

# knowing me knowing you

**brap**'s peer mentoring programme, Knowing Me Knowing You (KMKY), has harnessed the power of socially motivated organisations to grow and develop the social enterprise sector from within.

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This programme will continue to co-ordinate the exchange of knowledge, expertise and ideas in the following ways:

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- **One-to-one peer mentoring** – working with a KMKY mentor to explore business ideas and challenges.

## What's peer mentoring?

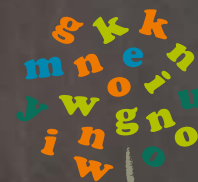
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Rather than provide lessons on 'how things are done', peer mentoring provides opportunities for a mentee to reflect on the explore the ideas, concerns and challenges of their current or future work or business.

“It made me think,  
about what I  
wanted for  
the organisation  
as well as for  
myself.”

Sharon Morgan | ComeUnity Arts

Supporting  
social  
enterprises  
to  
grow  
and  
develop  
the  
social  
enterprise  
sector  
from  
within



knowing me  
knowing you

## Promoting connectivity and support between social enterprise in the West Midlands

### What's behind it?

- **Creating opportunities to be enterprising** in terms of the development of the entire sector, not just our own businesses!
- **Making the most of the skills and expertise** that exist within the social sector by increasing opportunities to connect with peers in mutually beneficial relationships.

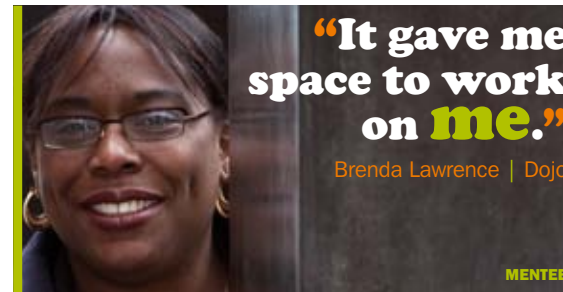
### How will we do this?

- Continue to promote and facilitate **one-to-one peer mentoring** for people who are in the process of setting up a social enterprise or third sector organisation and want to bounce ideas. We call this strand **Knowing Me Knowing You**.
- Promote and facilitate opportunities for the leaders and managers of social enterprises to gain access to a group of peers who will support each other to consider future opportunities and develop business ideas, as well as tackle the day-to-day issues that challenge most leaders. We have called this **Inside Enterprise**.
- Work with **We Share Stuff** to implement effective and appropriate social networking opportunities so that people can **keep in touch** without having to learn a new technical language!
- Create **region-wide networking opportunities** in partnership with other organisations already doing this at a sub-regional level, so that social enterprises can come together to exchange ideas, form partnerships and explore future opportunities.

If you are in the West Midlands and are interested in how brap might help you – or if you provide similar services and would like to explore how we might make the most of our combined resources and services – contact **braps** Community and Enterprise Team:

**amyw@brap.org.uk** or **0121 456 7403**

Supporting social enterprise in the West Midlands



This is the first of a series of five leaflets about **brap's** Knowing Me Knowing You programme. See the other four to read about our peer mentoring success stories. They're all available by contacting **brap** or from our website at **www.brap.org.uk**.



Community & Enterprise Team

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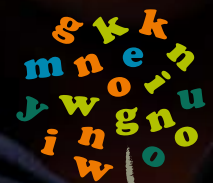
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# “It gave me space to work on me.”

Brenda Lawrence | Dojo



knowing me  
knowing you



### What did you set out to achieve?

To refocus my priorities around work and my project Dojo and look at how these things affect my work/life balance.

### How did it feel to be mentored?

Originally it was a strange process, as I have not been mentored formally before. It was about my own stall setting, but it gave me space to work on *me*, which was very interesting. I remember my mentor allowing me to realise that I am very animated about work and my project but not about myself which gave me plenty of food for thought. For me to be effective I need to concentrate on me and replenish myself, rather than putting everything and everybody first.

### What was it about your mentor that worked for you?

Frances was very good at her craft. She seemed measured and connected to what I was saying. Her challenges made me realise how I had or had not thought my thoughts and actions through. Frances encouraged me to be myself (made me own myself), and made me comfortable in myself when it came to decision making.

### Was it what you expected?

No, I thought I was going to work with someone who could tell me what I needed to do or should be doing. Instead, I met someone who made me realise I had everything within me. I took the time to think and re-evaluate everything around me in order to be able to work more effectively.

