



# TAKE FIVE

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IN THE  
COMMUNITY

**STAND STRONG**  
BREATHE

**A Qualitative Report on the  
Impact  
of Take Five in the Community**

**IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS**

The perspectives of five adults who participated in  
Take Five at CSL Community Centre, Manton, Worksop,  
Nottinghamshire, June 2015

## About this report

This report shares the perspective of five adults who completed a Take Five in the Community programme. The programme was designed and delivered by Each Amazing Breath CIC at CSL Community Centre in Manton, Worksop, Nottinghamshire. Participants attended four two hour sessions to learn Take Five techniques tailored to meet their personal needs.

Two to three weeks after the programme had finished, five one to one in-depth interviews were conducted. The interviews were all fascinating and insightful, and a huge amount of information and learning was very generously shared.

This report, although compact, aims to convey the high level essence of each interview. As such, it provides what the five interviewees considered the impact of Take Five to be. Following the interviews their distilled words have been sent to each of them to ensure they are happy with the summary.

The hope is that each of you reading their words will gain a meaningful glimpse of the impact of Take Five in the Community.

## The courage to share your story

We are confident that those who read this report will feel privileged to read the story of people who have been willing to share, in such an open and courageous way. Both Each Amazing Breath CIC, who commissioned the interviews, and Kate O'Dell, the Free-lance consultant who conducted them, are very appreciative and we offer our sincere thanks to each of them.

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## About Take Five

Take Five is a safe, universal, resilience and capacity building skill set focussed on breathing, grounding and awareness.

Take Five has been developed by Each Amazing Breath CIC and involves mindful resilience practices that take between thirty seconds and five minutes and can be practiced anywhere.

Each Amazing Breath CIC, a range of organisations and Manton residents worked together in creative workshops and developed a range of ways that Take Five can be applied, these include:



For more information on the roots and vision of Take Five in Manton see page 19.

## About Each Amazing Breath CIC

Each Amazing Breath CIC is a not for profit organisation founded in 2014 by Mark Lilly and Helen Whitney. We bring practices that promote capacity, resilience and mindful awareness into the everyday reach of nearly everyone.

We create patterns for people to use at work, at home and at school, over both immediate and long-term time-frames, and we encourage attentive, honest needs analysis and smart executive planning for both complicated, and very simple daily life events.

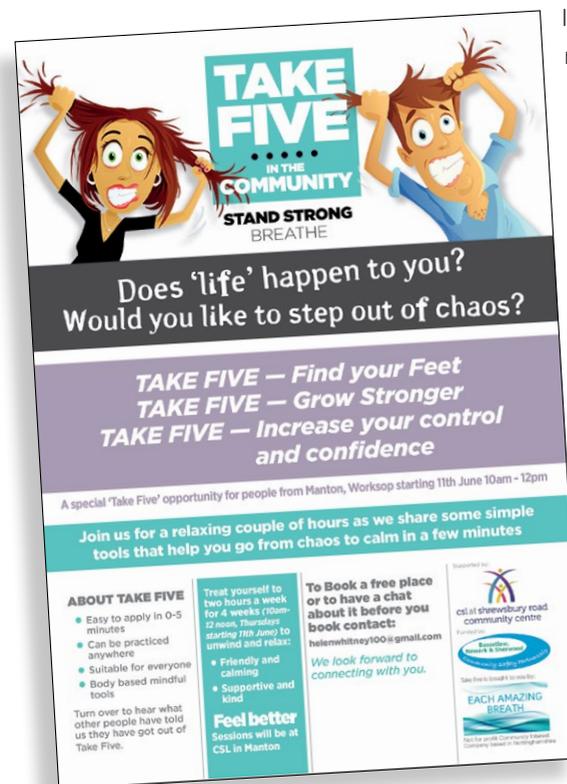
For more information on Take Five and Each Amazing Breath CIC please visit [www.eachamazingbreath.org](http://www.eachamazingbreath.org)

## About Take Five in the Community

The Take Five in the Community programme was designed by Each Amazing Breath CIC and local residents in Manton in the spring of 2015. The aim was to allow local people to have tailored access to some of the Take Five practices that were already happening in local schools.

