on the participants. It is developing and enhancing their life skills such as their confidence and self-esteem, their self-expression and creativity, their interpersonal social and communication skills, e.g. dependability and commitment.

• *Lifelong Learning*

Becoming more self-reflective as well as more able to apply their new understanding in real life situations, the participants of the Project are learning how to process information. An ability to process information, i.e. to convert information into a practical tool for daily living, is an essential skill for 'lifelong learning'.

Knowing how to process information enables individuals to adapt to the rapid changes in their lifetime and in society as a whole¹. Learning about a particular field of study can help people to access employment (ibid.). However, it is the ability to process new information, which will help individuals to access opportunities of further education, training and employment (ibid.).

• *National Health and Social Policy Documents*

In addition to lifelong learning, the Mindful Exercise Project is also on target to achieve many recommendations and good practice guidelines that are stated in Government health and social policies. For example, the Project is achieving some of the recommendations in the following Government policy documents:

- > Department for Education and Skills: - A fresh Start: February 1999
- > Department for Education and Employment: - Freedom to Learn: May 2000

- > Department of Health:
 - NSF for Coronary Heart Disease: Standard One
 - NSF for Mental Health: Standard One
 - NSF for Older People: Standard Eight

The Project is having an impressive impact on the lives of those individuals who are participating. It has significant beneficial effects on their health and well-being, their breathing, balance and co-ordination, their ability to focus, concentrate and live in the moment.

The Project is on target to achieve the aims and objectives set by the Learning and Skills Council.

In brief, it:

- ✓ works with unemployed people without basic or key skills who have not participated in learning for some time with no, or low levels of qualifications
- ✓ uses a unique approach to course delivery which is particularly effective at engaging people
- ✓ offers accreditation in CPC performing, confidence-building, speaking and listening
- ✓ promotes wider access and participation in lifelong learning by taking learning opportunities into the community
- ✓ targets assistance to groups experiencing specific problems with engaging in learning
- ✓ delivers an accredited programme of learning

¹ www.sinclair.educ/information/Learning%20A.../processlearning.htmls, p. 1.

1. Introduction

This section gives the background of the Mindful Exercise Project and the evaluation process.

1.1. Background of the Mindful Exercise Project

The Mindful Exercise Project uses the fun and motivational learning activities of the College of Chinese Physical Culture (CPC) to attract people, who are over 45 years old as well as people with learning disabilities, into lifelong learning.

CPC is an innovative and challenging programme of holistic exercise. It develops learning potential, health, fitness and life skills through a balanced mix of fun and training, which incorporates movement, dance and gymnastic-based exercise. This non-traditional programme benefits people in the following areas:

- confidence, communication and concentration
- co-ordination and interactive skills
- frustration, depression and stress management
- improved health
- motivation, empowerment and fun
- accreditation in basic skills and CPC¹

The Mindful Exercise Project commenced on the 1st July 2002 and is scheduled to finish on the 27th March 2003. The Project consists of eight classes for people who are over 45 years old and one class for people with learning disabilities. The classes run for between 3 and 5_ months and are delivered in various community-based organisations in North East Derbyshire. Around 90 individuals are participating in the Project, 76 are within the target group and 4 individuals are on course to complete the Open College Unit: **Using ICT**. Numbers fluctuate, as some classes have between 10 and 20 participants².

1.2. Aim of the Mindful Exercise Project

The three main aims of the Mindful Exercise Project are to:

- work with unemployed people without basic or key skills who have not participated in learning for some time and who have no, or low levels of qualifications in order to:
 - address and change any barriers to learning such as a negative attitude
 - develop effective interpersonal skills
 - stimulate process learning, self-reflection and motivation
 - enhance the possibility of re-employment

¹This information was gathered from the marketing materials of the Mindful Exercise Project.

²See Appendix 1 for the towns that are involved in the Mindful Exercise Project.