### Since you've been working with your mentor, what's changed for you?

I have a clear focus on my priorities. I am now very conscious when approaching 'overload' and I have actually been saying 'no' a lot more and being more assertive. I used to think I had to do everything myself when in reality as a manager, I can delegate to others best suited for particular roles. I will constantly evaluate what is important to me.

### Would you recommend mentoring to others in your boat?

Yes, definitely.

### Sum up your experience in three words

A learning journey.



### What makes mentoring different to other types of support?

My approach to mentoring is non-directive, holistic and person-centered. Mentoring is about relationship and creating a 'space' for the mentee to make changes and move forward. The mentee seeks to discover their own answers through skilled use of questions, listening and, with permission, challenging.

### What does this approach offer the mentee?

During the mentoring session the time is for the mentee, who chooses the areas they want to focus on. I listen

and ask questions to help them discover what they want to do to move yourself forward in that area. I use my skills to facilitate an environment where they can speak freely – hear themselves think and take time to reflect and to generate ideas. As the session progresses, key themes are identified, learning emerges and finally points to follow through are noted.

### At what stage can mentoring be used to most effect?

Whenever an individual wants to clarify their priorities and explore options for change.

### Is it a two way process? Did you develop new skills?

As a coach and mentor I work to professional standards including guidelines, competences, duty of care and ethical concerns. I reflect on my learning, engage in supervision and maintain CPD (continual professional development).

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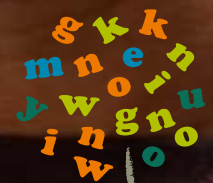
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# "I felt important."

Margaret Snape | Sister Tree



knowing me  
knowing you



### What did you set out to achieve?

I wanted to bounce ideas with someone with the professional capacity to help me visualise and achieve my ambitions, as well as keep me focused and, sometimes, give me advice!

### How did it feel to be mentored?

I felt important, or perhaps it was that the time felt important. We connected and found common ground instantly and it was clear that my mentor was listening and taking me seriously. When you work on your own it sometimes feels like progress is slow – there is only one of you to make it happen. My mentor asked me questions and reflected things I was telling her, which really helped me to see what I'd achieved. I was surprised at the progress I'd made without realising.

### What was it about your mentor that worked for you?

The flexibility. There is no pressure – it's not like seeing your bank manager! My mentor was a great listener and understood me – I didn't feel I had to convince her of my intentions.

### Was it what you expected?

It more than exceeded my expectations. I have been able to share things that up until now have lived in my head. Putting my hopes and dreams out there has opened up conversations and discussions that are really putting me on the right track to making these things happen. Throughout these conversations Juanita would drop in information and would ask questions that helped me to think straight.

### Since you've been working with your mentor, what's changed for you?

Discussions around income generation and my services helped me to understand how I currently package and sell my products and how to really value what I can offer. I'm repackaging and re-branding things that have been the same for 13 years – it's made a huge difference.

### So what now for you and/or your organisation?

It's a case of taking on board everything I have explored and learnt and making it count. I have so many more ways of making my organisation sustainable, which I'm now in the process of applying. I'm also in a much better position to take on volunteers and manage the process.

### Sum up your experience in three words

Informative, exciting, productive.



### What makes mentoring different to other types of support?

Mentoring is the building of trust. As well as business and life guidance, it allows someone to help you identify your gremlins and chart steps to overcome them. A mentor can help break cycles that you may not have identified or good practices that you didn't know you had. Other business support may offer practical ways to overcome certain obstacles, but mentoring can help you discover root causes that, once overcome, can be life changing.

### What does this approach offer the mentee?

Space to reflect on their own issues, allowing them to take ownership of the process rather than a consultant dictating what should or should not be done! This allows the mentee to identify their own path of success, rather than follow a path they aren't familiar with.

### Is it a two way process? Did you develop new skills?

Yes, I learnt how to listen! I thought I knew how, but the mentoring journey exposed that gap in my skill set. Just sitting there and listening allowed me to offer the right guidance, rather than a blanket business support approach.

### At what stage can mentoring be used to most affect?

It can be used at any stage – at the birth of a new business idea or with the CEO of an established organisation. It's an open space to think, create, chart goals and evaluate progress. It's not so much where the mentee is at, it's how responsive they are to the guidance and support offered. If they're not willing to change and reflect, the journey can be redundant.