The first task was to promote the opportunity in a way that might appeal to people who may never tried a mindful resilience building practice.

We are especially grateful to Clare Phillips, local resident, for her inspiration in helping to design the words for the promotional material.



In May 2015 promotional material was ready for distribution and within two weeks we had six people signed up (and a further six people asking for a similar programme in the evening).

The programme ran for two hours (10am – 12 noon), a week for four weeks in June 2015.

## Programme design and delivery

The Take Five in the Community programme was designed and tailored to personal needs by Each Amazing Breath trainers, Mark Lilly and Julie Christian.



Mark Lilly, Each Amazing Breath Training Director.



Julie Christian, Each Amazing Breath, Lead trainer in Nottinghamshire.

## About the in-depth interviews

At the end of the third Take Five in the Community session the impact had been so powerful that Each Amazing Breath discussed whether participants would be interested in being involved in a more formal means to record impact. A variety of options, ranging from; film testimony, written testimony, questionnaires, a focus group and in-depth interviews were discussed. Participants were unanimous that a one to one in depth interview was their preferred choice.

## Who conducted the interviews?

Each Amazing Breath CIC commissioned Kate O'Dell as a Free-lance evaluator. Kate is highly experienced at managing complex, and sensitive data collection, and analysis, in community settings. She has a Masters in Conflict Prevention and Peace Building and specialises in community empowerment, project management and participatory evaluation.

## Aim of the interviews

It was agreed with the participants, that the interviews would have the following aims:

- To allow their individual perspective of the impact to be conveyed to potential funders and interested individuals
- To allow Each Amazing Breath to capture their ideas so they could be fed into future workshops

## Who was interviewed?

There were six participants of Take Five in the Community. Five of them took part in a one to one in depth interview. The sixth person was the spouse of one of the other interviewees, and it was decided it was only necessary for only one of them to be interviewed.

## Methodology

### Data Collection methodology

The questions were devised in partnership with Each Amazing Breath who in turn based the key areas of questioning on agendas that both funders and participants had indicated as being important to probe. The questions were piloted and amended and the final semi-structured questions are set out in Appendix 1. The data was collected during one to one interviews with Kate O'Dell. The interviews took place between two and three weeks after the programme had finished and lasted between 40 - 50 minutes. Two interviews took on the telephone and three, face to face.

## Volume of data collected

As previously mentioned in this booklet the volume of data captured was considerable. Given this, it was decided that the production of a high level testimony summary based on the words of each participant was the most expedient way to convey the data. These are produced as the summary testimonies that follow in this booklet. Each of the interviewees have confirmed that they are happy with their respective summary. The other data has been stored recorded interviews held on record with Each Amazing Breath CIC.

# Summary of Chrissie's Testimony

## Profile

[Age: 26-35] Chrissie is a full time cleaner at a well-known hotel chain.

[Married]She is a mum and wife who has suffered for a long time with low self-esteem and negative thinking.

[X2 children]Chrissie is on a journey of self-discovery to increase her positive thoughts and live a happy life with her family.

[Employed full time]

## Why did you decide to attend the Take Five sessions?

**Chrissie:** I heard about the sessions through Facebook and had been researching meditation on YouTube for a while, so **went looking for practical, every day coping techniques** to help my anxiety and panic attacks.-medication can only get you so far. I was also hoping to meet other people on the same journey

## Have you used any of the techniques since the training, if so how useful have you found them?

**Chrissie:** I use the techniques any time everything gets on top of me. I've even done the practices in the toilet. No one can see you, **so I stand and breathe for a few minutes and I'm back to myself. These techniques are making me feel stronger each day**

## Has there been any overall benefit from learning these techniques?

**Chrissie:** If I hadn't been on this course, I'd still be unaware like I was before-reacting to every thought that came into my mind as if it were reality, panicky, no control over my body, but now it's opened by eyes. **It feels like I'm alive now. Before, I was just existing.**

You don't realise but you put it on yourself, depression is just what you're thinking, it's not reality.