- improve people's health and well-being by:
 - involving them in fun and health-related exercises and activities

- create the possibility for people to obtain certificates at entry level or level one through the Open College in:
 - CPC Performing
 - Speaking and Listening
 - Confidence Building³

1.3. Evaluation

The aim of this evaluation is a summative individual impact assessment, i.e. it assesses the impact of the Project on the individual from the perspective of the:

- a) participant
- b) worker or carer
- c) CPC tutor delivering the course

The assessment is based on a substantial amount of qualitative data, which includes:

- > **Learning Ledgers and Individual Learning Plans** that were developed for the participants by the College of CPC to demonstrate change in soft outcomes⁴
- > **Class Observation** by the evaluator
- > **Semi-structured Interviews** with participants, observers, workers and CPC tutors⁵

The evaluation focuses on the two main target groups: adults over 45 years of age (two classes interviewed) and people with learning disabilities (one class interviewed). Details of the impact that the Project had on adults over 45 are found in Section 2 of this report. The impact on people with learning disabilities is explained in more detail in Section 3 of this report.

Please note that the evaluation does not set out to quantify or qualify the effectiveness of the Project in terms of the management or organisation of the College of CPC. In addition, it does not evaluate the sustainable development of the Project. As stated earlier, the evaluation focuses on the participant of the Mindful Exercise Project and the impact that it has on her/his physical, mental and emotional development.

³This information was gathered from the marketing materials of the Mindful Exercise Project.

⁴As, at the time of writing this report, most of the classes had not finished, some of these records were incomplete.

⁵See Appendix 2 for the semi-structured questionnaire.

2. Adults

The Mindful Exercise Project is aimed at people who are over 45 years old, who are unemployed without basic or key skills and no, or low levels of qualifications and who have not participated in learning for some time.

The Project seeks to engage and motivate the people who participate in the CPC course to increase their opportunities of lifelong learning, their levels of health and well-being as well as their progression into further training and re-employment.

2.1. Clowne and Clay Cross

Two classes in North East Derbyshire, one in Clowne and the other in Clay Cross, participated in the interviews. The interview in Clowne was carried out on the 30th January and the interview in Clay Cross on the 5th February 2003.

Of the twelve people, who attended the class in Clowne, nine were women and three men. Seven women attended the class in Clay Cross. As a rule, 15 people come to the Clay Cross class, but severe weather conditions prevented a full turnout.

As an “outreach college”¹, the College of Chinese Physical Culture holds its classes in community centres, e.g. a Working Man’s Club in Clowne and a Sports Centre in Clay Cross.

The participants in both classes are mainly in their fifties and sixties. As these two groups in the Mindful Exercise Project are homogeneous, they will be treated as one target audience in this report.

2.2. Participants’ Perspectives

This sub-section comprises the answers to the questions in the semi-structured questionnaire.

All 19 participants gave a **positive appraisal** of the Mindful Exercise Project and emphasised the benefits that they were receiving from it in terms of their physical, emotional and mental development. Some of the aspects they liked most about the Project were, to use their own words:

- *“fun-related, gentle exercises*
- *new and unique routines, forms and stances from the Chinese tradition*
- *deeper breathing; it helps to relieve tension and to acquire a better posture*
- *it improves balance, mental alertness and the power of concentration*
- *social contact by meeting new people*
- *no competitive pressure*
- *a friendly, relaxed atmosphere*
- *opening up to other people*
- *making the body more supple and increasing its mobility*
- *good for stiff joints and muscles*
- *instructors are gentle, supportive and positive in their approach*
- *building trust and confidence.”*

¹This is one tutor’s description of the community-based work carried out by the CCPC.

There were **no negative comments** about the Mindful Exercise Project from any of the 19 participants.

All participants have noticed **changes in the way they see themselves and others**. Individuals stated that they see:

- a) **themselves** as *“less shy and reserved, more assertive, more relaxed in front of other people, more confident, with a little more indulgence, more supple, with more confidence in my body, more supple and therefore with improved well-being, more open”*;
- b) **others** as *“enjoyable and friendly, friends and not strangers, [...] and their reactions more clearly, vulnerable and in need of support and help, very nice, fellow learners, more as equals, people willing to try something new, friendly without knowing me, pleasant and helpful, more respectful towards other people in the group”*.

