



Learn to Thrive

WITH POST CONCUSSION SYNDROME

**A Positive Psychology-based Well-Being Program
Improving the Emotional and Psycho-Social
Experience of Those Living with PCS**



REVIVE & THRIVE

WELLBEING INC.

**Featuring Arvinder Gaya & Lina Maria Aristizabal
Toronto ABI Networking Conference 2022**





Outline

- INTRODUCTIONS
- BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON PCS
- LEARN TO THRIVE WITH POST-CONCUSSION SYNDROME PROGRAM
- PROGRAM RESULTS
- WHAT'S NEXT
- WHAT OUR PARTICIPANTS SAY
- QUESTIONS



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WITH POST CONCUSSION SYNDROME



REVIVE & THRIVE

WELLBEING INC.



Arvinder Gaya

BSc OT

- Clinic Director and CEO of PiOT
- Co-Founder of Revive and Thrive Wellbeing
- Occupational Therapist
- Certification in Applied Positive Psychology
- Intensati Leader, Meditation teacher
- Published Author





Lina Maria Aristizabal

MSc APPC

- Wellbeing Educator, Trainer, and Resilience Coach
- Co-Founder of Revive and Thrive Wellbeing
- Certified Coach
- Certification in Applied Positive Psychology
- Ontario Certified Teacher
- Concussion Survivor



Lina Maria's Story

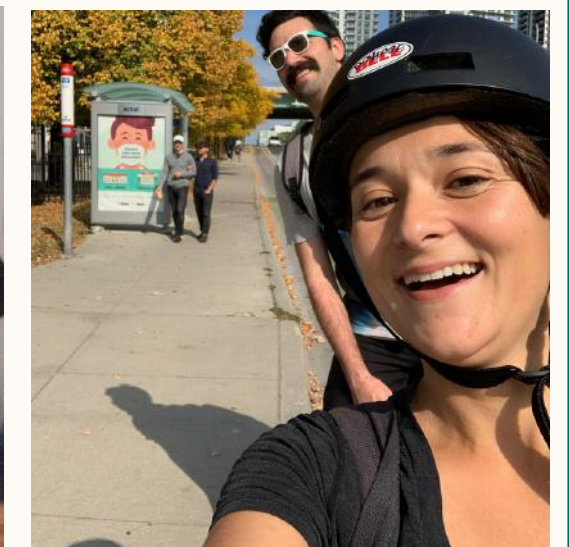
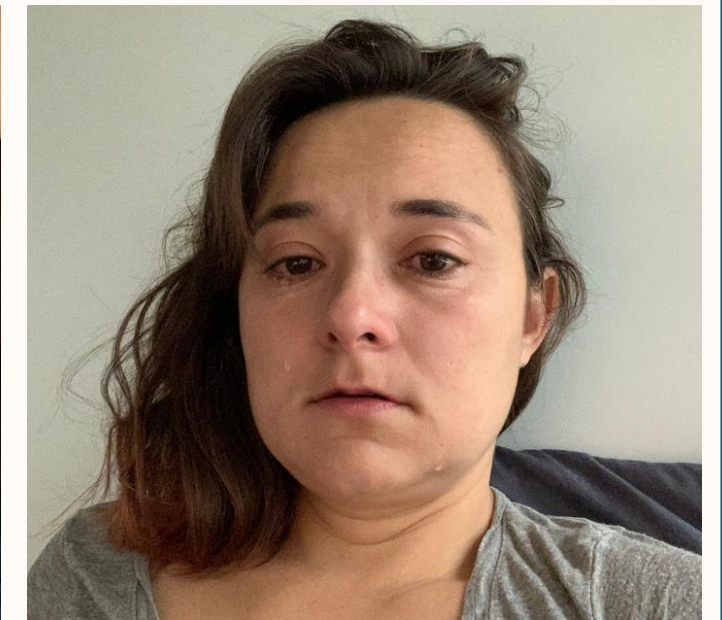
Life Pre-injury

Sustaining the concussion

Post-concussion symptoms & mental health

Beyond the Personal: Relationships & Activities

Implementing Positive Psychology



Breath Exercise

Concussion Incidence in Canada

1

2% of Canadians live with Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI), putting TBIs amongst the most common neurological conditions in Canada

(Permenter et al., 2022)

2

500 of 100,000 Canadians are impacted by TBIs, equating to ~165,000 Canadians annually, or 1 Canadian every 3 minutes (Permenter et al., 2022)

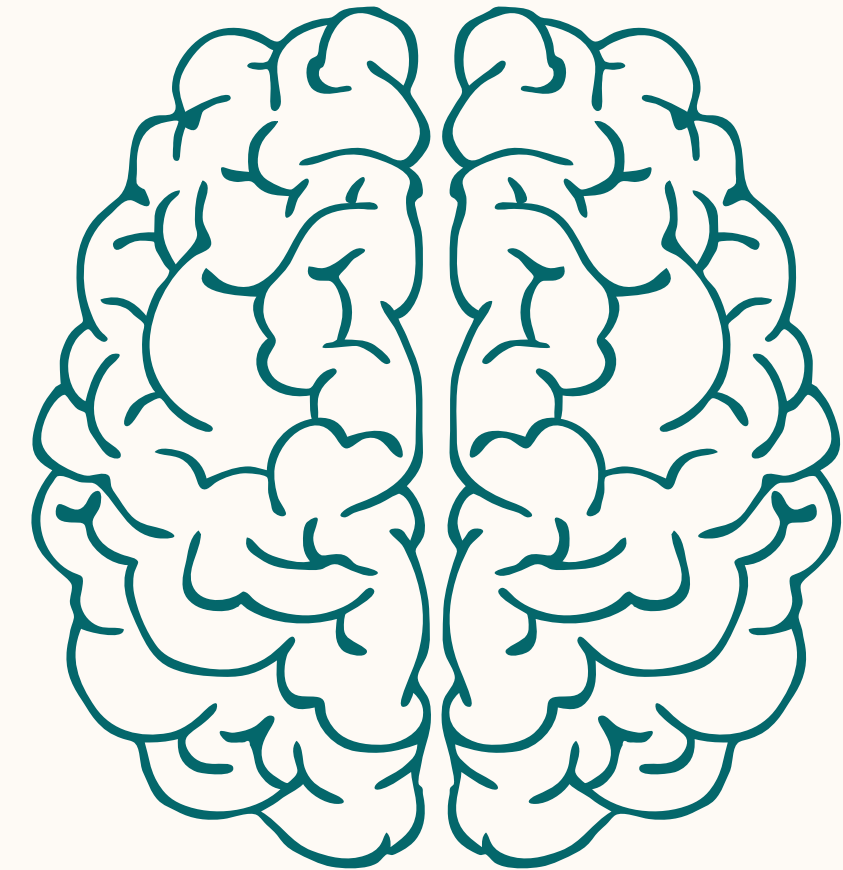
3

Annually, 200,000 Canadians suffer concussions, leading to ~18,000 hospitalization (Permenter et al., 2022)



Incidence of Post-Concussion Syndrome

- Post-concussion syndrome manifests itself as:
- Somatic symptoms: nausea, vomiting, headache, auditory disturbances, impaired balance, sensitivity to light & noise, blurry or double vision, & fatigue
(Polinder et al., 2018)
- Cognitive symptoms: impaired memory, executive functions, emotional regulation, & behavior
(Polinder et al., 2018)



30-80% of patients with mild to moderate TBI experience prolonged symptoms, characteristic of Post-Concussion Syndrome (Polinder et al., 2018)



Incidence of PCS Mental Health Issues

- Prevalence of depression after concussion is at least 35%, while major depression is 15% (Vargas et al., 2015)
- Prevalence of anxiety after concussion is between 10-20% for all degrees of post-concussion syndrome (Langer et al., 2021)

Prevalence of other symptoms includes:

- Fatigue (49.9%)
- Sleep disturbance (42.4%)
- Irritability (44.0%) (Voormolen et al., 2019)



