

Here are a selection of testimonies from Boxing in Recovery class members sharing their experience of the class:

“Emma’s recovery boxing class has been a truly transformative part of my journey. Boxing has played a significant role in my personal recovery offering me structure, discipline, confidence, and perseverance. Being able to share these benefits in a safe and supportive environment with others who have had similar experiences is incredibly meaningful.

Emma has a real gift for making the sessions accessible to people at all levels of experience. I’ve witnessed participants progress rapidly, not just physically, but emotionally and psychologically. Boxing has a unique power to support healing in all these areas, and Emma’s approach really brings that out.

Since November of last year, I’ve been attending the sessions when I’ve been in the country, and Emma has generously allowed me to assist with coaching. This has given me a valuable opportunity to grow in my own role as a coach. I recently earned my Level One Boxing Coaching certification, and since February, I’ve been doing my best to attend regularly and support Emma in making the classes inclusive and welcoming as the group continues to grow.

What makes these sessions especially unique is the combination of physical training with personal development practices, such as the group check-ins at the start and the mindfulness-based cooldowns at the end. It’s not something you typically find in a boxing gym, and it makes the space feel especially approachable and restorative.

I’ve seen this community grow significantly, and I’m excited to continue being a part of it. I genuinely believe this is a powerful model for recovery, and for making boxing accessible to people who might not otherwise find it.”

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“I recently attended my first session of the boxing class for people in recovery, and I cannot express enough how deeply impactful the experience was. As a recovering alcoholic, I’ve tried different ways to stay grounded and present—but nothing has made me feel as connected and in the moment as this class did.

The environment was warm, welcoming, and inclusive. As a young female, the idea of walking into a boxing gym was initially quite intimidating, but from the moment I arrived, I felt supported and safe. The equipment was in great condition, and the space itself was clearly cared for.

I travelled 45 minutes from Dartford to attend, and it was more than worth it. That short time in the class gave me a real sense of strength and community, and I’m so grateful that spaces like this exist for people like me. It’s not just exercise—it’s healing.

Thank you for providing this opportunity. I look forward to coming back.”

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“I’m relatively new to the boxing class in Peckham, and boxing in general.

This was always an activity that I felt was too masculine or red taped off from people like me - who felt too gentle for such an activity.

The class is so inclusive, gentle and welcoming that I've felt able to explore new sides of myself through boxing - and it's only been a few weeks so far!

The pace is slow, the teaching style and approach friendly and approachable - there is no pressure to perform in any given way and folks are invited to get curious about the form, technique as they let it out on the bag.

I'm thoroughly enjoying the class, and discovering the practice to be quite cathartic (albeit tiring also!)

I highly recommend Emma and her classes to anyone trying to find a new form of fitness, self care and some old fashioned good old *unofficial* physical therapy!"

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"I haven't done boxing in a while due to my tendency to break bones however I started the Saturday boxing class early in recovery and attended for several months and it really helped me both physically and mentally.

Emma was a fantastic teacher, knowledgeable, supportive and open to new ideas / suggestions and the sessions were fun and enjoyable. They were structured in a way that they could help anyone regardless of fitness or experience.

I would recommend this class (indeed i have) to anyone in recovery whatever stage they are at. Its a valuable and unusual resource that anyone in recovery can access and very much deserving of support."

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"I hope you are well. I wanted to take a moment to share some positive feedback about Emma's boxing class, specifically designed for individuals who are in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction. Emma is an amazing coach who brings a unique blend of enthusiasm, professionalism, and knowledge to every session. Her upbeat and encouraging attitude creates a welcoming and inclusive environment that is truly invaluable.

Emma's class has been a significant part of bolstering the recoveries of many individuals, myself included. She supports us in discovering abilities we never even knew we had and helps us build self-confidence we never imagined possible. Emma leads by example and is a beacon of hope for my own future. Her understanding and encouraging nature make her an exceptional coach in every sense.

Thank you for creating such a supportive and transformative space for those of us in recovery."

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"I have been attending boxing in recovery for some time now

I have to say I thoroughly enjoy it and get so much help for my recovery from these sessions.

Emma is amazing, I feel safe and very content after letting go of stresses.

I can't recommend it enough and see so many benefit from it."

