

BUILDING BETTER FUTURES: CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND WELLBEING- Collaborative UK and Canada research and toolkit



Deirdre Hughes, Legacy Fellow
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Development
Scotland**

Focus

- To share emerging findings from a collaborative UK and Canadian research programme (April 2021 –ongoing)
 - ❑ A strong collective interest in the effects of Covid on adults' career development and wellbeing
 - ❑ Together met online to identify 'the art of the possible' in measuring and enhancing the impact of career development practice on wellbeing
 - ❑ Sourced theories and methodologies and reviewed literature to inform the career development and wellbeing project.
 - ❑ Joint commitment made to undertake a 'pilot project' in Wales, Scotland and Canada to develop and apply a small set of indicators (up to 7 maximum) that could easily be applied by careers practitioners in their everyday work.
 - ❑ A key driver was to find ways of supporting practitioners to feel sufficiently well-equipped in supporting a wide range of adults in 'a safe and ethical place' that supports career and wellbeing conversations and action

Acknowledgements

- Our work has been inspired by the expertise and dedication of practitioners in Wales, Scotland and Canada. We have been privileged to work closely on a UK and Canadian collaborative research programme inspired by:
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- Nikki Lawrence CEO, Gyrfu Cymru/Careers Wales, Sareena Hopkins, Director, Canadian Career Development Foundation and Sandra Cheyne, National CIAG Policy & Professional Practice Lead, Skills Development Scotland (SDS)

Practitioners, Managers, and Senior Leaders who contributed to the research					
Canada		Wales (Gyrfa Cymru / Careers Wales)		Scotland (Skills Development Scotland)	
Name	Role	Name	Role	Name	Role
Julia Bloomquist	Career Development Practitioner	Jen Arthur	Careers Adviser	Erin Bartley	Careers Adviser
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Laura Fraser	Facilitator, Immigrant Youth Employability Project	Manon Charles	Careers Adviser	Cathy McPhail	Careers Adviser
Sareena Hopkins	Executive Director, Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF)	Julia Devilleneuve	Employability Coach	Anupama Rao	CIAG Helpline Adviser
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Dawn Park	Practitioner				
Lisa Rosestenberg	Career & Employment Specialist				
Tony Slade	Co-op Coordinator				
Lacey Yellowbird	Employment Readiness Facilitator				
Faith Young	Employment Readiness Coach				



Career development and wellbeing

- The **likely value of career development practices to wellbeing** (e.g., Redekopp & Huston, 2020; Whelan et al, 2017; Robertson, 2013; Bimrose et al, 2008; and Kirschner et al., 1994).
- In 2018, the British Journal of Guidance & Counselling published a special issue on **Happiness and Wellbeing** (Vol 47, Issue 2). Hermans, H. & Meijers, F. (2019), The pursuit of happiness, *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 47:2, 139-142.



Image source: Redekopp & Huston (2020)

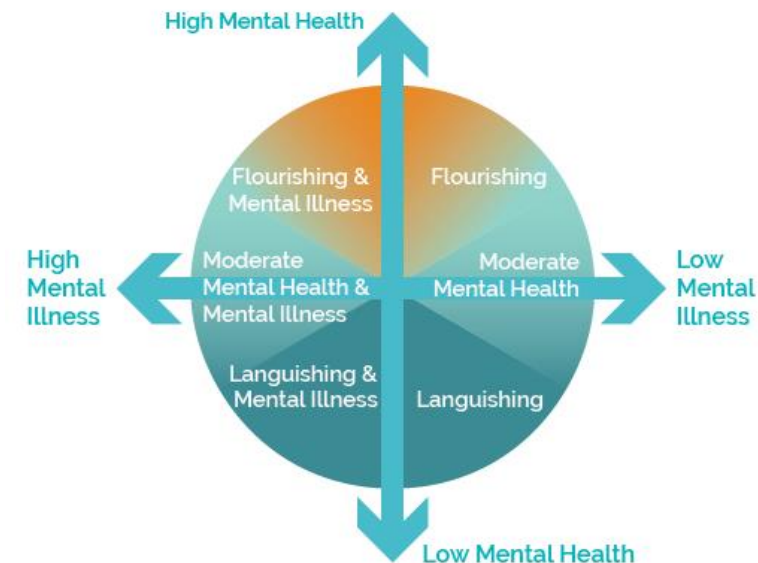


Image source: Redekopp & Huston (2020)