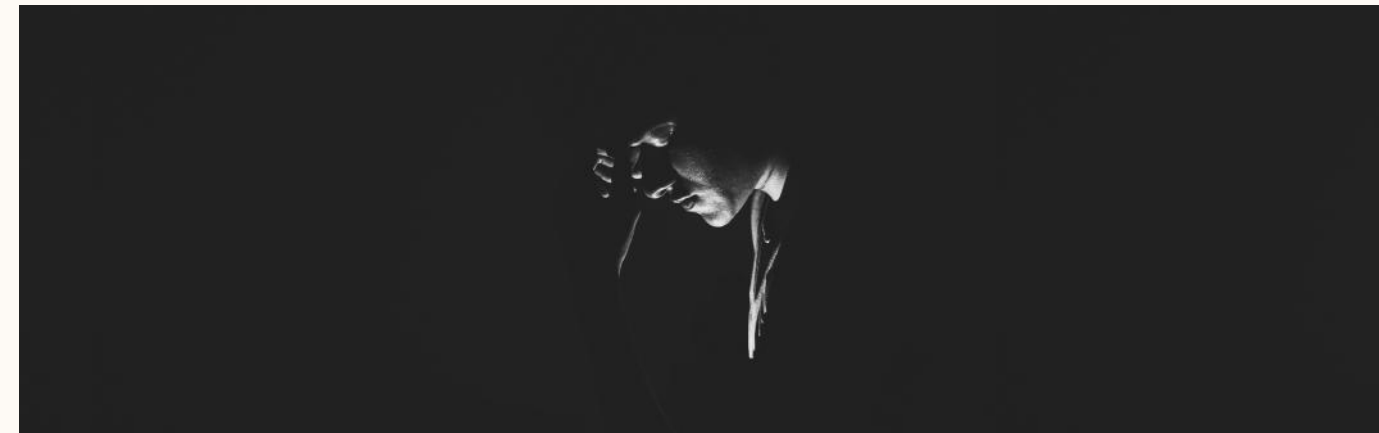
Post-concussion syndrome (PCS) leads to a constellation of physical, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral symptoms and its prevalence varies from 11% to 64% (Bedaso et al., 2018)



Slow Downward Spiral

Symptoms can **persist** beyond your own & doctor's expectations including:

- Persistent inability to engage in normal life roles (work, socializing, relationships, function)
- Lack of understanding from employer/family/friends (invisible injury)
- Isolation, loneliness, fragility
- Worsening depression, anxiety
- Limiting beliefs and fear about the future

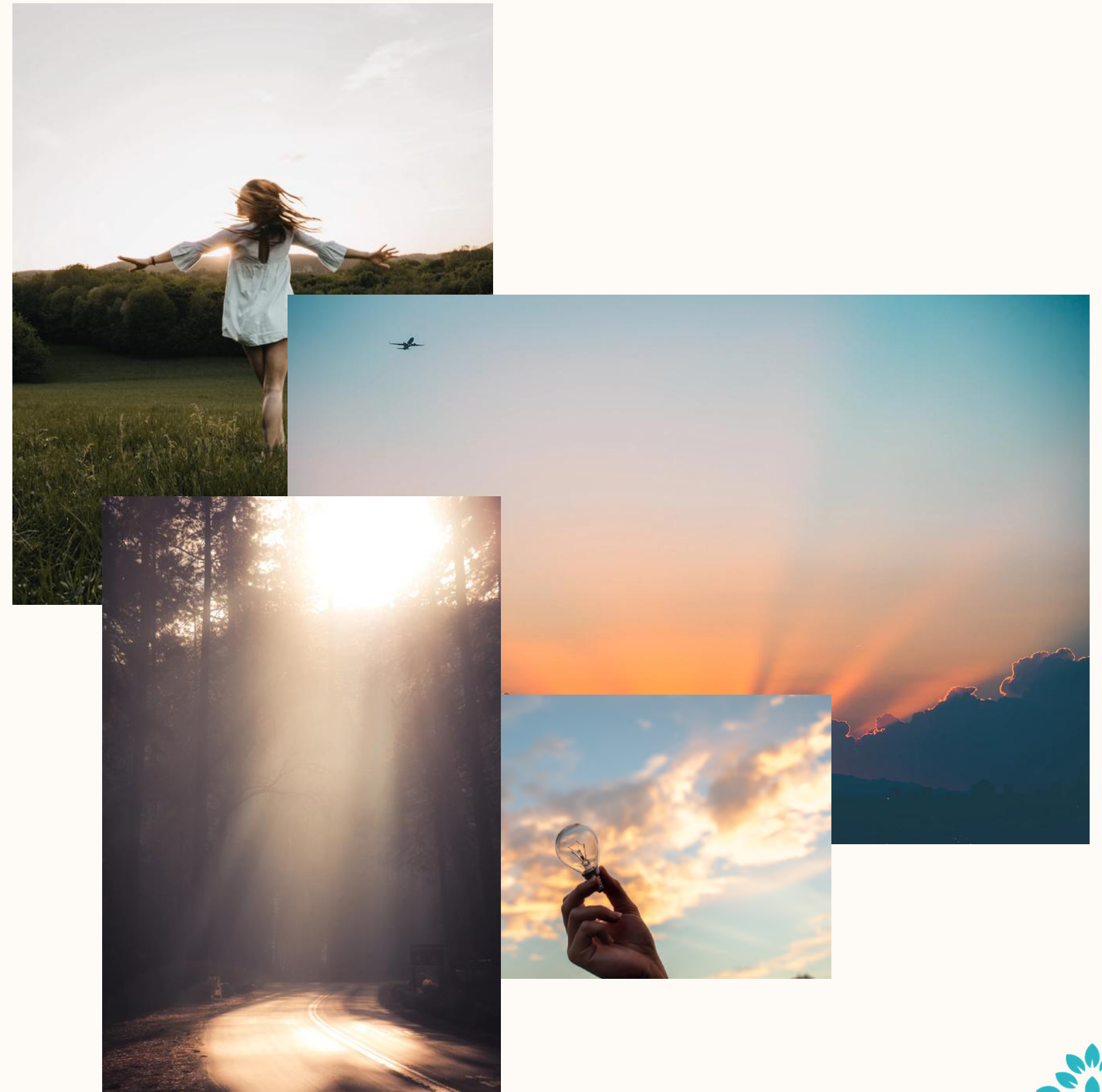


These symptoms can lead to a **debilitating negative feedback loop**



Mindset Shift

Rather than waiting to get better, they can decide to start feeling joy and start *living* regardless of where they are in their healing journey.



Positive Psychology

"The scientific study
of optimal human
functioning"



Aims to discover & promote factors that
allow individuals & communities to thrive
(Seligman, 2002)

Helps people move “North of Neutral”
(Peterson)

Builds upon your strengths rather than
fixing weaknesses

Enhances well-being and flourishing-
wholeness of the human experience

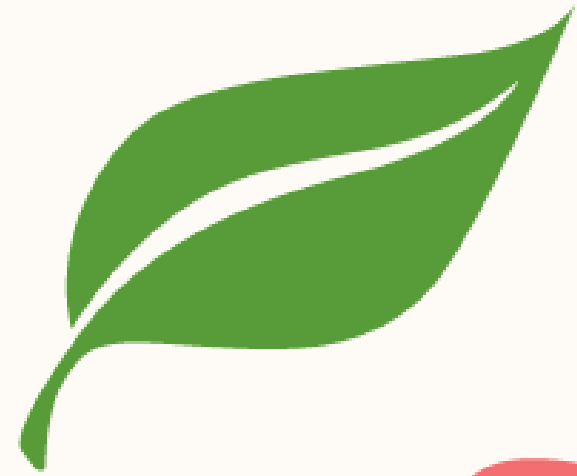


Tools to Support the Mindset Shift

Approaching mindset management via Wellbeing Science

- Understanding our brain - negativity bias and intentional compassion
- Rewiring our thought patterns - Growth vs. Fixed mindset, our perception, beliefs, and story
- Changing how we interact with our symptoms and engage in activity
- Manage our communication and relationships