### Sum up your experience in three words?

Insightful, reflective, fun!



Community & Enterprise Team

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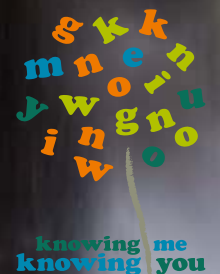
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**“I felt safe  
to share.”**

Sherill Fuller | Know Urself CIC





### What did you set out to achieve?

I hoped that the process would enable me to grow as an individual and to share my ideas about my business.

### How did it feel to be mentored?

I really enjoyed being mentored, because Jonathan is someone with a wealth of knowledge and skills. It was an opportunity for reflection and to share new ideas.

### What was it about your mentor that worked for you?

He listened to me and I felt safe to share how I hoped to develop the business. Jonathan enabled me to look at additional features to the business in a framework and he really inspired me to 'go for it'.

Jonathan used to ask me what I would like to focus on within sessions, which I really appreciated. Our sessions were really useful for me and gave a structured format for me to develop my ideas in relation to my business re-launch.

### Since you've been working with your mentor, what's changed for you?

I have been able to develop additional methods of structuring the business and taking new projects forward. Jonathan was a great person to bounce ideas off and spoke to me about new methods of working in partnership with organisations.

### Sum up your experience in three words

Anyone that knows me knows that 'three words' is going to be hard for me to use! Here is my experience: Progressive, new direction. Empowering, useful, beneficial.



### What makes mentoring different to other types of support?

It is direct and personal. Mentoring focuses on the individual's needs. I found that only by questioning the present situation and events in a dialogue could the hidden or background feelings surface and be met intelligently. I can really help examine the issues pertinent to the mentee and enable fresh approaches to emerge. Dialogue often goes much deeper into solutions because of the one-to-one, meeting.

### What does this approach offer the mentee?

Undivided attention and focus on their issues, sometimes emotional, sometimes structural or strategic. The one-to-one encounter offers flexibility to meet the needs of that person wherever they are. This demands flexibility and openness of approach – as a mentor you deal with what is presented and not your own interpretation, which is the challenge and the fun.

### Is it a two way process? Did you develop new skills?

I feel I learn as much as the mentee and I'm privileged to participate. The process demands that you listen very carefully to the issues and then question and have dialogue around it to uncover a solution. The mentee usually knows the answer, but it takes the process to reveal it.

### Sum up your experience in three words?

Meeting of minds.

### At what stage can mentoring be used to most affect?

At any developmental stage I would say that mentoring could help. I think that mentoring is about opening up possibilities and that particularly happens when there is some sort of block, impasse, problem for which a solution is not obvious. Through the process of attentive listening, discussion, skills and experience then what can emerge to meet the present need is often useful.



