



CHOMP WOMEN'S BEGINNERS RUNNING COURSE

During 2020, our Chomp mums were telling us that they were feeling sluggish and unhealthy because of the Covid related lockdowns. So, in September 2020, Chomp partnered with Brighton and Hove Women's Running Club to run an 8-week beginners running course. Here is an interview with one participant – Amel.



Amel, why did you sign up to do the course?

Other than the health benefits that comes with continuous exercise on physical, mental and emotional health, my aim was to:

- Connect and be part of a like-minded community
- Help with stress relief, emotional strain and mild depression
- Increase confidence and self-esteem
- Improve my energy level and work towards achieving a specific goal

And last but not least... have fun!

How did you feel in that first session?

Excited and terrified after a long period of all activity interruption due to difficult personal circumstances. I'd lost all confidence in my abilities and was also very body self-aware.

My concerns soon faded away when meeting with the smiling, relaxed and friendly group members and amazing sport coaches Amanda and George who provided exceptional guidance, support, a weekly training plan and post-session assessments.

I felt so welcomed and encouraged.



Describe the impact of the course on your physical and mental health

It gave me a focus and a sense of purpose; I felt good about myself again. It helped me to:

- Control stress and release mental tension
- Lessen the expressions of depression by being exposed to the outdoor air and light/sunshine
- Feel calmer and more capable of coping with tough times
- Boost brain power and improve planning, thinking and decision making
- Improve my sleep patterns and rest routines.

The inner peace and happiness I feel after exercising is liberating!

Do you think women in particular need the support of a club to start running?

In my case it was vital. I gained discipline, learnt to run the right way and prevent injuries.

I enrolled in the **CENTURION 10k walk/run** in October 2020. And achieved the distance in just under 2 hours. I cherish and look at my medal and certificate every time I need a bit of motivation to go running. I am now a registered athlete with British Athletics.... unthinkable in a million years.

What would you say to other women who are nervous about running?

It took a leaflet posted by Chomp to turn my life around.

Not only I began to see physical benefits but also my mental health, self-esteem and cognitive function improved.

The support from all women staff and coaches is outstanding. The team is made of like-minded, non-judgmental people.



I am ever so grateful for the opportunity and can't thank you all at CHOMP for your work to help women take charge of their lives and make the positive change they need.

Amel

Big shout out to: Rerunclothing.org who provided us with trainers