The above changes have also had a **significant impact on the way in which the participants treat themselves and behave with other people**. Individuals stated that they:

- *“feel more independent and can do the CPC exercises by themselves at home*
- *do not feel lonely and isolated any more*
- *participate more with other people*
- *feel more confident to make new friends*
- *have a heightened awareness of other people’s needs*
- *value themselves differently*
- *breathe better and communicate more freely with others*
- *respect other people more*
- *always try to be approachable, helpful, friendly and polite*
- *listen more carefully, are more patient and less quick to judge*
- *feel more pleased with themselves and have a sense of achievement*
- *are more prepared to try a new approach*
- *give a cheery smile to others and address them with a few happy words.”*

When asked **what they had learned about the mind and body and how this has helped them**, all 19 participants stated unanimously that they

- a) now appreciated the extent to which the mind controls the body
- b) could do a great deal more with their bodies than they had previously thought possible
- c) had learned different ways of the mind-and-body interaction.

The participants stressed that, in practical terms, their changed attitude towards a more harmonious mind-body relationship, and as experienced through the CPC exercises, has significant beneficial effects on their health and well-being, their breathing, balance and co-ordination, their ability to focus, concentrate and live in the moment.

The participants were invited to assess **the levels of their personal growth and development** before and since participating in the Mindful Exercise Project by using a scale of 1-10. The participants were asked to place a mark on the following tables². The scoring comprises **1 = no confidence** to **10 = a lot of confidence**.

²One or two new participants felt they could not place a mark into all the scoring fields on the grid.

Table 1: Before starting the course

Soft Outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Confidence	3	1	2		4	2	2	3		
Self Esteem		7	1	2	3	1	1	4		
Speaking and Listening		3	2	3	1	1	1	2		3
Communication		4	3		7				2	3
Participation with Others	2	1	3	1		1		3	3	3
Improved Health	4	2	4		1	3	2	2		
Motivation	4		1	1	5	3		3		
Total	13	18	16	7	21	11	6	17	5	9

Table 2: Since starting the course

Soft Outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Confidence			1			3	5	5	3	1
Self Esteem					1	2	3	6	4	1
Speaking and Listening		1			2		4	2	3	7
Communication		1				1	1	3	3	9
Participation with Others		1			1	1		1	3	11
Improved Health	1			1	1	1	5	4	3	4
Motivation					1	4	2	8	2	
Total	1	3	1	1	5	9	22	23	27	35

When asked what **practical opportunities** they have become aware of since starting the Mindful Exercise course,

- three participants stated that they were joining a night class
- one participant was going to start on an IT training course
- one was going to set up a stall at an exhibition
- one participant was planning to take on more jobs in their church
- three participants had become involved in running another ME group
- one participant mentioned a project in which he would get involved.

On a more personal level, most participants identified new opportunities in the way they can now relate to other people. They saw this as a positive outcome of their increased ability for self-reflection and interpersonal awareness.

Finally, when asked what **three things they will remember from the Mindful Exercise course**, the participants replied:

- *“how to breathe properly*
- *power through gentleness*
- *the instructors’ positive attitude and gentle approach”.*

It is clear from the participants’ perspectives that they benefited from the Mindful Exercise Project. This viewpoint was supported by the class observation carried out by the evaluator prior to the interviews and by the CPC tutors (see below).

2.3. Class Observation

The evaluator had the opportunity to observe the two classes before the interviews were carried out.

The class began with some basic physical exercises, allowing the participants to loosen up. The instructors created a relaxed, pleasant atmosphere by using an easy-going, humorous approach and people were clearly enjoying themselves.

Gradually, the exercises were getting more complex. The participants were taken through different forms, stances and steps in a slow, deliberate way, e.g. the chicken stance and the dragon shape.

The slow, well-directed movements required the participants’ full attention. They had to focus and concentrate on every single movement. It seemed like hard work, but everybody participated with enthusiasm.