Learn to Thrive

WITH POST CONCUSSION SYNDROME



REVIVE & THRIVE

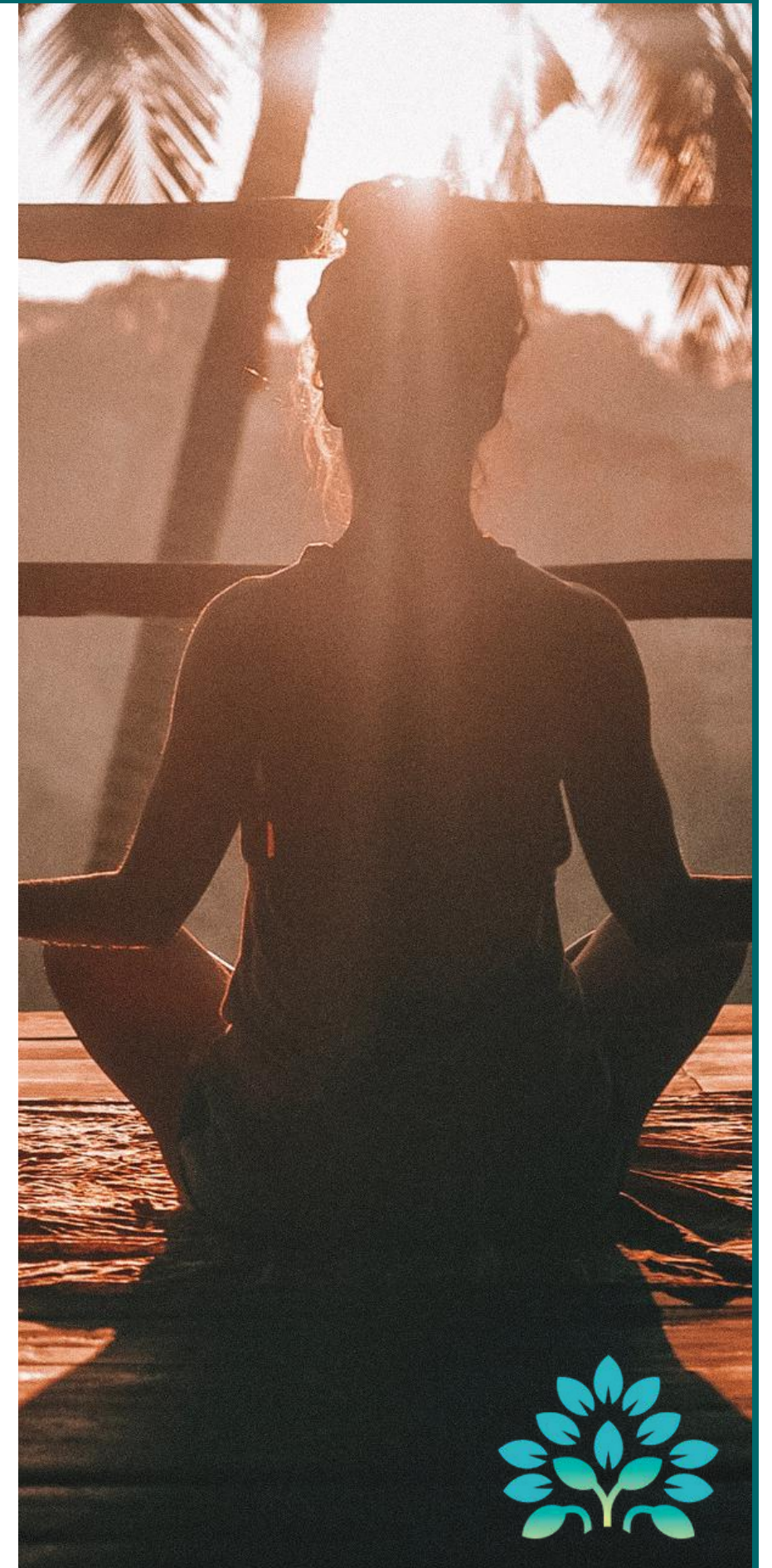
WELLBEING INC.





**Committed to helping those dealing
with PCS to experience more joy,
connection, and resilience in their
recovery...**

...to support them to start living life again.





9-Week Well-being Workshop Series



- Meet online via Zoom
- 2 hrs/week for 9 consecutive weeks
- 12 participants maximum



**Co-facilitated by Arvinder Gaya &
Lina Maria Aristizabal**



Adults who are:

- experiencing post-concussion syndrome / persistent concussion symptoms for more than one year
- MVA claimants and others
- able to engage in some screen time and engage in group discussions

*Who is
it for?*





Learn to Thrive

Our program addresses the social-emotional aspects of PCS recovery.

We provide a safe space for educational and experimental practice, while offering professional and community support.





Evidence-based tools and practices from positive psychology for:

1. Coping and Building Resilience
2. Boosting Happiness
3. Improving Relationships

*A Focus
on
Well-being*



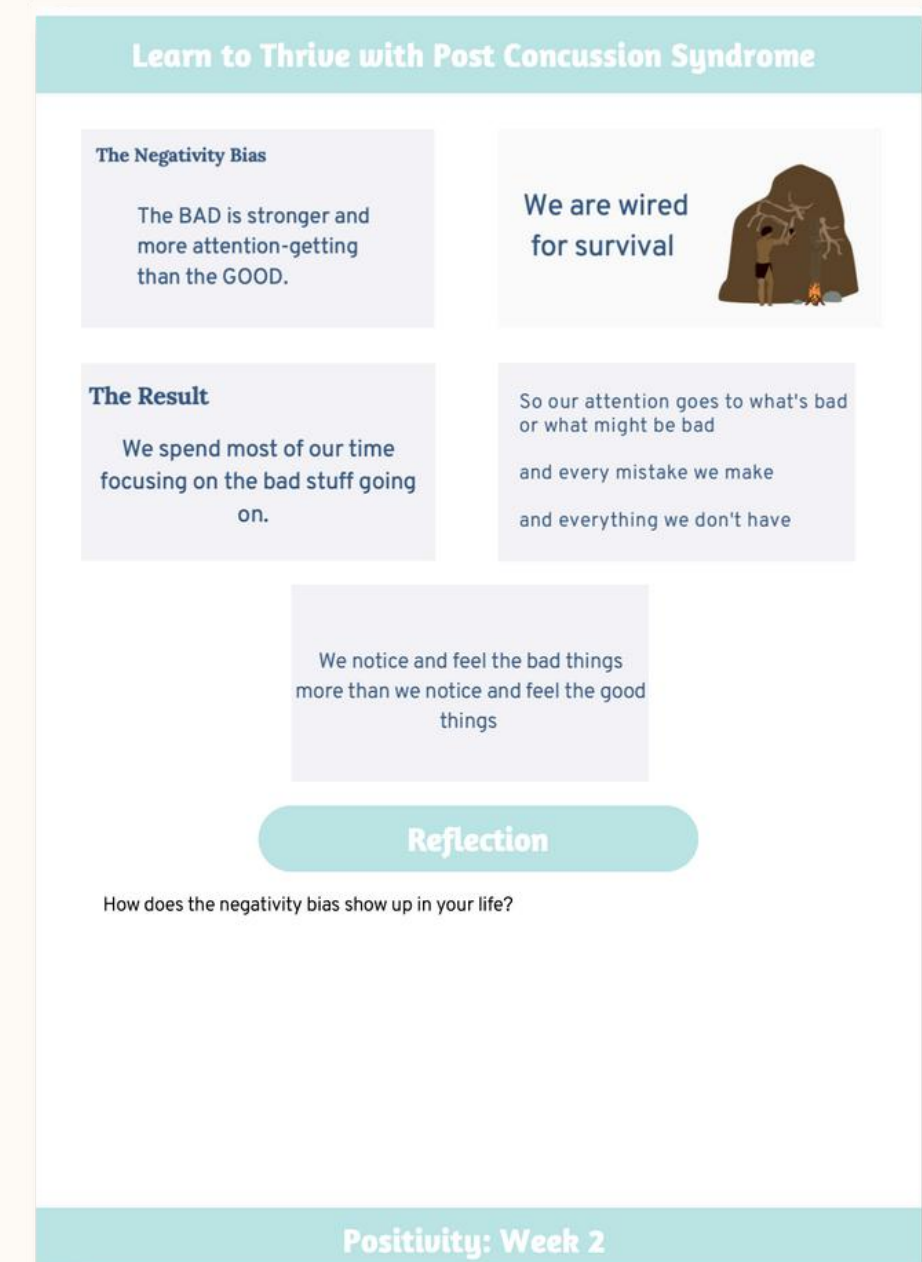
The Program Includes

A full course workbook with:

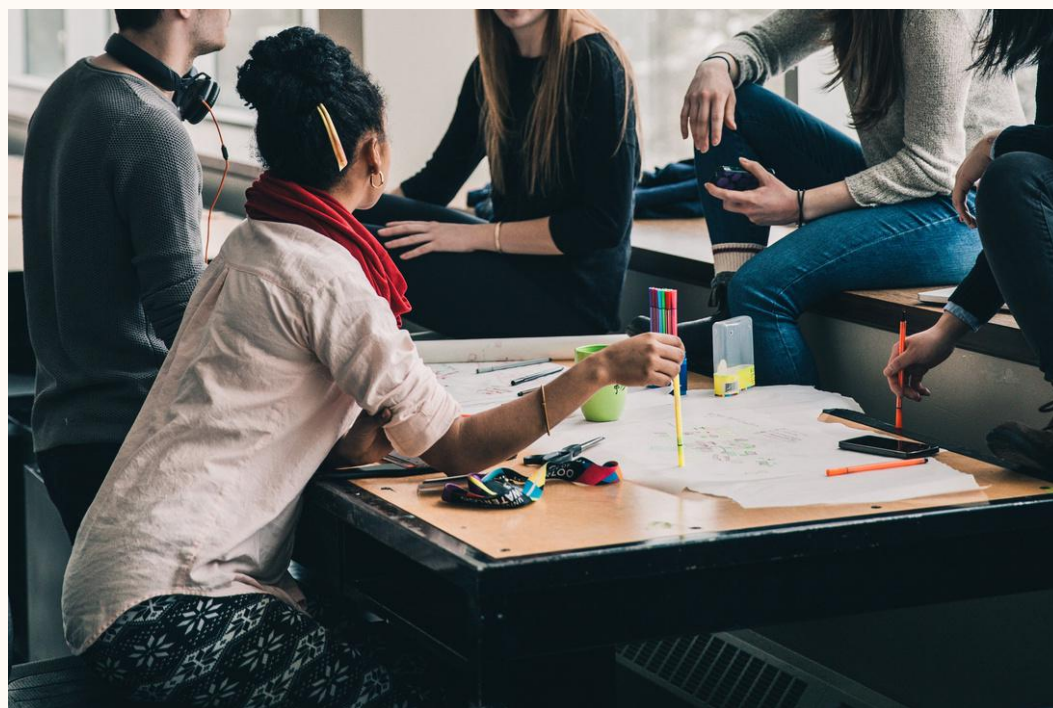
- workshop slides
- reflection prompts
- habit checklists

Online course platform with:

- training content videos
- weekly meditations
- discussion forums



Meeting Timelines



2 mindful minutes

Check-in with all members and review

Program content teaching and review

Breakout groups, discussion & practice

Movement + 10 min meditation

Break

Content Review, Practice, Discussion

Assignment of home tasks



Learning, Practice, Homework

Learn to Thrive with Post Concussion Syndrome

What Went Well (3 Good Things)

Write about What Went Well
or 3 Good Things that happened that day each night before bed.
You can also add how you contributed to each good thing that happened.

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Positivity: Week 5

- self-compassion
- neuroplasticity
- gratitude
- working with worry & judgement thoughts using CBT principles
- using character strengths
- managing the stress response



Learning, Practice, Homework



- breathing strategies - from stress to calm
- meditation
- assertive communication for needs
- building and keeping habits
- physical activity
- strengthening relationships
- reframing experiences and creating meaning



Activity List

Connecting to Loved Ones



Daily Habits



Powerful Reframes

Things I can do

curiosity
Open-mindedness
zest
Bravery
Kindness
Leadership
integrity
humility
Fairness
persistence
Humour

The power of YET

Re-Writing Their Story



My Resilience Story

My Resilience Story

My Resilience Story

Client Benefits

- Transformative learning, tools, and practice in evidence-based strategies for happiness and wellbeing
- Personalized support and coaching
- The opportunity to feel connected with fellow survivors and feel heard and understood



Reporting



- Pre- and post-program assessments are completed by clients to evaluate changes in anxiety, quality of life, and depression
- We are currently using:
 - Beck Depression Survey
 - Beck Anxiety Survey
 - The Flourishing Scale

Diener, E., Wirtz, D., Tov, W., Kim-Prieto, C., Choi, D., Oishi, S., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2009)



Results

Anxiety (Beck)

Cohort 1 & 2

Significantly Decreased

Overall, the participants had an average percent decrease of **14.725% (cohort 1)** and **9.22% (cohort 2)** after attending “Learn to Thrive.”

Depression (Beck)

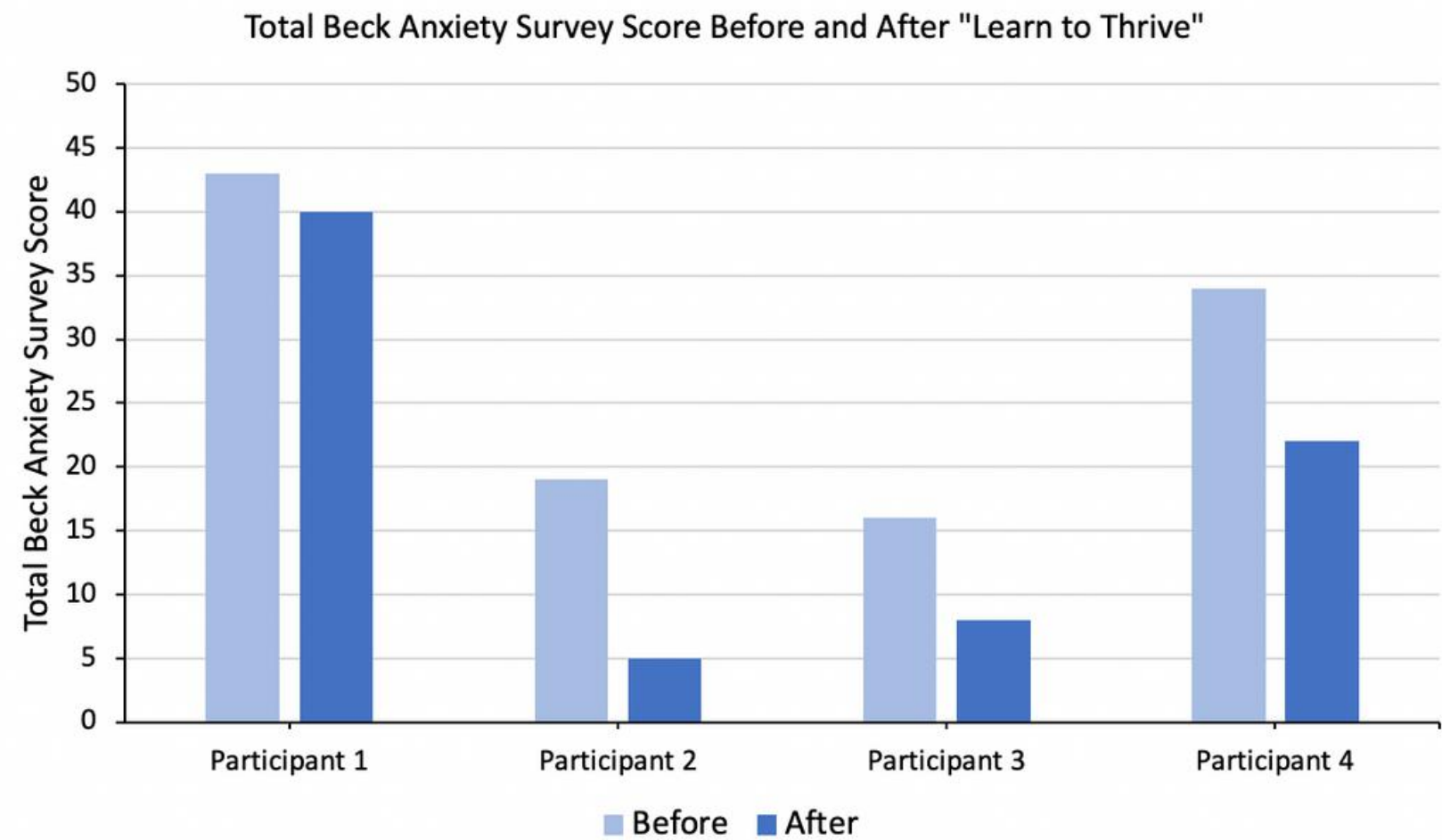
Cohort 1 & 2

Significantly Decreased

Overall, the participants had an average percent decrease of **15.25% (cohort 1)** and **9.54% (cohort 2)** after attending “Learn to Thrive.”

