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SURVIVORS GIVE VOICE! - A COURSE FOR WOMEN January-March 2000

with Jill Rakusen

SUMMARY

- A 6-session course in learning the use of *Giving Voice* (GV) as a tool to promote health and healing has been shown to be valuable for survivors of abuse, on the basis of an 85% response rate to post-course questionnaires returned.
- Numerous gains were reported, and 91% attempted to use what they'd learnt in their lives, with positive results.
- On all scores, a majority experienced a range of positive feelings, 82% indicating this was unusual for them.
- 91% indicated they had discovered something about how feelings/experiences can be transformed through GV.
- All wanted to do more GV, either in this group/another group and/or individually, if it was available and affordable.
- All wanted to see *Giving Voice* in the following year's International Women's Day festival programme.
- The high percentage, and extent, of participants' positive responses in relation to a range of factors, including severe chronic illness, high blood pressure, stress, depression and anxiety, sheds light on the value of GV for people experiencing a variety of problems.
- Given the above, it is hoped that planners, administrators and practitioners in Calderdale and Kirklees consider urgently how they might enable participants and others to have access to opportunities for life- and health-enhancement through GV.

For a copy of the report, details of future events, and/or to find out more about how *Giving Voice* can be used in a variety of settings, contact National Foundation for *Giving Voice* during office hours:

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Giving Voice is an approach that **Jill Rakusen** has been developing for many years. It involves the strategic use of sound and song, regardless of people's confidence and perceived ability. Events vary from one-off workshops and performances to regular courses and residentials, and can be offered in a wide variety of settings. *Giving Voice* is a health- and life-enhancing tool *par excellence*.