The instructors interacted with the class by asking for feedback, e.g. *“how do you feel now after the exercises?”* and *“is everybody okay with that?”* or by going over to individual participants to help and encourage them with their work.

Those participants, who had been on the course from the beginning, often had to exercise their memory as well, i.e. to recall the various steps and movements. They also helped and supported the new participants in their learning.

The animal imagery such as monkey, duck, dragon, eagle, leopard, riding horse etc., which was used to describe the stances and steps, has its roots in ancient Chinese exercises designed to bring harmony and balance into the mind-body relationship.

After the individual exercises, the participants worked with a partner. Here, the emphasis was on mirroring each other’s movements. The participants were working with balance, co-ordination and focus. They had to concentrate on observing, relating and communicating.

In one instance, a participant held out her arm in a relaxed manner. At the same time she was using her breath as she had learned to do through the CPC exercises. She did not use any force. Her partner tried to push up the arm. It proved impossible. This example showed that physical strength can be generated in a gentle way.

From observing the two Mindful Exercise classes, it became clear that the basis of the CPC work is **physical movement and that other essential learning processes are closely linked to this.**

2.4. Tutors' Perspectives

Four tutors participated in an interview, which took place on Tuesday the 4th February 2003.

Not surprisingly, the tutors' perspectives closely overlap with the participants' perspectives and also broadly reflect the evaluator's own observations. However, some of the tutors' comments, which do not coincide with the participants' and the evaluator's observations, are set out in this section.

For example, the tutors thought that some interpersonal difficulties can arise as a result of a "*gender divide*", that women are more open to touching than men, but that the dynamics change after 6 to 7 weeks, when both genders begin to interact more freely.

The tutors also explained that often the participants hear or read something outside the class and that then they are thinking about what they have learnt on the course, trying to explore and bring together the two different realities.

The tutors further pointed out that the participants are thinking about the ME exercises and how these are affecting them, e.g. the way they feel connected physically, emotionally and mentally, and how as a result their attitudes begin to change.

Following on from the above, the tutors also pointed out that the participants find it harder to think about what they are doing and to have to be constantly aware of their own bodies as they take them through the various CPC exercises. Nothing can be done in a purely mechanical way.

The tutors stated that sometimes the participants may say something negative about themselves to prompt the tutors to agree with them or to give a positive reply. However, as the CPC learning dynamic is based on positive feedback, support and encouragement, the tutors only challenge the participants in such a manner.

According to the tutors, the different breathing techniques, which are learned through the CPC exercises, can produce different effects. They can either make a person feel calm and relaxed, or invigorated, upright and focused, or restful and tired.

The participants – when questioned by the tutors about the breathing exercises – make the following typical remarks: "*I feel more energised*", "*I feel it in my eyes*", "*I feel taller*", "*I feel more upright*", "*I feel more relaxed*".

Finally, the tutors stated that by doing the CPC exercises the participants realise that they are still capable of learning and that, in the humorous words of one tutor, "you can still teach an old dog new tricks".

According to the CPC tutors' perspective, it is clear that the participants - though only halfway through the Mindful Exercise Project at the point of writing this report - are making considerable positive changes in their attitude to the Project, to themselves and to other people.

3. People With Learning Disabilities

The College of Chinese Physical Culture (CPC) runs one Mindful Exercise class for people with learning disabilities. This takes place once a week at a Youth Club and Community Centre in Eckington, North East Derbyshire.

After a time of observing the group in action, the evaluator carried out an interview with three carers. This took place on 30th January 2003.

Seven participants were present. Of these three were men and four were women. As a rule, eleven people attend this class, but because of transport difficulties four of them could not be there on that particular occasion.

The carers described the range of the participants' disabilities as "deaf and dumb", "diabetes" and "mobility problems".

3.1. Carers' Perspectives

According to the carers, the participants **most of all like the gentle approach** and the fact that the **instructor adapts himself to their pace**, making the exercises neither too long nor too strenuous.