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"Just wanted to say a huge thanks mostly and to give a little bit of feedback on the boxing in recovery class you have been organising and running for the past 18 months or so.

Having moved back to Scotland, I'm not able to attend as many classes as I'd like anymore but when I'm back in London I do try to get along - this class started shortly after I got sober and was massive in helping me meet like minded people who were trying to change their lives and open themselves up to new ways of living.

Who knew boxing and discussing sobriety would mesh together so well?

Every time I return, it's so clear to see the confidence it's giving everyone attending as they develop a new skill. Individuals who are doing something that is really quite intimidating, walking into a boxing gym in South East London, with maybe not so much experience of exercise/fitness but then finding such a welcoming and challenging environment when they do.

It really is inspirational and I can't thank you enough Emma for taking the initiative and helping change lives for the better."

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"My name is Tracy Vaughan I'm 44 and 2 years into recovery from addiction.

I was told about the boxing glass through a mutual friend also in recovery about the boxing session with Emma on Saturdays.

I'm writing to say how very beneficial these classes have been and how much it's really helped with my recovery.

I was very in confident around joining any kind of fitness but having a place with like minded people feels very safe space to exercise.

Not only had the exercise helped with my mood but also with my mental health.

These classes have been a game changer in my recovery a place where I've made new friends, my mood is lifted.

After nearly every session I attend I've noticed my mood is calmer, I'm more disciplined in my behaviour, my interactions with others are nicer.

All round a happier human being. The work that Emma does here is so underestimated she's a true credit to this organisation. I really hope these classes continue it would be a mass Shame for a lot of people in recovery.

I would also like to thank you for this space. I'll be eternally grateful."

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“Hay my name is Cole and i go to the recovery boxing at LCB with Emma ive been doing it for the pass year now and its help me with meeting new people and to get intouch with my body again and with doing the recovery boxing I have started to train now to it has help me in my recovery journey and to know boxing is there i have took other people there thats in recovery and it have been really good and Emma has been great she is a great boxing coach and by continuing on going”

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Participant case study

The following case study is an example of the deep and long term impact the project has on participants.

Cole has been in drug and alcohol addiction recovery for 2 years. She had been street homeless for over a decade and had very poor physical health when she first came to Boxing in Recovery. Cole had metal plates in her knees and ankles and an amputated finger, due to the frost bite experienced while street homeless. She had been physically inactive for many years and was clinically overweight.

After joining Boxing in Recovery, Cole quickly caught the boxing bug. She soon progressed to also training 1:1 every week with Emma, working on her boxing as well as her strength and fitness. She purchased a range of fitness equipment for her supported housing, which she used for home sessions in addition to her personal coaching and weekly Boxing in Recovery sessions. Cole now attends the Fighting Spirit sparring session every week and has her eyes set on a boxing match raising money for charity someday. Cole also often supports Emma with coaching and can usually be found teaching the basics to newcomers in the class. She is an active ambassador for the sessions, often bringing friends along each week. Before starting boxing Cole weighed 120 kg, and due to her engagement with the project she is now 100 kg. She can often be found in her signature personalised shorts and lucky boxing socks, pictured below:

Another participant, Tracy, combines her therapeutic practices of art and boxing to create boxing related artwork inspired by her sessions:

Mothers and Children

This is what some of the parents have to say-

‘Love these sessions! Enjoy the mental and physical stress release, keeping fit whilst socialising with others all during time that works around children being at school.

Emma is an excellent coach and a lovely human being.’

‘This is a great activity to break isolation and affordable for those with low income who can't pay for professional guided physical activities’

‘I really enjoy this boxing session. It's done my mental and physical health wonders and everybody is amazing!’

‘The boxing sessions are wonderful it makes me feel great when I can get there and having all lady's it's lovely to meet new woman in a safe fun space’

Thank you excellent, knowledgeable teacher. Sessions are never the same.. Teachers are very helpful. I love it. Got a bit more fit, and happier.;

Love the sessions as provides a great opportunity for mums to socialise and keep fit mentally and physically which is hard to do so with kids and during school hours

Honestly a wonderful thing for the community and women. Getting fit shouldn't cost an arm and a leg. It's such a great way to start a path to getting active