Indicators customer is suitable for engagement in research

- **Low confidence/ lack of self esteem**
- Customer is **long term unemployed** and lacks **confidence** in the application process
- Customer has **mental health** issues – reported in briefing notes and during interview
- **Shock** of being made redundant or entering university for the first time
- **Returner** to work after a long time away – **low in confidence** due to time off
- Customer is **Frustrated** and **Lost , Anxious** or **Depressed**
- **Work/life** balance is an issue resulting in **stress**
- **Lack of Job Satisfaction**
- **Transition** (example from army to civilian life)
- Current job is impacting **mental health** (long working hours/shift pattern/bullying at work/zero hours/low pay)

Canada: Two distinct approaches

Analysis of community employment services' outcomes and a new measure of mental health changes

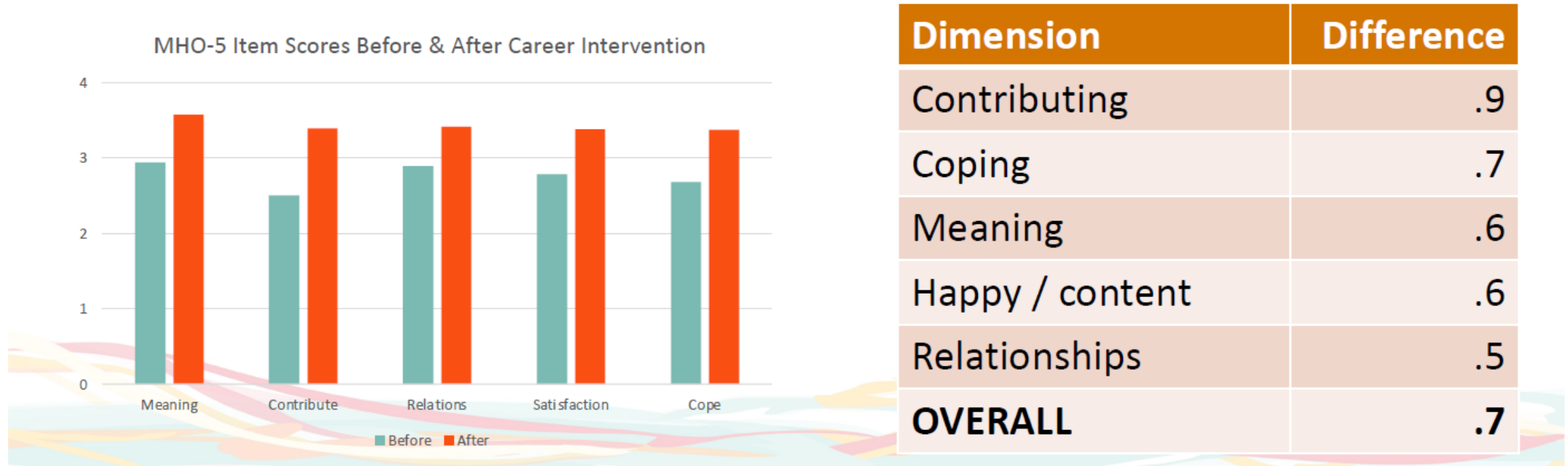
A major analysis of community employment services took place in Canada between December 2018 and February 2020, built around **the PRIME assessment tool**, which asks a range of career development and wellbeing related questions scored on a 1-5 scale (CCDF, 2021)

The Mental Health Outcomes survey (MHO-5) applied as a post-pre- measure assessing changes in mental health. It was developed to determine if practitioners' typical interventions with clients lead to changes in mental health (**62 customer/client participants**)

1. I feel my life is meaningful. (I know what matters to me, and I feel that I have some of that in my life.)
2. I feel I can contribute to society. (I make a difference to my family, friends and/or community.)
3. I feel I have supportive relationships. (I have people in my life who support me and who I support.)
4. I feel good about my life. (I am happy or content with life.)
5. I feel I can cope with life's problems. (I am able to manage the ups and downs of life.)