## What impact have these sessions had on those around you?

**Chrissie:** Before I was like a boiling kettle if the kids were at me, but now I step back and take a moment and then **I have time for them, I'm fully engaged with them.** So it makes sense if the mom/dad is feeling better in their mind, it will have an impact in the kids.

They've noticed I'm happier and want to go out more. The house is a happier, calmer place

## Concluding Comments:

**Chrissie:** I've been dealing with depression since late teens/twenties, just not been dealing with life very well at all. On medication, very introverted into myself, not good positive thinking-all negative. So really, now I feel like I'm coming out of it, and those sessions came up – **it's opened my world more** and I'm out of a dark hole of depression.

# Summary of Jo's testimony

## Profile

[Age: 26-35] Jo lives in Worksop with her 6 year old daughter, they also have a large family of pets. Despite Jo's day to day life being extremely stressful, she often volunteers at a local pet shop.

[Single]

[X1 child]

[Can't work] She overcomes approximately 3 panic attacks every day and suffers with anxiety.

## Why did you decide to attend the Take Five sessions?

**Jo: My 6 year old daughter brought a letter home and asked me to do the course because she said I was stressed.** I felt terrible and thought I better do it!

I have panic attacks on average 3 times a day which can be set off by anything, so I was hoping this would teach me how to handle stress a bit better.

## Have you used any of the techniques since the training, if so how useful have you found them?

**Jo:** I haven't been able to use the techniques when I'm really stressed out yet, because it's just too late by then, but **it has taught me to relax so I can get a good night sleep.** So I use the techniques in bed or the bath after my daughter is asleep. The mornings are really stressful especially feeding all the animals and getting my daughter up for school. I used to shout at her to wake up, now I'll sing her silly songs which puts us both in a better mood.

## Has there been any overall benefit from learning these techniques?

**Jo:** If I hadn't come on this course, I'd be the same as I was before, flapping. Having a good night sleep has made such a difference. **If I have a bad sleep I'll be swearing and kicking off, whereas when I sleep well I'm more in control and relaxed.** I just want it to continue and to get better. It's just doing it more, and it's only me that has to find the time to do it.

## What impact have these sessions had on those around you?

**Jo:** My daughter is doing the techniques at school, now when she is mad I can hear her calming herself down and doing the breathing. She has anxiety too so it's really good for her. **We've been able to play together much more, before I felt stupid playing games but now I just laugh;** my daughter says I'm more funny and even my animals have noticed a difference and will come to me for a fuss.

## Concluding Comments:

**Jo:** I felt like an idiot at the start and wouldn't join in all the exercises because I didn't want to look stupid. By the end of the 4 weeks I joined in with it all. **I just thought knickers to it. Rather than getting stressed I was just laughing.** I've told some moms about it whose kids didn't take their letters home. They all want to come and do it.

# Summary of Albert's testimony

**Profile** Albert describes himself as having always suffered with stress, but about a year ago Albert had a major scare, (a heart murmur).

[Age: 56-65]

[Married]

[No children at home] He was told to reduce his stress levels for health reasons.

[Retired/  
Self-employed] Whilst retired, Albert is also a Methodist preacher and self-employed jeweller.

**Why did you decide to attend the Take Five sessions?**

**Albert:** My wife works at a school who is participating in a Take Five project. She hinted very strongly that it might be good for me. **I was really keen but didn't expect it to have the impact I wanted** - to reduce stress levels as it's always been part of my makeup.

**Have you used any of the techniques since the training, if so how useful have you found them?**

**Albert:** I don't get road rage and I'm not a nasty driver, but if you're in the car with me you probably wouldn't want to be. I'm afraid my language and temper gets the better of me.

But the first time this happened, **I found myself saying no, breath and it calmed me down.** So it's helping tremendously.

**Has there been any overall benefit from learning these techniques?**

**Albert:** I would probably be visiting my doctor and going back on my anti-depressants which I voluntarily gave up earlier this year. Life was starting to change a little and the tablets were stopping me from being who I am.

Without this course I think I would have headed straight back on them. **I suffer from pain in my joints which is improving the more I relax.** Again, without this course I would probably have been back on tranquilisers and generally not be healthy.