The participants **especially like the forms, stances and steps** that remind them **of different animals**. They also enjoy being together as a group and the fact that an outside person is doing the exercises with them.

The carers were **not aware of any negative feelings** towards the CPC exercises.

The changes, which the carers have noticed, are that all the participants have become **more motivated** as a result of being able to do something new. This gives them a **sense of achievement** and personal pride.

The carers have also noticed that, although the participants are all at different levels, there is a **greater cohesion within the group** since starting the CPC exercises. The participants have become friendlier, more approachable and **more sensitive to each other's needs**. They learn by copying and supporting each other.

When the participants feel a **pain** in an arm or a leg, this can be a **positive experience** for them, as it **raises their awareness of themselves**. They are not discouraged by their pains or even when they get tired, but keep coming back.

The carers explained that, on the one hand, the **participants are helpful** to a fault, always wanting to please the instructor, but that, on the other hand, by being willing to overcome their inner resistances and to try again, they are **learning their own limits**.

Although **some of the participants** can do the exercises, they do not derive a lasting benefit from them, as they find it **difficult to retain any information** and knowledge. However, certain animal shapes and stances, like the snake, are retained more easily.

The carers have noticed that through the CPC exercises the participants have become **more focused and more organised**. As they have learned to listen to the instructor, their powers of attention have increased.

This has strengthened their basic life skills and provided them with **a more structured approach** to their daily activities. For example, when the class finishes, they now take the chairs out and clear up behind them.

The carers also observed that the **participants feel very pleased** with themselves when they discover that **they can do things on their own**, i.e. without the help of the carers.

When asked what **three things the participants might remember** from the course, the carers thought it would be the snakes with the breathing and hissing, different animal stances, and the instructor.

The final comment of the carers was, to use their own words: *"It would be nice to have a chance to do these CPC exercises again and again."*

3.2. Class Observation

It became clear from observing the class in action that the impact of the CPC exercises used with the disabled participants was adapted to their disabilities.

Seated on chairs and in a circle, they started with basic physical exercises, using their arms, shoulders and their heads. The participants were enthusiastic and enjoyed themselves, although some were easily distracted and found it difficult to concentrate.

The instructor motivated the participants by saying their names in a gentle but firm way and by encouraging them to try again. His speech was always clear and deliberate so that the participants had no difficulties following his instructions.

The exercises were clearly having an impact on the participants' co-ordination, balance and concentration. Emphasis was placed on their breathing in and out slowly and deeply.

Gradually, the exercises became more specialised, focusing on the mobility of all the limbs of the body, e.g. moving the wrists and other joints.

Some of the people did not participate in the upper body movements, but only worked with their legs, feet and toes.

The instructor helped the participants raise their awareness by asking them to determine the directions of their movements.

It was clear to see that the exercises stimulated the participants' brain activity, as they became more alive and bubbly, with a glow on their cheeks.

3.3. Tutor's Perspective

The tutor's comments coincided in all main points with the carers' perspectives and the evaluator's observations.

4. Conclusion

At the time of writing this report, the Mindful Exercise Project is on course to achieve its outputs for the Learning and Skills Council as well as to achieve its aims and objectives.

The Project demonstrates that a significant number of participants are gaining valuable life skills. They are becoming healthier and happier as well as transforming into more self-confident and self-reflective individuals.

Significantly, the Project meets a wide range of the Government's national health and social care policies.

4.1. Project on Target to achieve National Social Policy Guidelines

There are national policy guidelines that refer to the two main target groups of

a) adults over 45 years of age and b) people with physical disabilities, which are discussed in Sections 2 and 3.

4.1.1. National Policy Recommendations for Community-based Programmes

In 1999, the Department for Education and Skills produced the document that highlights the need for community-based programmes¹.

The Working Group recommends that:

"it is wrong to regard a large number of adults with poor basic skills as permanently hard to reach. Arrangements need to be made to package provision in a way that is attractive to all. The best examples of community-based provision have motivated some of those not otherwise attracted by the simple device of linking provision to common concerns. Only by harnessing the energy and outreach of community organisations will the message of basic skills get across to large numbers in the target group. Community organisations are often close to those who are not participants in formal education or in civic life. Their contribution within the National Strategy is vital."