- CCDF. (2021). *Evidence for Community Employment Services: A Collaborative Regional Approach. Final Report: A Tale of Transformation.*

Canada: A snapshot of findings



Wales and Scotland: 5 statements

I am able to make up my own mind about things that are important

I feel my life is meaningful and I make a difference to my family, friends, or community

I feel optimistic about finding relevant and valued work that will fit in with my life

I am taking action / being proactive to help overcome the barriers and challenges in my life

I feel positive about my ability to handle the demands/barriers/challenges coming up in my life

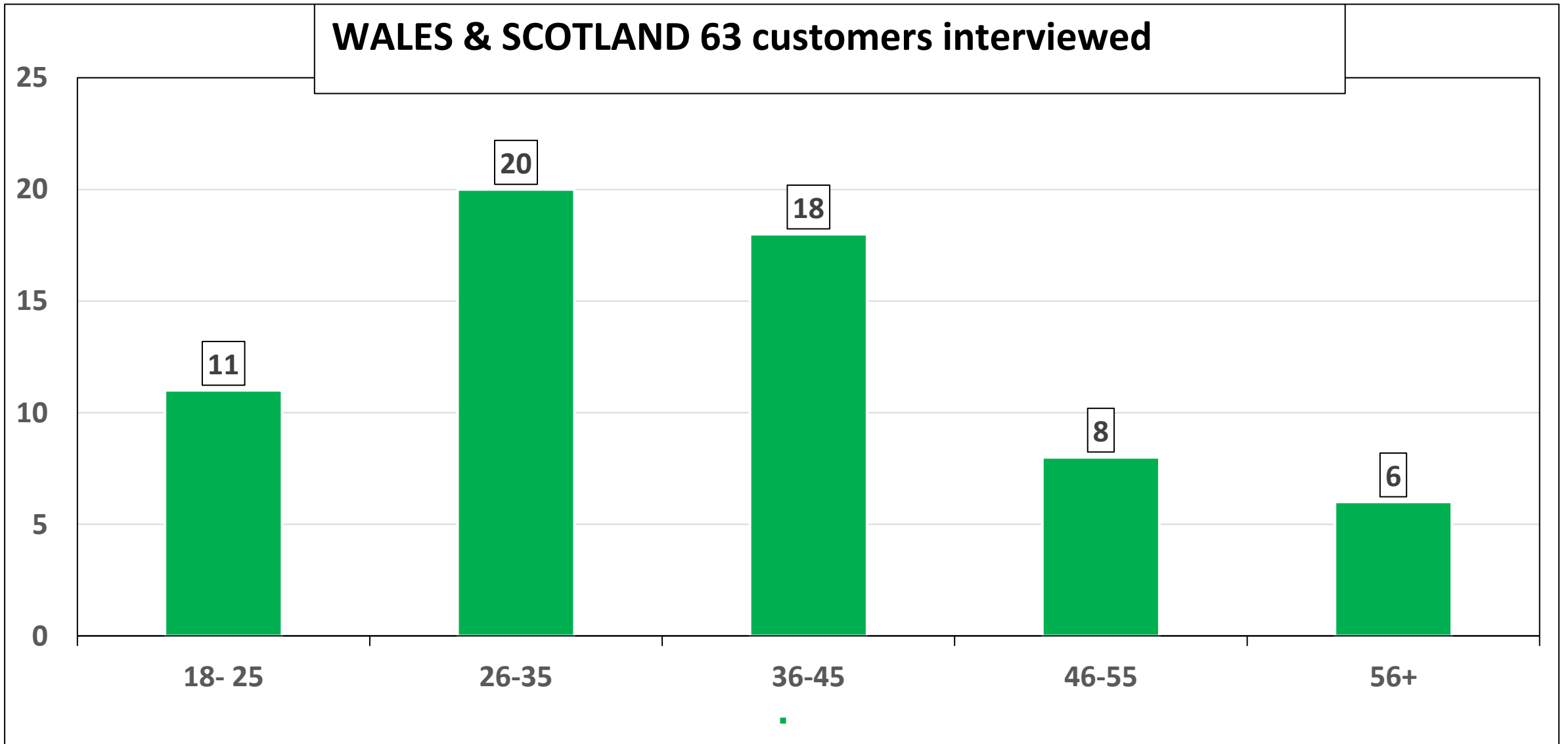
The pilot in Wales and Scotland

The implementation of the pilot involved career development practitioners using their professional judgment and experience to introduce an optional series of brief statements for adults' response in a post -pre interview conversation.