**What impact have these sessions had on those around you?**

**Albert: The impact on the relationship with my wife is probably the biggest.** It's definitely improved and that's from both sides as she took part in some of the classes. We can't do the practices together but by us breathing and relaxing we're both doing better.

## Concluding Comments:

**Albert:** I have a more positive and relaxed outlook on life. **I ask myself 'Does it really matter?'** Whatever I do in life, if it succeeds that'd be great but if not, there's no point dwelling on it, ditch it and move on.

# Summary of Pat's testimony

**Profile** Pat works in retail with a lovely team.

[Age: 56-65] Although she enjoys her job, she finds socialising an impossible task with panic attacks and a lack of confidence often preventing her from venturing outside the safety of her every day routine.

[Living with partner] Pat often misses out on family days out and even holidays as a result of her anxiety.

[X2 children]

[Works part time]

**Why did you decide to attend the Take Five sessions?**

**Pat:** From a young age I have suffered restrictions of not being able to do anything out of my comfortable routine. Over 20 years ago a doctor referred me to counselling and group therapy, the waiting time was so long and despite the lady being lovely I didn't learn any coping mechanisms or techniques. **In 4 weeks I've been able to do what I've not been able to in 40 years.** It was my granddaughter who brought a letter home about Take Five, I was really hopeful that breathing would give me a practical way to deal with my fears and panic attacks.

**Have you used any of the techniques since the training, if so how useful have you found them?**

**Pat:** Having a phobia of the dentist makes treatment really difficult, often the dentist will have to abandon the appointment because I'm too worked up. After these sessions, I've been to the dentist and used the breathing techniques. **The breathing has helped me calm down in situations that I would normally panic such as waking up in the middle of the night.**

**Has there been any overall benefit from learning these techniques?**

**Pat:** I feel like facing situations out of my comfort zone more. **I want to meet the challenge and I'm looking forward to taking the grandchildren out for the day in the six weeks holiday.** If I hadn't found this course, I would not be able to do this and I wouldn't be coping still.

**What impact have these sessions had on those around you?**

**Pat:** My Granddaughter has also done these sessions at school. She can be a bit of a monster at times, especially when getting ready for school. **Rather than getting annoyed with her I think to use my breathing and suggest she does the same.** She still has her moments but it's helped me to stop getting cross with her. Despite Granddad being the usual choice to put on her cream because he's more patient, last week she asked me to do it - so the breathing must be having an impact on us both.

## Concluding Comments:

**Pat:** These sessions have had a big impact on me and I would encourage all others who feel like me to give it a go. **It's made me feel like I've got more of a life and given me more confidence.** I looked forward to coming to the sessions, and if they could replace it with anything else that'd be great.

# Summary of Angie's testimony

**Profile** 14 years ago, Angie was diagnosed with Chronic Fatigue (M.E) which meant her careers as a financial advisor to HSBC came to an end.

[Age: 46-55]

[Married]

[X2 children and x4 grandchildren]

[Volunteers, as no need to work]

Having tried everything from vitamins to acupuncture, Angie was introduced to mindfulness in 2013. For Angie, this had a transformative impact. Despite battling with depression, Angie has felt much better.

**Why did you decide to attend the Take Five sessions?**

**Angie:** I had finally reduced my anxiety enough to be allowed onto the 5 month waiting list for the NHS mindfulness course when my oldest daughter saw an advert on Facebook for the sessions. **This was a last resort for me.** I had tried other things before but never just 'breathing.' I was hoping to achieve peace. It certainly came as a nice surprise to achieve this after a rough patch of anxiety.

**Have you used any of the techniques since the training, if so how useful have you found them?**

**Angie:** All the time! As soon as I wake up. My anxiety is worse first thing in the morning. **If I take a breath whilst I'm still in bed, it cuts it right down.** While you're calm it's harder to be worried, so breathing is like taking a break from worry. I recently started a voluntary job and was really nervous on the first day, but the breathing really helped me calm down. I was fine by the time I got there, but at the start of the day wasn't sure if I'd even get there.