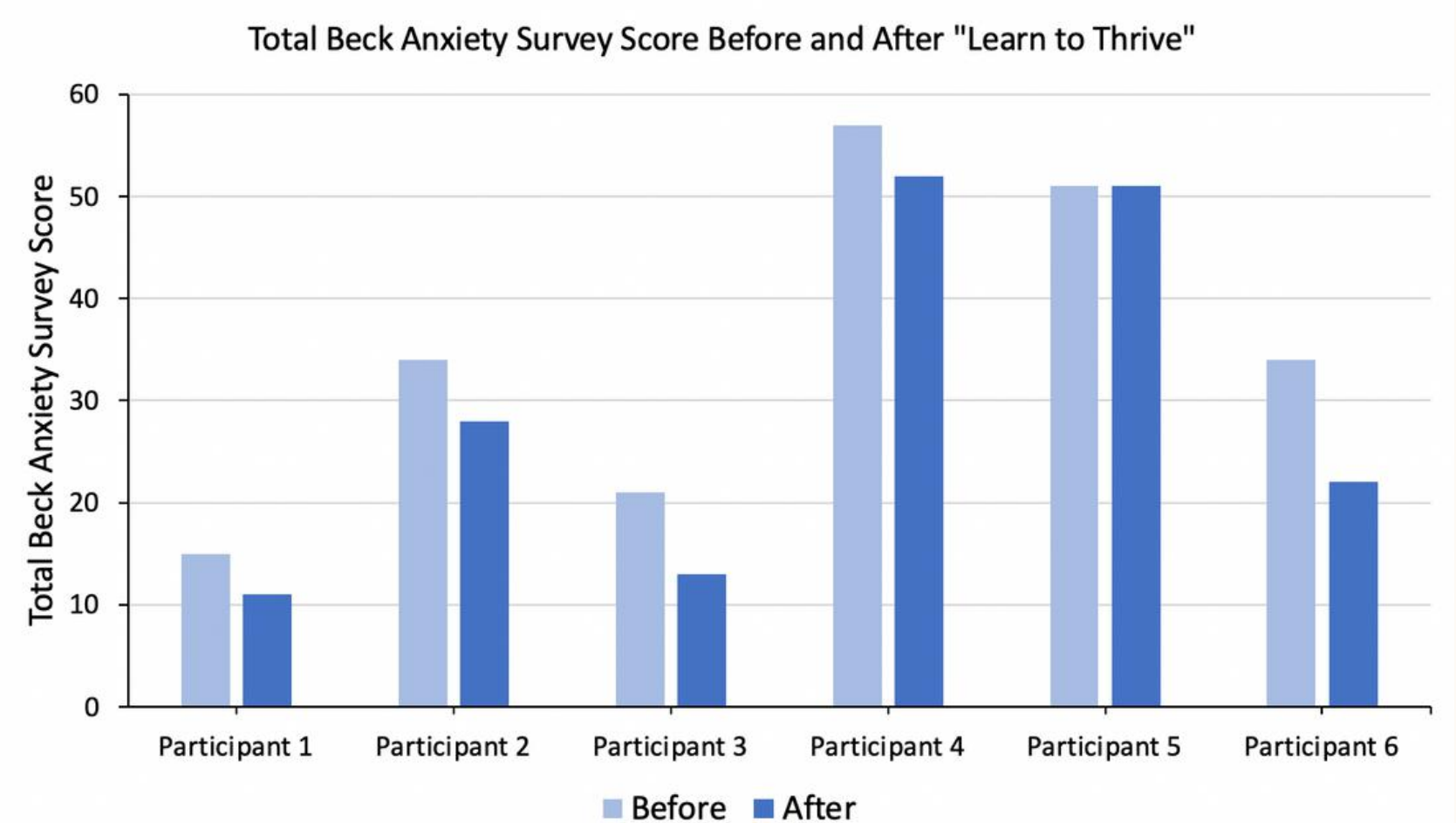
Beck Anxiety Graphs

Cohort 1



Average percent decrease of 14.725%

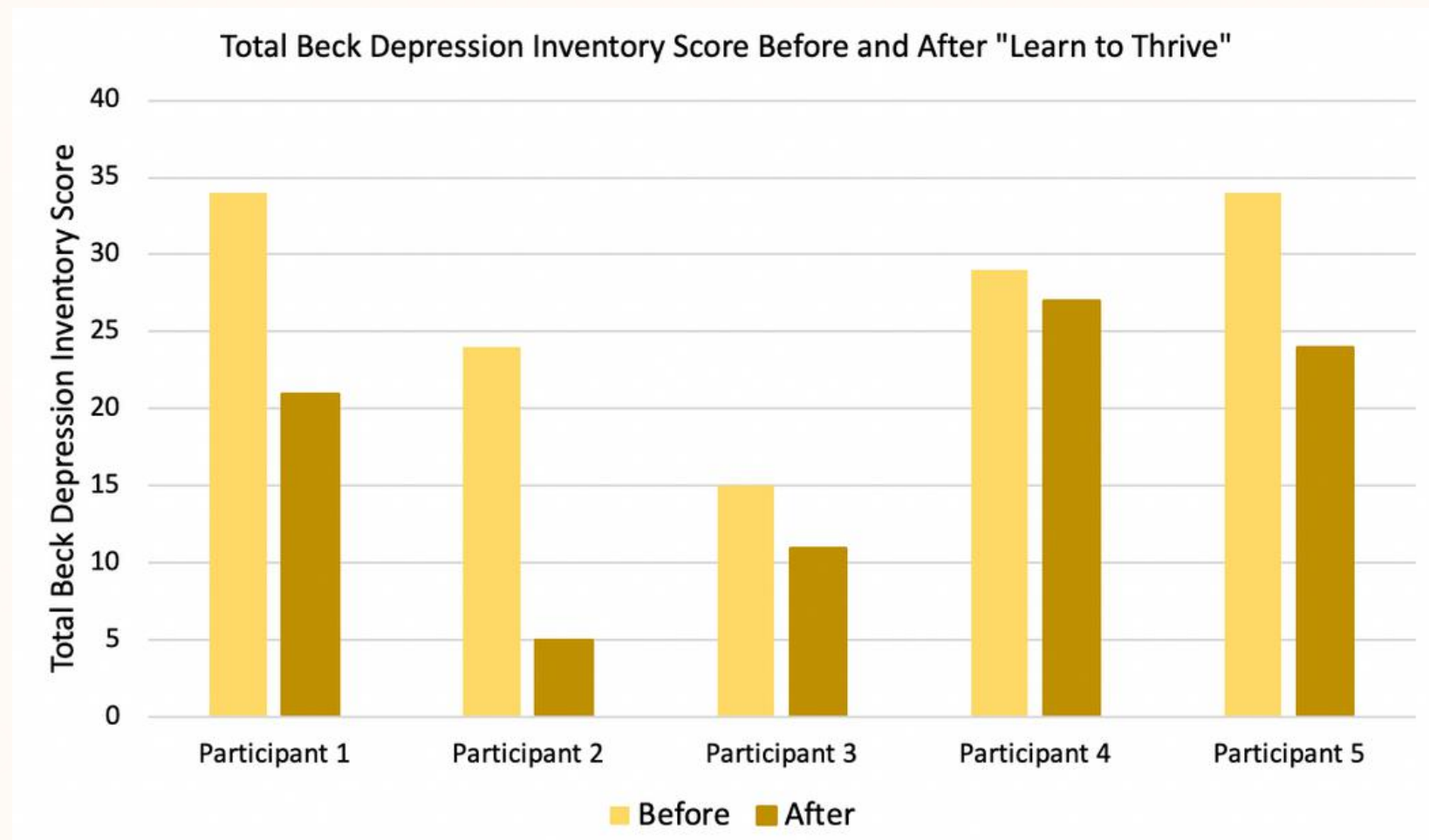
Cohort 2



Average percent decrease of 9.22%

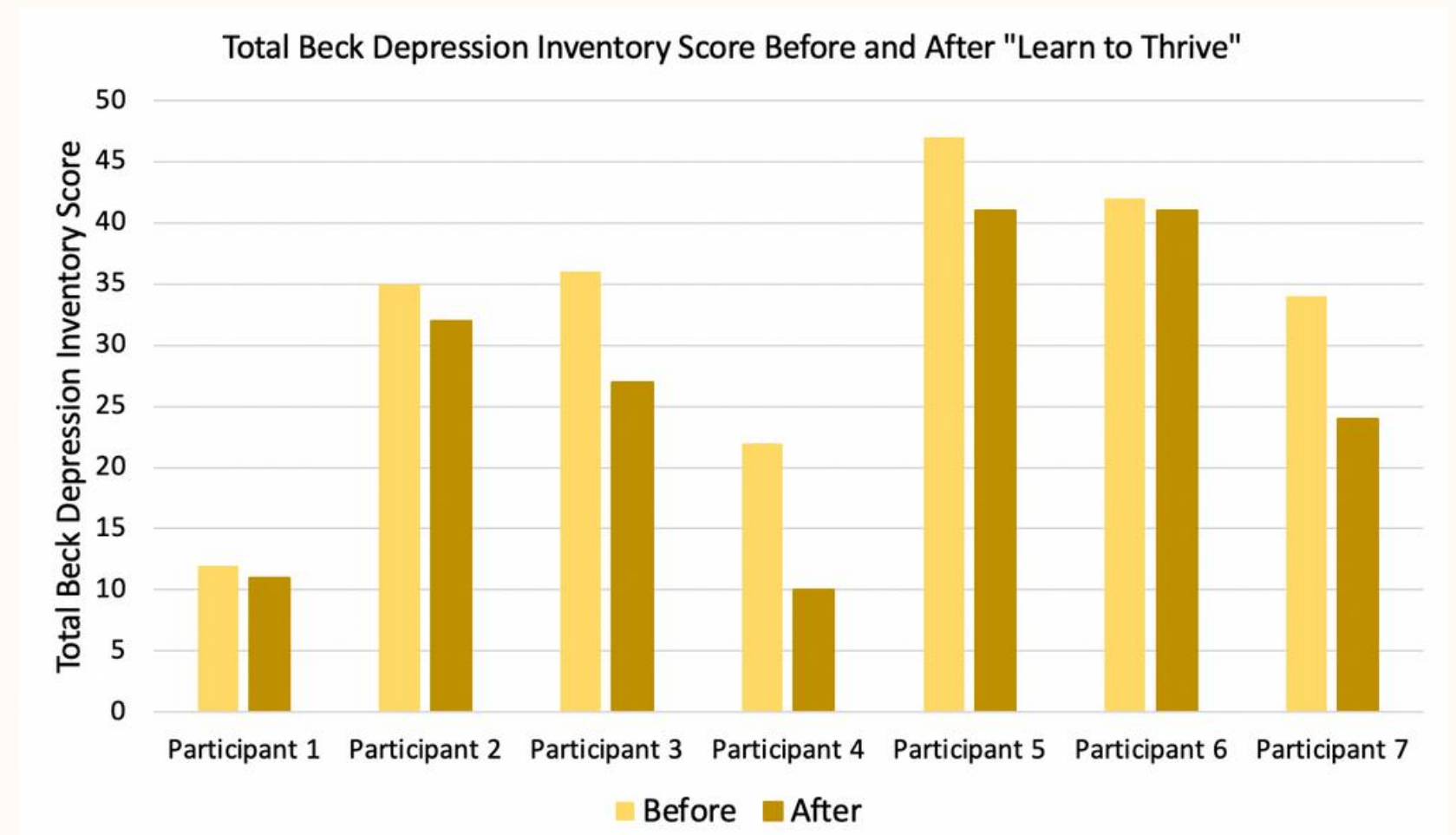
Beck Depression Graphs

Cohort 1



Average percent decrease of 15.25%

Cohort 2



Average percent decrease of 9.54%

Results

Quality of Life WHOQOL

Cohort 1

Significantly Increased