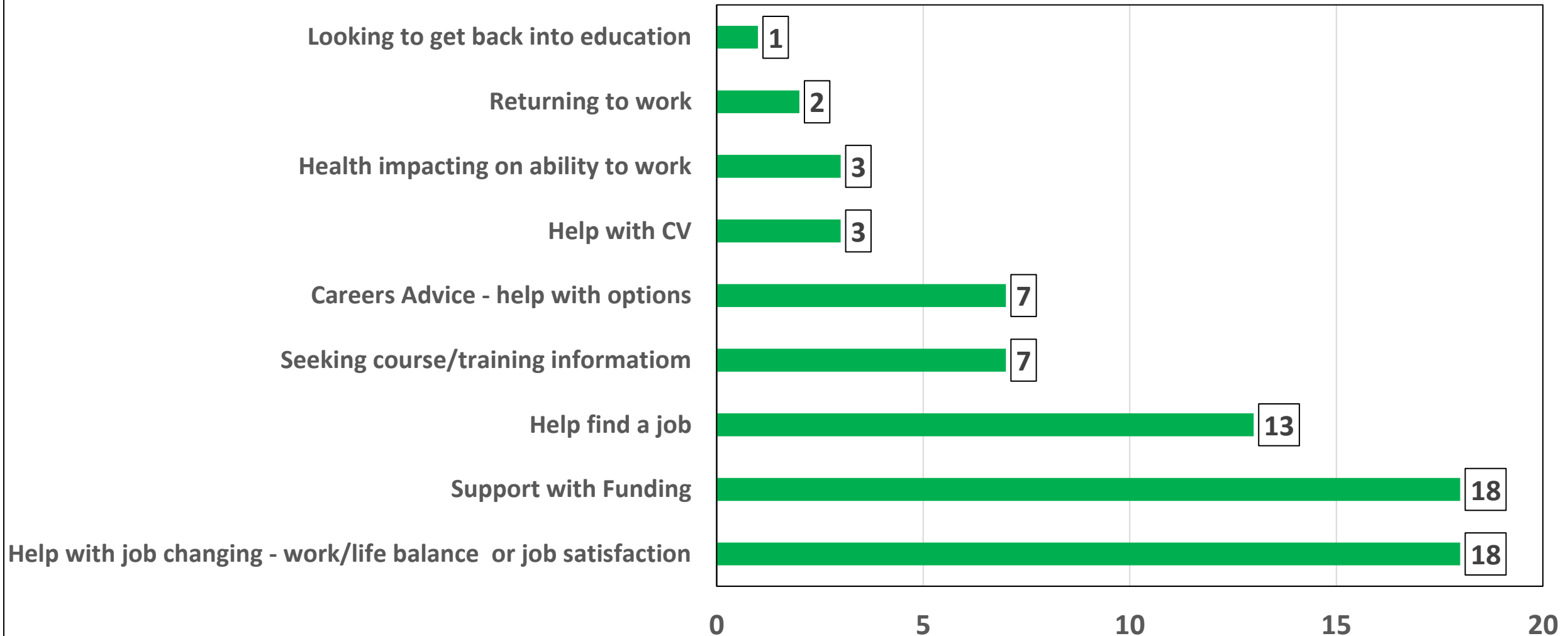
The post-pre-setting refers to asking clients after the support both how they feel about the statement now ("post") and how they felt beforehand ("pre"), i.e. asking about both simultaneously.

Hiebert, B. (2012). A framework for demonstrating the value of human services, *Orientación y Sociedad*, 12: 1-19. Universidad Nacional de La Plata. Facultad de Psicología A, December 2012 - <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/301066596.pdf> .

WALES & SCOTLAND 63 customers interviewed



Identified Customer Needs



Typical words expressed

Lack of Motivation

Feeling of worthlessness

Embarrassed

Shock of redundancy

Isolation

Fear of change

**Worried about finances and
supporting family**

Boredom

Feeling lost

Family concerns (relationships)