**Has there been any overall benefit from learning these techniques?**

**Angie:** The fear of the day was making me sick every morning and that feeling stays with you all day affecting your appetite amongst other things. For me, I had lost 3 stone really quickly (which caused other health problems). I am now eating much better which is having knock on effects. This course couldn't have come at a better time as it has enabled me to come off Diazapan and also has reduced my anxiety so that I don't feel there is a need any more to increase the dosage of the anti-depressant in the future, which is a very positive result. I have never been on Diazapan before and it is very difficult to come off and I feel the course helped me enormously with this. My confidence levels have been quite low but as a result of these sessions, **I have gained confidence to go and try yoga - which I would not have done before.**

**What impact have these sessions had on those around you?**

**Angie:** My doctor has noticed I look better and despite my husband not being into this sort of thing, he has noticed I'm eating better and can learn by example. **My oldest daughter and granddaughter have also completed courses.** I really want my other daughter to go on the course as things are so much more manageable if you can stay calm.

## Concluding Comments:

**Angie:** These last two years I've had reasonable health but **if I'd had something like this from the beginning, the difference it might have made!** School is where this should start, this would cut down a lot of illnesses and a lot of work. It could help people return to work after illness, maybe even doctors should be prescribing these sessions!

## Types of Impact the summaries convey

It is our hope that reading these five testimonies will have conveyed the impact of the eight hours of tailored Take Five training. We have grouped the types of impacts they convey below.

The testimonies convey impact that:

- Illustrate immediate personal benefit
- Provide examples of self-application in daily life
- Provide examples of personal insight of, how and when, to apply the practices and devise related coping strategies to help overcome day to day barriers and challenges.
- Convey enthusiasm to continue to practice what they have learnt
- Illustrate positive impact on others in home, work, and community settings
- Cultivates a creative use of the practices
- Provides evidence of use of the practices in key points of transition in daily life. (See table on page 20)
- Illustrates cross generational benefits and usage (See table on page 20)
- Illustrates determination to continue to use the practices
- Offers practical help and suggestions of working creatively with Each Amazing Breath and other partners to grow Take Five in the Community
- Illustrates joy, fun and laughter related to use of the practices
- Demonstrates enhanced verve for life!

## Additional benefits for Each Amazing Breath

In addition to helping others understand the impact of Take Five these interviews have allowed us to further deepen our understanding of how to creatively work with people towards applying the practices into a meaningful and impactful programme in other Community settings.

Please note the many hours of recorded testimony also illustrate each of these impact statements and this data is available should further analysis be desired at a future date.

## Take Five – its roots and vision

In March 2014 a Manton (Worksop), based Steering Group of organisations and local people devised 'Take Five'. Their vision was for 'Take Five' come alive across Manton in all sorts of settings and ways and to impact people of all ages.

To achieve this we knew 'Take Five' needed to be part of the daily life of schools, organisations and workplaces. However, the steering group were also very clear that it was important that Take Five focussed on the most stressful transitions that comprise local people's daily lives. The residents involved were especially keen to help ease the daily stresses of home/school and school/home transitions.

### Take Five Steering Group members include:



*(from left to right)*  
*Claire Phillips, Community Organiser for CSL, Manton,*  
*Helen Whitney Co-Founder of Each Amazing Breath CIC,*  
*Karen Searles, CSL Co-ordinator*



*Noelle Barron,*  
*Nottinghamshire*  
*County Council,*  
*Extended Schools*  
*Officer*



*Leah Sareen,*  
*Nottinghamshire*  
*County Council*  
*Community*  
*Safety Officer for young*  
*people*



*Catherine Burn, Director*  
*or BCVS*

## Take Five at points of transition and its impact across generations

You may have noticed that all five testimonies refer to how a number of their family members were using Take Five on a regular basis.

	How they heard about Take Five	Impact within family	How many generations
Pat	Granddaughter gave Pat the poster	Grand daughter and Grandmother both have a regular practice	Two
Angie		Grand daughter is a Take Five Ambassador at Sparken Hill Academy  Daughter attended the Take Five in the Community programme	Three
Chrissie		Daughter has a regular practice at school and mother attended the Community programme	Three
Jo	Daughter brought Jo the poster	Jo describes how her daughter self applies the practices at home based on her learning from Sparken Hill Academy	Two
Albert		Albert's wife also attended the Community programme	One

The steering group were particularly pleased to see how their vision of the practices being useful in transition between home/school was coming alive.

