

Transcript

YSS: Hear from a support worker

Lia Palios-Hayden:

YSS, our charity, have been working for more than 30 years to help people who face significant life challenges to realize their potential and feel safe. We're often seen as the glue between those who are socially isolated and the wider community. We're rooted in the local community. We work across West Mercia and Warwickshire. What I often hear as a YSS worker from service users is that they feel professionals talk over them, hold all the power, perhaps don't listen.

So, whether it's a 50-year-old prison leaver or a six-year-old child affected by parental imprisonment, it's really important to build that relationship and empathize with them. For us, as YSS workers, it's not just a tick box exercise. We want to put the time in. And we want them to feel like they are empowered to move ahead with their life. We're not there as their saviors. It can sometimes be quite difficult to balance that professionalism and sort of wanting to feel part of the family, so that they feel they can trust you.

But we have a great team at YSS who help us if we do feel like we're taking things away with us. Saviors and superheroes is exactly what we don't want to be seen as. We're not there to wave a magic wand and make everything better. It can be really tempting, particularly to feel like you can want to go in there and sort everything out for people, make everything better using your connections. But that sort of change is not sustainable long term, particularly when we leave. So, it's all about empowering people to find their way forward, to build their own resilience, and find a way to solve their own problems.

So, when we step aside at the end of the day, they feel like they've got a promising future. YSS doesn't believe in putting labels on people. We want to show people that we care, that they shouldn't be judged by their past mistakes, and everyone deserves a second chance. It's about helping to guide them on their journey by providing them with the roadmap, linking them in with other charities, other local community members, and working with those charities to ensure that regardless of what door they knock on, there is no wrong door.

YSS really believes in the power of volunteers. In fact, a lot of our wisest staff now were formerly volunteers, including myself. So, we're looking to recruit volunteer champions who are people that might enjoy doing presentations and spreading the word about the work we do. But you can also join our mailing list, follow us on social media, go on our website, learn about us, or maybe just give us a call. Find out more about YSS and spread the word.