Anger

Low confidence

Lack of self esteem

General health concerns

Mental health issues

Drug abuse

These are typical solutions and actions taken

Barriers identified

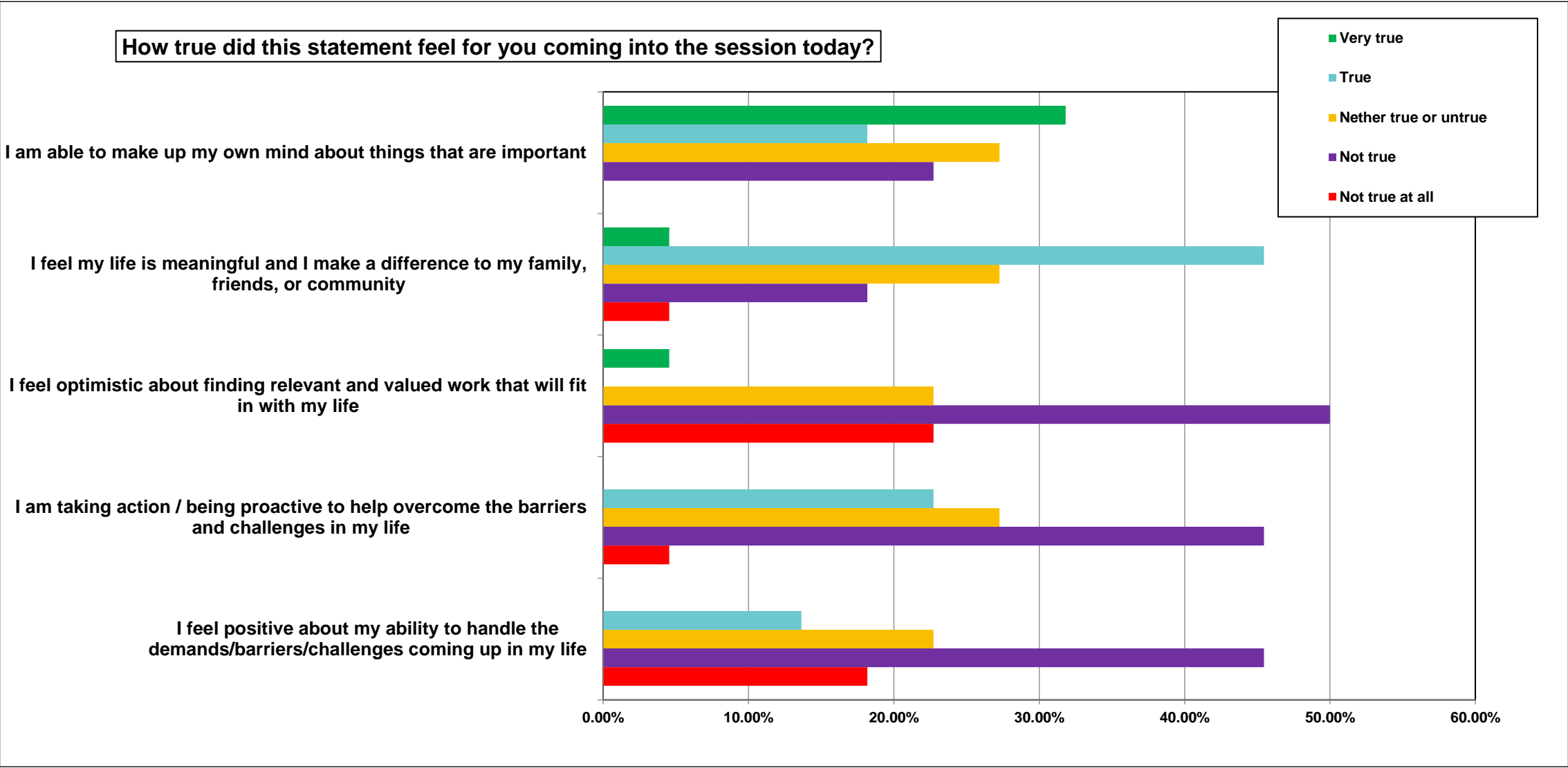
- **Mental health concerns**
- **General health issues**
- **Financial concerns**
- **Fear of change**
- **Lack of self confidence**
- **Successive failed attempts at finding work – frustration**

Solutions

- **Signposting and Referrals** to support networks – Drug rehabilitation/ Debt Advisory services/Anxiety support groups/ Rehousing support/ Social workers etc.
- **Opportunity Awareness**
- **Signposting to training opportunities**
- **Access to LMI and job information**
- **Volunteer opportunities to gain experience and confidence**