In total, the participants had an average percent increase of **12.28% (cohort 1)** and **6.25% (cohort 2)** in their scores after attending Learn to Thrive.

The Flourishing Scale

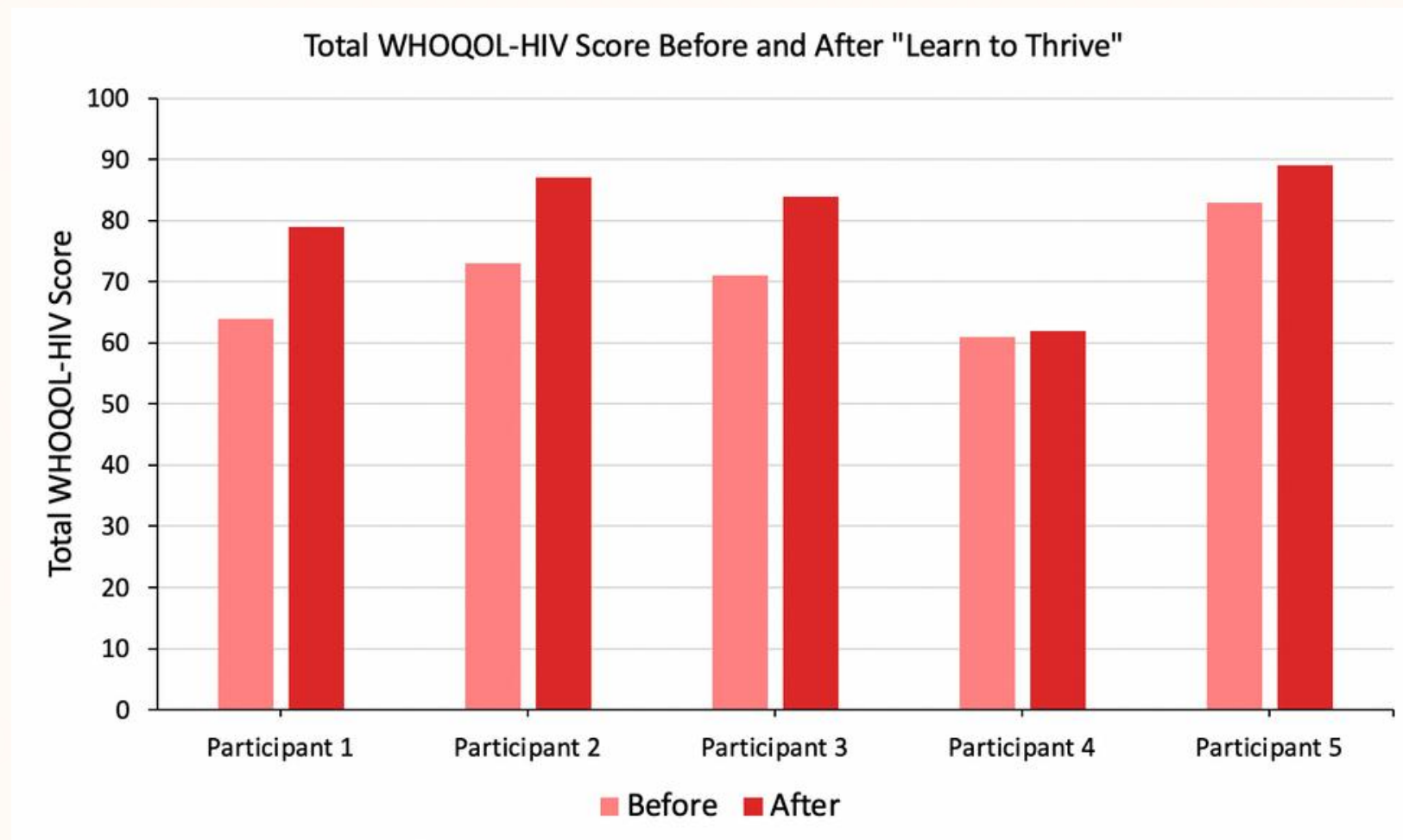
Cohort 1

Significantly Increased

On average, the participants experienced a **31.92% (cohort 1)** and **12.3% (cohort 2)** increase in their scores after attending Learn to Thrive.

