

FIRST INVOLVEMENT IN SPORT & RECREATION

A Positive First Experience

FIRST INVOLVEMENT MEANS ENSURING THAT ALL PARTICIPANTS HAVE A POSITIVE FIRST EXPERIENCE WHEN TRYING AN ACTIVITY FOR THE FIRST TIME.

The first time Jackie went to a yoga class the instructor wouldn't make eye contact and avoided talking to her one-to-one. She didn't go back to yoga for over ten years!

'I felt like I was an intrusion, and even the thought of that is enough to put people off. Luckily I have now found better people, but it took a long time for me to pluck up the courage to try again.'



Coaches, reception staff and instructors all play a role in ensuring people feel welcome. New participants may feel awkward, afraid, lacking in confidence or aware that their presence creates a need for adaptations.

Now, Adaptive or Accessible yoga has gained momentum through strong advocacy. Contrast Jackie's experience with the case study below. Which would you rather be a part of?

CASE STUDY: WHAT IS AN ACCESSIBLE YOGA CLASS?

- Everyone is welcome to join.
- Everyone is invited to participate in all practices.
- Variations are offered at many levels.
- Positive focus on abilities not disabilities.
- All students are given equal praise, support and attention.
- Touch is optional.
- Language is sensitive and positive.
- Focus is on the essence of yoga - connecting with inner peace.
- Goal is individual empowerment and community building.
- Financially accessible - affordable or scholarships.
- Effort to reach underserved communities.
- Accessible location.
- Teacher is focused on service and love.

"It is often the people who need sport and recreation most who have the most trouble accessing it."