### What now?

The Take Five in the Community programme and the in-depth interviews have produced a huge amount of experience and ideas of what could happen next to bring Take Five to more people in Manton. This report forms part of the process of how we convey the impact and build the Steering group's vision of a whole community Taking Five!



## Appendix

Semi-structured interviews – Format and questions

*This interview should take between 30 and 45 minutes, the questions have been split into themes so we can cover a few different areas, but there will be a space at the end for you to share any other thoughts or experiences you'd like if there hasn't been the opportunity throughout.*

*This is an informal conversation, so please don't feel at all nervous and just be honest—we want to know the real impact of this project in order to learn lessons of how we can improve the sessions and support.*

The Questions:

### 1.) Why you decided to attend the Take Five sessions

How did you find out about it?

Have you tried anything like this before?

What were you hoping to get out of attending?

Did you think this was likely?

How important was it for you that you got what you were hoping for out of the sessions?

Is there anything else you'd like to add about your aims or reasons for attending the sessions?

### 2.) How useful you found the sessions.

Were your expectations/hopes met by the sessions?

How useful were the techniques you learnt?

Did you find personal benefit(s).

If so, what were they and how significant were they?

### 3.) Whether you have used the techniques you learnt and how useful you've found them

If you have, can you give me example(s) of where and when you have used them?

Has there been any noticeable impact of doing these practices in these settings? (personal reflection & has anyone commented on this?)

Do you think you will carry on using the techniques?

If, so in what way(s)?

Have the techniques replaced any other coping mechanisms you had in place (either healthy or unhealthy ones).

Is there anything you'd like to add about how and why you use the techniques?

**4.) The more general benefit to your life having learnt these techniques**

Have the techniques changed your ability to manage things in your life that you find difficult?

Have the techniques changed any general life patterns?  
For example appetite, energy levels, sleep pattern, outlook on life?

How different do you think your life would be now if you hadn't taken part in the sessions?

**5.) The impact these sessions have had on others, such as your family members, work colleagues, friends or neighbours?**

Have you shared any of the practices with other people?  
If so, why and what was the impact?

Have any of your family members or friends noticed any changes in you?

Have the sessions impacted the people around you?  
If so, please give an example.

Do you have any thoughts about how useful Take Five would be to other people? If so, who do you think would benefit and why?

**6.) Is there anything more you would like to share with me about your experience of Take Five that none of the other questions have covered?**

## Gratitude

Take Five in the Community would not have been possible without the help and support of a large number of amazing people. We offer our sincere thanks and appreciation to:

**Take Five in the Community funders:**

Bassetlaw and Newark and Sherwood and Community Safety Partnership and Nottinghamshire County Council's Community Safety Committee.

**The Take Five in the Community Steering Group members:**

Leah Sareen	NCC, Community Safety Officer
Catherine Burn	BCVS
Karen Searles	CSL
Claire Phillip	CSL
Noelle Barron	NCC, Extended Schools Officer
Helen Whitney	Each Amazing Breath, Managing Director
Mark Lilly	Each Amazing Breath, Training Director
Julie Christian	Each Amazing Breath, Lead Trainer in Nottinghamshire
Kate O'Dell	Free-lance evaluator
Glen Powell	Graphic Designer

Our thanks also to:

The following schools for distributing the promotional material and liaising with us so positively over home school transitions: Sparken Hill Academy, Worksop Priory CE Primary, Outwood Academy Portland, The NCC Supporting Families Team for their support and advice.

**And especially to all participants of the programme, including Albert's wife and of course: Chrissie, Jo, Albert, Pat, Angie for sharing their experience of Take Five. Without you this booklet would not have been possible. Thank you.**

This report provides information on the impact of a Take Five in the Community programme in Manton Worksop, Nottinghamshire.

It portrays the testimonies of five people who attended an eight hour Take Five programme. Two hours/week for four weeks in June 2015.

It shares their stories of why they sought to try Take Five, what the impact of the programme has been and how they feel it will affect their lives going forward.



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