As has been seen in Sections 1, 2 and 3 of this report, the College of Chinese Physical Culture (CPC) is an outreach college.

The Mindful Exercise Project is facilitated on-site, which ensures that the learners have easy access and are in an appropriate environment.

The comments of the learners, carers and tutors show that the Project meets the Working Group's recommendations.

4.1.2. Lifelong Learning

The participants of the Mindful Exercise Project are learning how to be more reflective and how to process information gained through their raised awareness. Processing information, understanding it, interpreting it, applying it and using one's knowledge is crucial for any individual to cope with the amount and flow of information in the twenty first century². It is an essential skill for 'lifelong learning'.

¹ Moser, C. (1999) A Fresh Start: improving literacy and numeracy, DfES publications, p.51.

² www.sinclair.educ/information/Learning%20A.../processlearning.htmls, p. 1.

Knowing how to process information will enable individuals to adapt to the rapid changes in their lifetime and in society as a whole (ibid.). Learning about a particular field of study can help people to access employment (ibid.).

The College of Chinese Physical Culture (CPC) uses a non-traditional programme that enables individuals 'to process information for themselves – by themselves'. The method used by the College also teaches individuals how to:

- participate in group activities
- take risks
- interact with others
- reflect on their learning
- observe their peers' learning
- make connections
- respect diversity
- identify areas for self-improvement and self-development (ibid., p.2)

The Project is having a positive impact on people's lives. It offers a holistic programme that enhances the physical, mental and emotional development of individuals in a fun 'learning' environment.

The participants said that they were beginning to feel healthier and happier physically and a great deal better mentally and emotionally. The CPC tutors also observed these changes.

4.2. Project on Target to achieve National Health Policy Guidelines

The Mindful Exercise Project uses movement, dance, gymnastic exercise and special breathing techniques to improve health and well-being. Consequently, it meets the following standards in the National Service Frameworks:

• Coronary Heart Disease

Standard One states:

"The NHS and partner agencies should develop, implement and monitor policies that reduce the prevalence of coronary risk factors in the population, and reduce the risks in developing heart disease" (p.17)

The Project focuses on the following people, who are known to be more at risk in developing heart disease. They include individuals who:

- do not exercise
- suffer stress and anxiety
- are unemployed or come from the manual classes
- live in the North of the country (ibid., p.7)

• Mental Health

Standard One states:

“Health and social services should a) promote mental health for all, working with individuals and communities and b) combat discrimination against individuals and groups with mental health problems, and promote their social inclusion”

The comments that were made by the participants in Sections 2 and 3 of this report demonstrate that the Project is having a positive impact on their mental attitude.

• Older People

Standard Eight states:

“To extend the healthy life expectancy of older people”

The Project is working with a significant number of persons over 55. The older participants’ statements demonstrate that the Project is having a positive impact on their health.

For example: a typical improvement for many of the participants is that the CPC exercises are making their bodies more supple and increasing their mobility.

4.3. National Policy Recommendations for People with Physical Disabilities

In September 1999, the Department of Education and Employment established a working group to look into the basic skill needs of adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities³.

As regards persons with physical disabilities, the working group recommended that:

“good practice which is promoted should centre around the inclusive approach to learning. This means making programmes of study directly relevant to the individuals’ needs and priorities, [...], creating programmes and curricula which are flexible, providing the necessary access to resources, ensuring the pace of programmes meets the needs of those with physical disabilities, placing a high priority on the development of practical skills, and teaching basic skills in real life situations” (ibid., p.26)

The comments from the carers and CPC tutors (see Section 3) show that the Mindful Exercise Project for People with Physical Disabilities meets the above recommendations.