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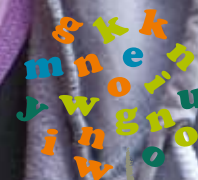
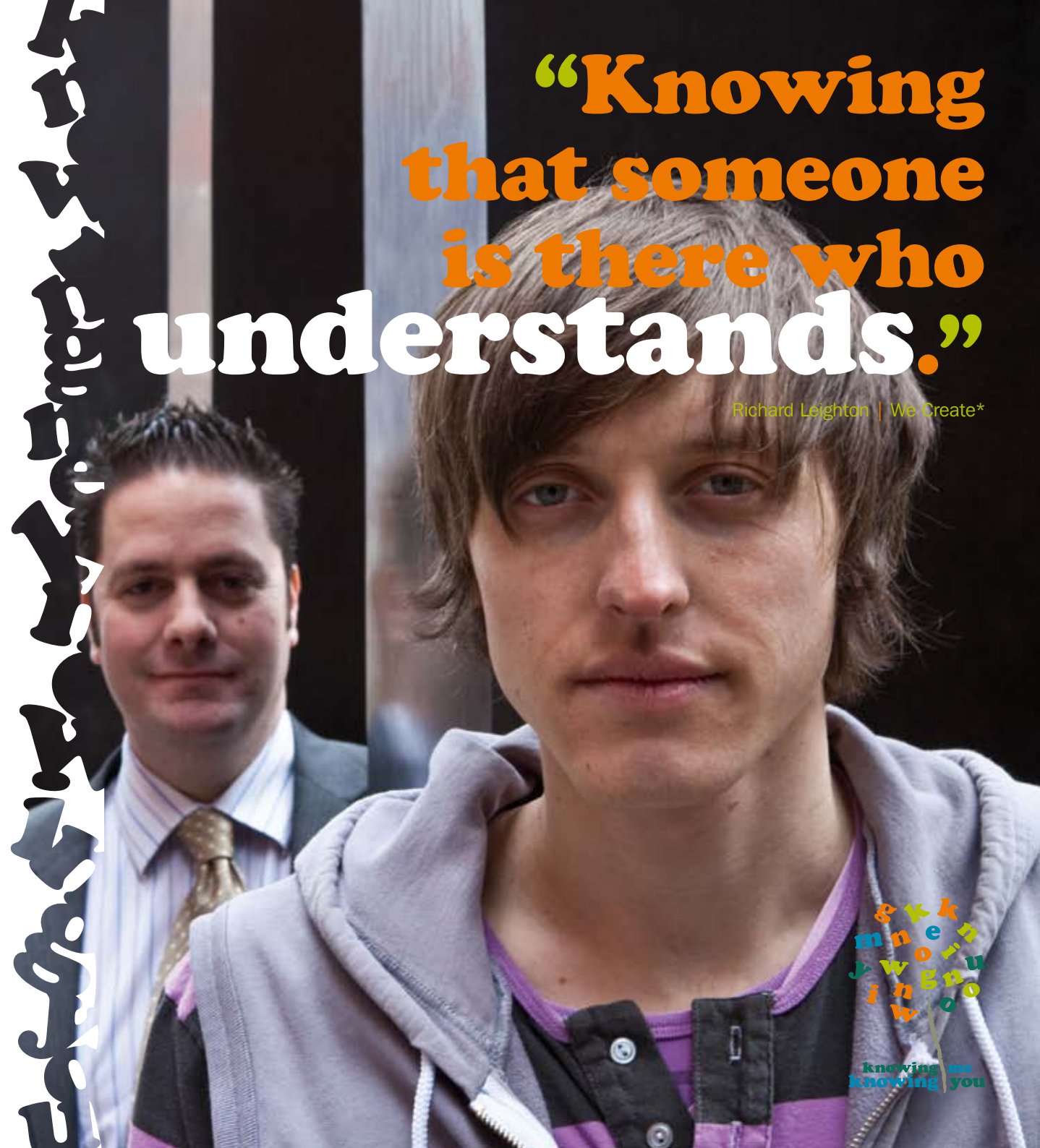
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Supporting Social Enterprise

“Knowing  
that someone  
is there who  
understands.”

Richard Leighton | We Create\*



knowing me  
knowing you



**What did you set out to achieve?**

To develop the We Create\* social enterprise.

**How did it feel to be mentored?**

It was nice to have the support of a more experienced social entrepreneur when I needed it.

**What was it about your mentor that worked for you?**

Knowing that there is someone out there to support the organisation that has experience, and who has dealt with most of the situations that can arise for someone who is running an enterprise.

**Was it what you expected?**

I have come to realise the realities of becoming a social entrepreneur.

**Would you recommend mentoring to others in your boat?**

Yes, it's always good to have a more experienced social entrepreneur you can turn to.

**So what now for you and/or your organisation?**

We Create\* is developing online retail operations and partnerships with academic institutions to help and support young design students and graduates.

**Sum up your experience in three words**

Support, help, experience.

**What makes mentoring different to other types of support?**

Mentoring support is a great way for mentees to gain clarity and direction and provides an excellent sounding board to bounce ideas and thoughts off. The great thing is, the answers and ideas are already with the client, the mentoring process just helps bring them out.

**What does this approach offer the mentee?**

By taking this approach it empowers the mentee to come up with their own answers, solutions and conclusions and to see different perspectives on various scenarios.

**Is it a two way process? Did you develop new skills?**

The key area for me was the process of quickly tuning into the mentee's situation and adopting perspectives I felt the mentee had, which weren't always necessarily the same as mine.

**At what stage can mentoring be used to most affect?**

If used appropriately, mentoring can be used in many different stages and has the flexibility to go as fast or as slow as the mentee wants.

**Sum up your experience in three words?**

Positive, experiential, worthwhile.

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