Feedback from Working Wales Brighter Futures - Post-Pre Survey

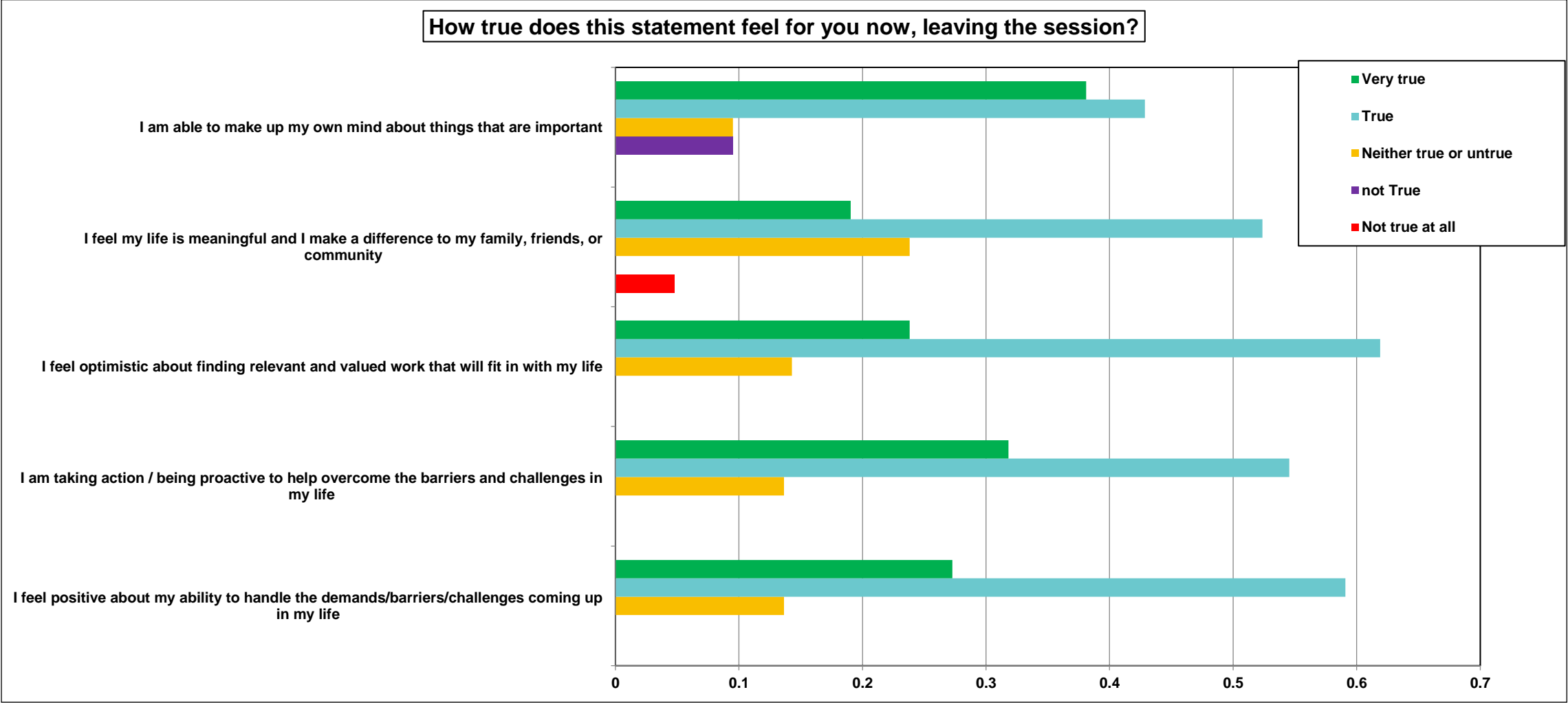
How true did this statement feel for you **coming into** the session today?



Note the red and purple coloured bars in the chart above – very few blue and green bars

Feedback from Working Wales Brighter Futures - Post-Pre Survey

How true did this statement feel for you **leaving** the session today?