In brief, the Project

- is inclusive
- is facilitated on-site. This ensures the learners have easy access and are in an appropriate environment
- has flexible, client-centred programmes
- develops practical skills such as physical exercises for easier movements and counting skills
- is offered as a group-based exercise which ensures the participants interact with others

³ DfEE (2000) Freedom to Learn, DfEE publications, p.1.

4.4. Project on Target to achieve Learning and Skills Council Objectives

The Mindful Exercise Project is on target to achieve the objectives as stated in the contract with the Learning and Skills Council.

In brief, the Project:

- offers a community-based course integrating basic and employability skills within the fun and health related activity of the College of Chinese Physical Culture
- works with unemployed people without basic or key skills who have not participated in learning for some time with no, or low levels of qualifications
- uses a unique approach to course delivery which is particularly effective at engaging people
- offers accreditation in CPC performing, confidence-building, speaking and listening
- promotes wider access and participation in lifelong learning by taking learning opportunities into the community
- targets assistance to groups experiencing specific problems with engaging in learning
- delivers an accredited programme of learning by which participants can gain a minimum of two qualifications at NVQ entry level or level one leading to progression into further learning or employment

This evaluation has measured the impressive distance travelled by the participants in terms of increased levels of **basic skills** such as:

- confidence
- self esteem
- communication
- speaking and listening skills
- participation with others
- improved health
- raised motivation to want to improve basic skills⁴

4.5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the College of CPC share this report with health-related organisations such as Primary Care Trusts and the Local Authority (Department of Sports and Leisure).

The College could also consider sharing its good practice within multi-agency partnerships such as the Older People's Forum in Leeds.

⁴ See Tables 1 and 2 in Section 2.

Appendix 1:

Classes in North East Derbyshire

Bolsover	28th Oct 2002 - 24th Mar 2003
Brimington	6th Jan 2003 - 24th Mar 2003
Clay Cross	5th Nov 2002 - 25th Mar 2003
Dronfield	3rd Dec 2002 - 25th Mar 2003
Chesterfield	7th Jan 2003 - 25th Mar 2003
Chesterfield	7th Nov 2002 - 27th Mar 2003
Clowne	31st Oct 2002 - 27th Mar 2003
Shirebrook	31st Oct 2002 - 27th Mar 2003
Eckington	17th Oct 2002 - 27th Mar 2003

(for people with learning disabilities)

Appendix 2:

Questions for Participants ¹

1. What do you like the most about the CPC course?
2. What don't you like?
3. What changes have you noticed in the way you see
 - a) yourself
 - b) other people?
4. How do these changes affect the way you
 - a) treat yourself
 - b) behave with other people?
5. What have you learned about the mind and body?
6. Has this helped you? Give an example.
7. What new things have you learned?
8. What was your level of the following factors before the course and what is it now:
 - a) confidence
 - b) self esteem
 - c) speaking and listening skills
 - d) communication
 - e) participation with others
 - f) improved health
 - g) motivation to improve basic skills?
9. What opportunities have you become aware of since being on the Mindful Exercise course?
10. What three things will you remember from this course?

¹ The Questions for Carers and Tutors are identical in content, but have been re-formulated to suit the different audiences.

Addendum

Final Project Results

This addendum details the accreditation gained by participants on the Mindful Exercise Project. This page has been produced by the College of Chinese Physical Culture, and is not associated with EAGLE-UK.com, who have completed the project evaluation report.

Overall 82 individuals participated in the project.

The following table details the units of accreditation, and the levels, gained by these participants, whilst they attended the project. These figures are correct as of 1st April 2003 (i.e. after the end of the project).

All the units are accredited by the West and North Yorkshire Open College Network (WNYOCN), which is a branch of the National Open College Network (NOCN). The OCN unit levels are equivalent to NVQ Levels.

Programme	Level	Unit Title	Number of Achievers
CPC (Performing)	Entry	Performance Skills	61
		Personal Awareness and Development	61
		Health Arts	61
	One	Introduction to CPC	39
Skills for Lifelong	Entry	Speaking and Listening	61
Learning		Confidence Building	61
		Using ICT	8
	One	Speaking and Listening	31
		Confidence Building	31