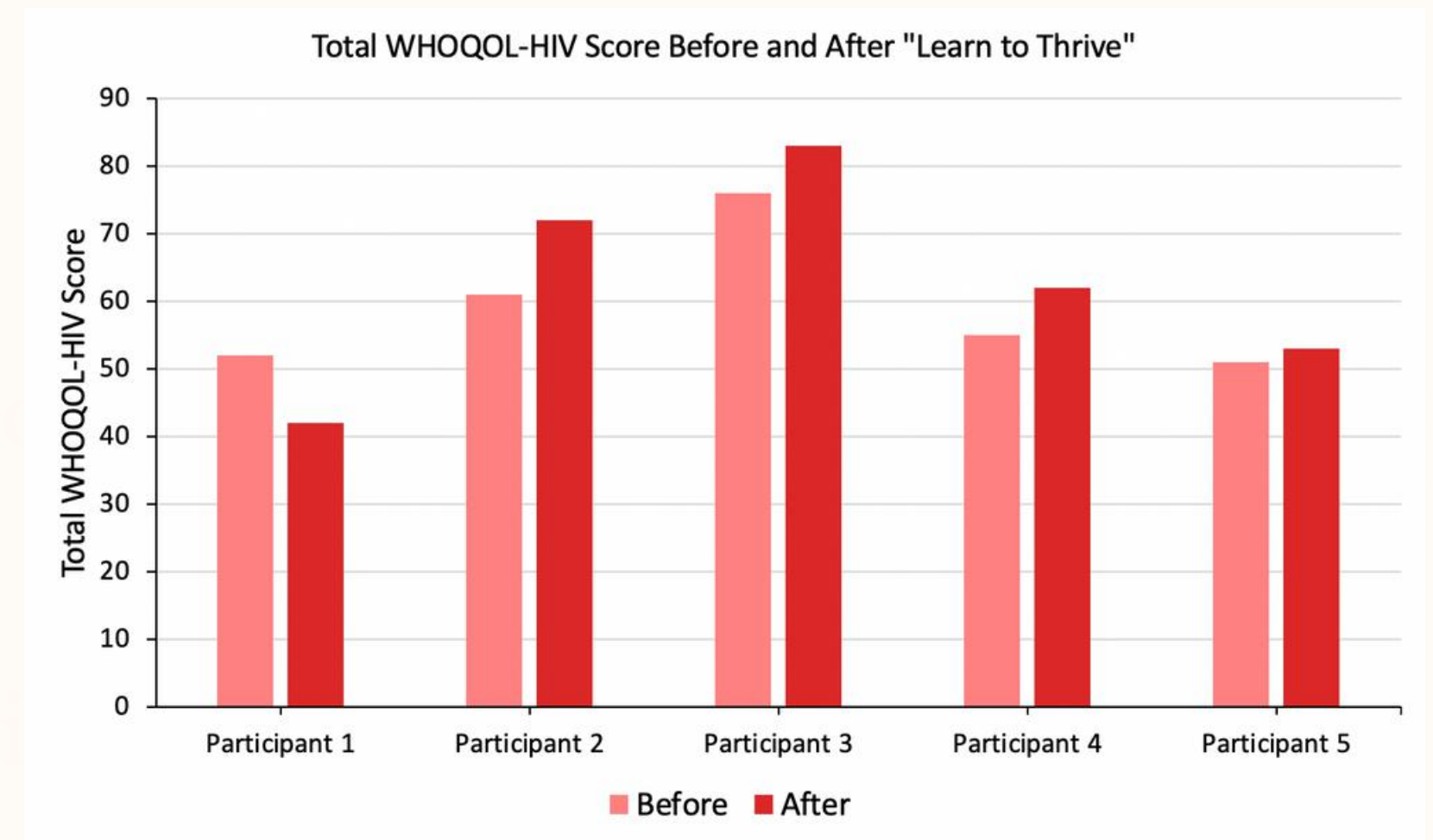
Quality of Life - WHOQOL

Cohort 1



Average percent increase of 12.28%

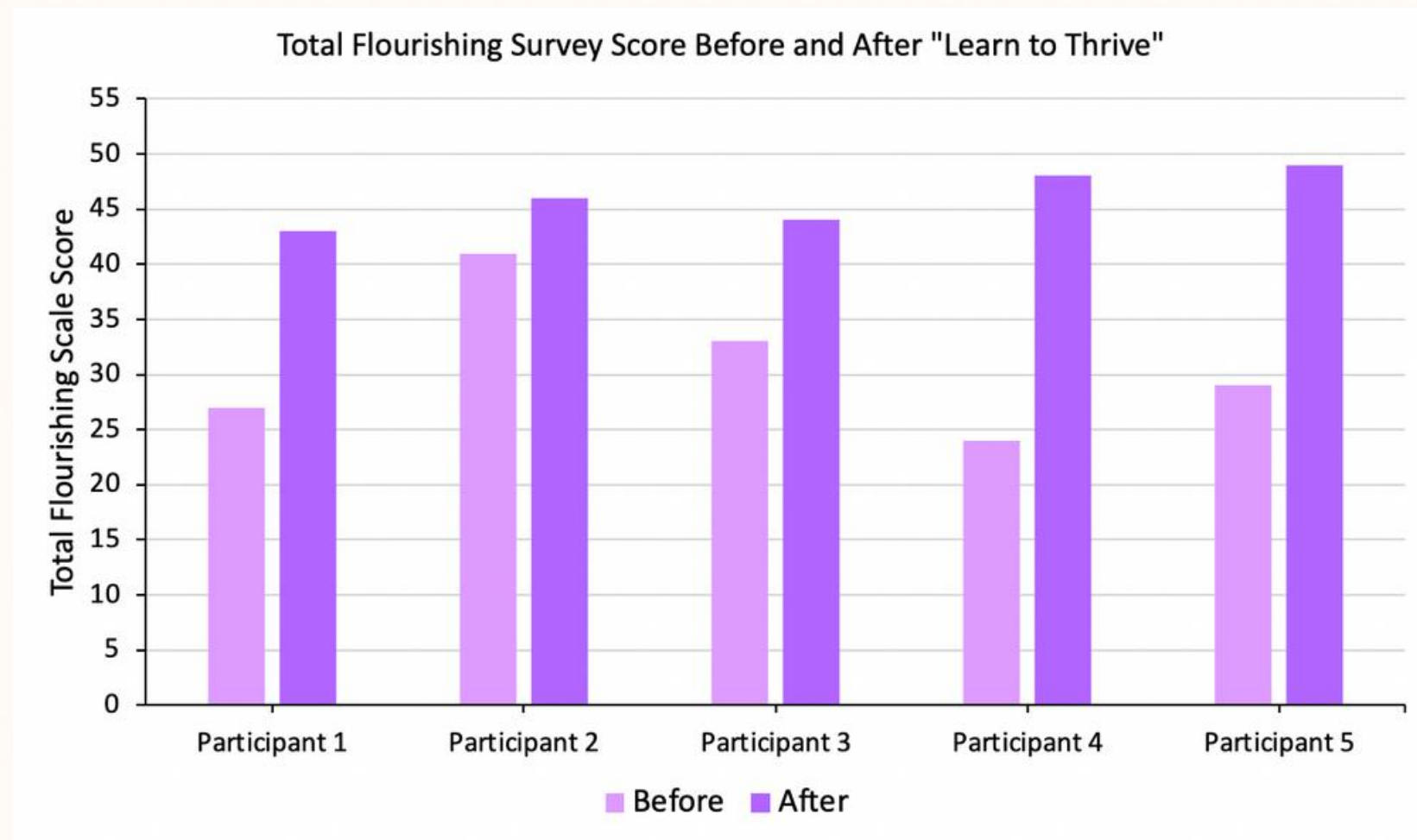
Cohort 2



Average percent increase of 6.25%

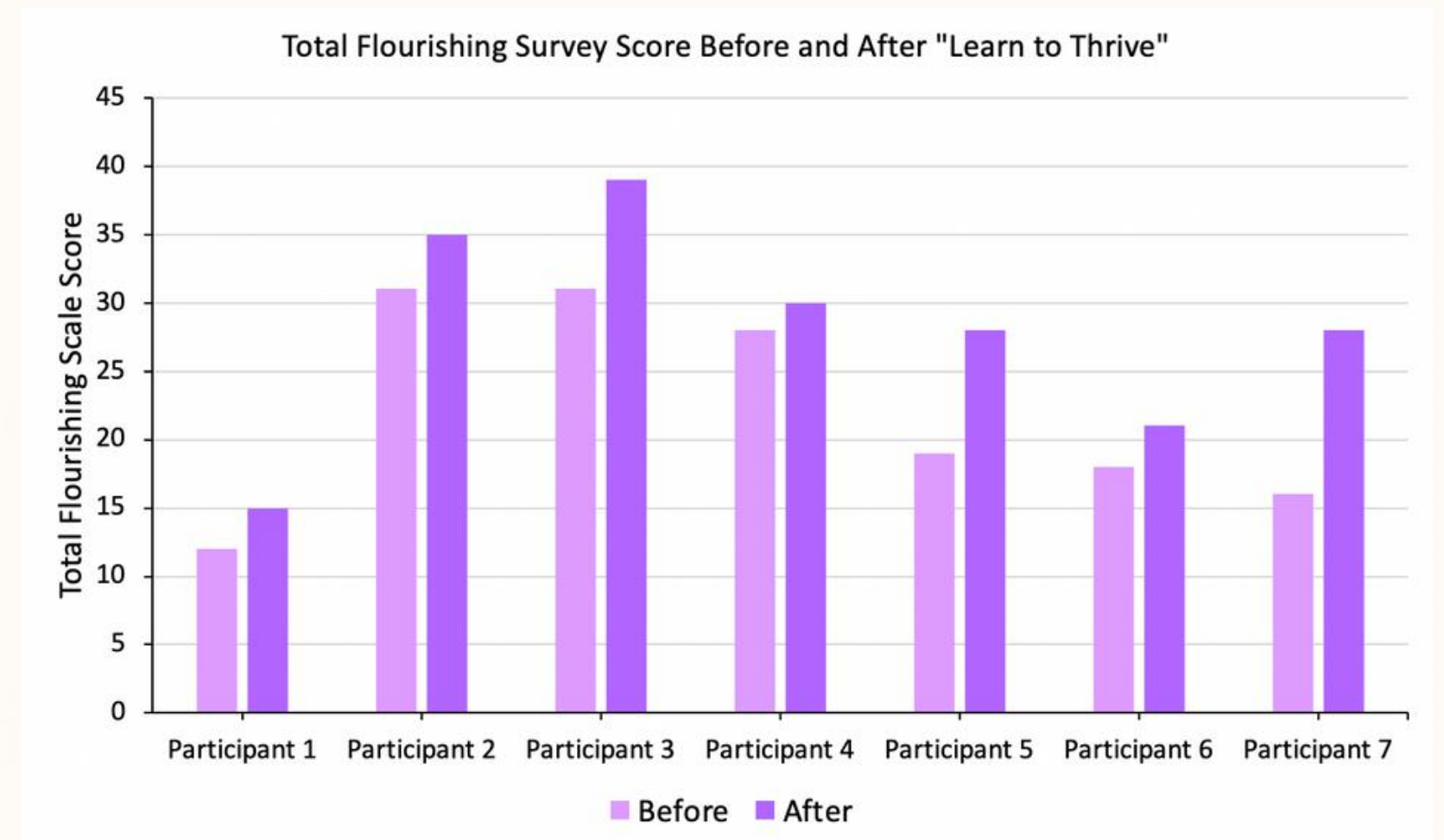
Flourishing Scale

Cohort 1



Average percent increase of 31.92%

Cohort 2



Average percent increase of 12.3%

Flourishing Scale

A brief 8-item measure of the respondent's self-perceived success in important areas of life such as relationships, self-esteem, purpose, and optimism.

Statements:

- I lead a purposeful and meaningful life.
- My social relationships are supportive and rewarding.
- I am engaged and interested in my daily activities.
- I actively contribute to the happiness and wellbeing of others.
- I am competent and capable in the activities that are important to me.
- I am a good person and live a good life.
- I am optimistic about my future.
- People respect me.

Our results reflect improvements in the emotional & psycho-social experience of those with PCS.

Brief Testimonials

I walked away from this program feeling **more positive and better prepared to handle the daily challenges** that I face due to PCS. I highly recommend this program to individuals with PCS." - N.S. Learn to Thrive Participant

"Lina Maria and Arvinder were incredible! ...The information in Learn to Thrive is **different than other PCS group...** All info was so useful and **everything is easy to apply to everyday life.**"

R.B. Learn to Thrive Participant

"Learn to Thrive helped me to learn and remember **how to focus on the positive aspects of my life** instead of all that I have lost... I am so fortunate to have been able to participate in this program and am **very grateful for all of the positivity it has brought back to my life!!** — S.V. Learn to Thrive Participant

"I am amazed at **how much I am learning, how much better I am feeling and how much I am enjoying** my Learn to Thrive sessions. ...I highly recommend the Learn to Thrive program." — S.A.T., Learn to Thrive Participant



Coming Soon



- An Online Community and continued programming beyond the 9 weeks
- A self-study online program
- More program options to reach a wider community



Affiliate Partner Clinics

Funding applications can be processed through one of the following clinics:



Thank You!

Contact Us

thrive@reviveandthrivewellbeing.com

www.reviveandthrivewellbeing.com



Special thanks to Pranav Khatri!



Testimonials