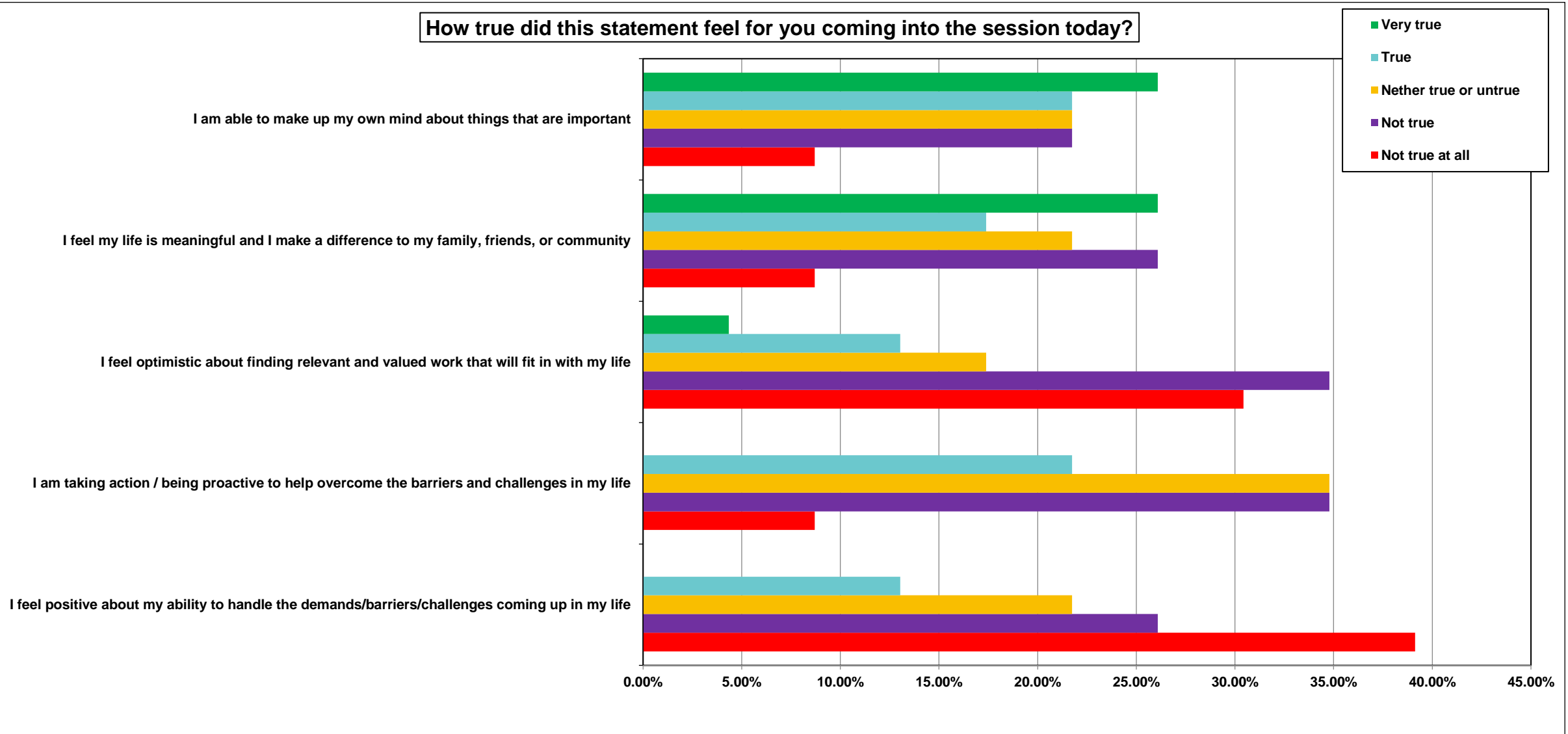


Note FEW red or purple coloured bars in the chart above – many more blue and green bars

Feedback from Skills Development Scotland - Post-Pre Survey

How true did this statement feel for you **coming into** the session today?

