

**Craig** is a young person with learning disabilities who was referred to dramatherapy by his teacher who had concerns about his self-esteem, low mood, anxiety, and poor communication. Though initially cautious about the new experience of dramatherapy, Craig said that he looked forward to his sessions each week, because, 'in dramatherapy you can be yourself, show how you feel and not have to change to act better, or to make someone else happy'.

It became evident to the dramatherapist that some adults around Craig, whilst trying to support him with his low mood and low confidence, had unintentionally hindered his confidence and communication. Suggestions to 'cheer up', resulted in Craig feeling pressured to pretend to be feeling comfortable/happy/confident when he wasn't feeling that way. The result was Craig's wellbeing declined further, this was because he felt he wasn't 'good enough' and that he wasn't meeting the expectations of those around him. This led to Craig feeling more anxious, frustrated and sad.

With Craig's permission the dramatherapist was able to explain these findings to the adults in Craig's life. This enabled them to better support Craig and his relationships outside of the sessions improved.

As the Dramatherapy sessions progressed, Craig realised he could be himself, be open about his feelings. The result was Craig's confidence and ability to express himself in the dramatherapy sessions grew.

In his Dramatherapy sessions Craig was able to explore his thoughts and feelings using drama, music, story making, and emotions stones. This allowed Craig to express the emotions and thoughts that were troubling for him, without worry how they would be perceived. The additional benefits for Craig included changes to his body language and posture from slumped shoulders, lowered head and crossed arms, to an open posture, shoulders back, head up and making eye contact.