"I am amazed at **how much I am learning, how much better I am feeling and how much I am enjoying** my Learn to Thrive sessions. Pedagogical strategies are fused succinctly with important facts dealing with our **brains, our emotions, our relationships and our post concussions**. These are all **integrated and reinforced with breakout groups, interesting weekly handouts, tasks, and even follow up e-mails** offering interesting articles and video clips to all. I highly recommend the Learn to Thrive program." — S.A.T., Participant

"Lina Maria and Arvinder were incredible! They **accommodated** me when needed and they were so **welcoming** and warm. The information in Learn to Thrive is **different than other PCS group** I've done which I'm so grateful for! All info was so useful and **everything is easy to apply to everyday life.**" - R.B. Participant

"I really enjoyed the program. It was **very well facilitated** and would recommend it to anyone who is struggling with post-concussion symptoms." - S.B. Participant



Testimonials Continued

"Learn to Thrive facilitators **promote a welcoming and supportive environment** for participants to learn coping strategies and share their challenges and experiences. The weekly learning videos are sent out to participants ahead of time, which helps them to come to their sessions with some **context and pre-learning**. Everyone's **individual experiences and comfort levels are acknowledged, respected, and supported**. Being part of this group made me feel **less alone and isolated in what I was experiencing**. I walked away from this program **feeling more positive** and better prepared to handle the daily challenges that I face due to PCS. I highly recommend this program to individuals with PCS." - N.S. Participant

"I'm really grateful that I did this program. It was really important for me because **I felt less alone in my situation**. It's hard when people in my life are disbelieving or misunderstanding what I'm dealing with. But in this program, **I felt comfortable** knowing there's other people with similar problems. It was really helpful to use the strategies that were given and to listen to the meditations each week. Thank you very much for all your time and help! :)" - M.G.

Participant



Testimonials Continued

“Learn to Thrive helped me to learn and remember how to focus on the positive aspects of my life instead of all that I have lost as a result of post-concussion syndrome. Arvinder and Lina are absolutely the kindest and most supportive leaders who are highly skilled in what they do. It has been less than 2 weeks since Learn to Thrive ended and I miss everything about it already! I am so fortunate to have been able to participate in this program and am very grateful for all of the positivity it has brought back to my life!! ”

-S.V. Learn to Thrive Participant