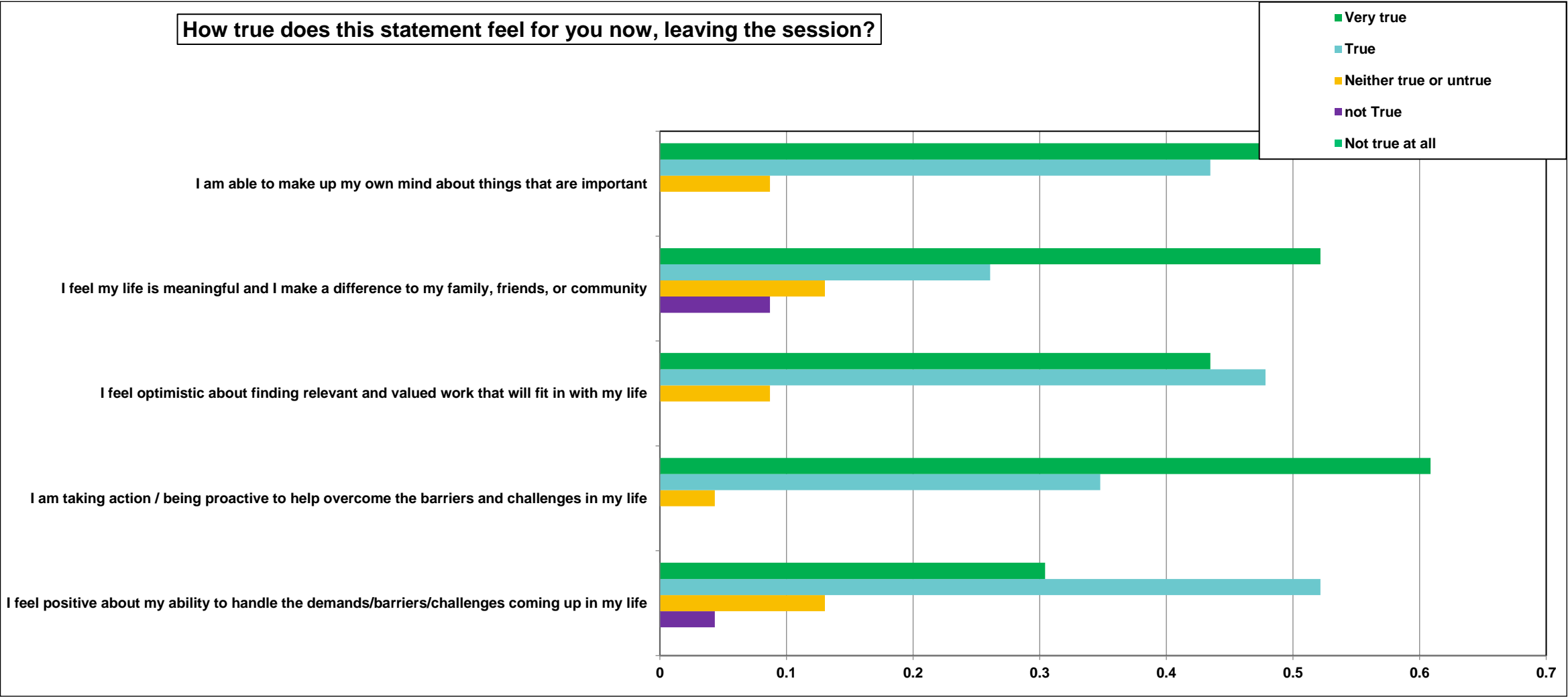
How true did this statement feel for you coming into the session today?



Note the red and purple coloured bars in the chart above – very few blue and green bars

Feedback from Skills Development Scotland - Post-Pre Survey

How true did this statement feel for you **leaving** the session today?



Note NO red and FEW purple coloured bars in the chart above – many more blue and green bars

Quotes from clients

“Feel like a weight has been lifted, got more balance in my life..... Loads more positive about the future”

“Confidence in myself. Felt clearer about my plan, what to do and how it would make a difference”

“I feel like progress has definitely been made and things are moving in the right direction”

“This has been a great help ...has really made me feel better about things”

“She said the experience had made her feel a lot more positive about the future, even though she is generally an optimistic person”

“Feel that I can identify exactly what about making these decisions is making me anxious and control it rather than being anxious about whole situation”

“Taking control of the process really helped me feel more confident that I can make good decisions”

A ten-step interview process

- Hughes, Hambly and Percy (2022) drawing on practitioner feedback and recognising that different levels of focus on wellbeing will be appropriate for different clients. The process supports practitioners in applying their judgement as to how far and how formally to apply wellbeing techniques on a case-by-case basis. The process is designed to align smoothly with many common practice approaches to interview session, e.g., contracting, identifying needs and possible actions.
- **Step 1:** A reminder to consider the environment, emotional steadiness, exercises available and evaluation approach in advance of beginning a career support conversation.
- **Steps 2–4:** Key steps for supporting brief careers information and advice requests or in the early part of triage assessment to determine good signposting and referral, where necessary.
- **Steps 5–9:** Steps that are most relevant for the more in-depth stages of professional career development, action planning, career guidance and employability conversations.
- **Step 10:** Another optional step for measuring progress to inform the evidence-base underpinning practitioners' skillful practice.

Building Brighter Futures

Career Development
and Wellbeing -
A Practical Toolkit

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THANK YOU 😊