

THE ELOWEN PROJECT

An illustration of a large building with a roof covered in yellow sticky notes. The sticky notes are arranged in a grid pattern, with some missing, revealing the brown roof tiles underneath. Two white figures are walking on the roof, and another white figure is walking on the ground in the foreground. The building has a wooden fence in front of it, and a window is visible on the right side.

WHERE THE
JOURNEY STARTS

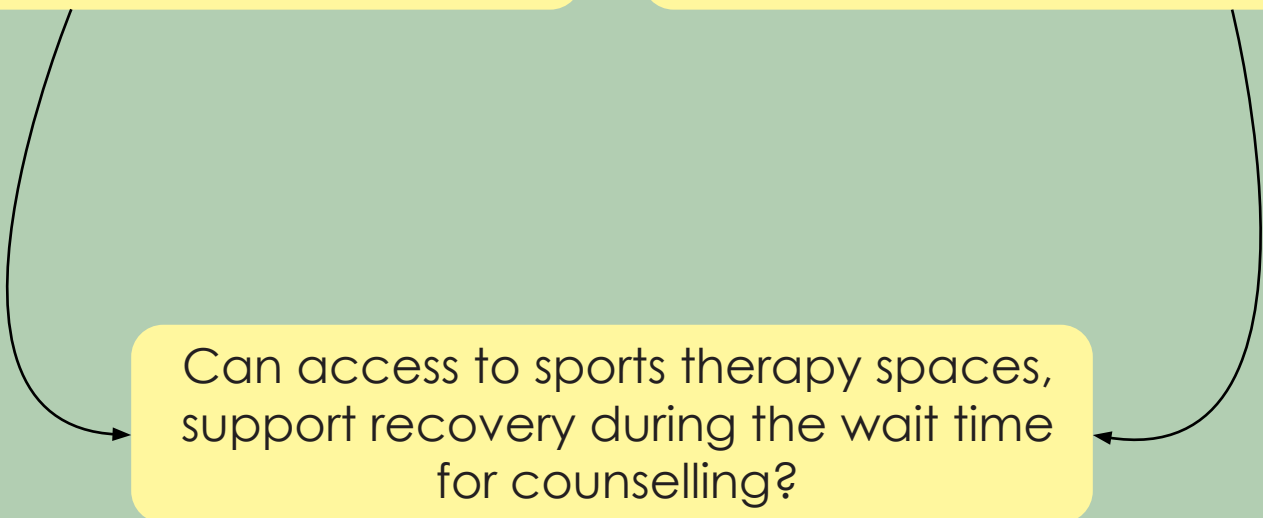
THE PROBLEM

It can take up to 1 year on a SARC waitlist before you receive treatment. 1 year of feeling stuck, scared, and alone. 1 year that could make a difference in the start of someone's journey.

In **2020**, the BBC reported that over **6,000 people** were on a waiting list for Rape Crisis services in England and Wales (BBC News, 2020). In **2023**, this figure had risen and Jayne Butler, chief executive of Rape Crisis, claimed there was now **14,000 people** on the waiting lists (Smith, 2023).

Sport has become unattainable for the normal person. There are less leisure centres for the population demand. Sport has also become a means for capitalist gains, expensive memberships (Existing sports facilities in Stretford), expensive match tickets (Manchester United Football), expensive participation (Manchester Marathon).

Sport is used by the NHS as a means of therapy, however it is currently not utilised as much as other forms. But sport can be used for good, to improve mental health. So why don't we use it?



Can access to sports therapy spaces, support recovery during the wait time for counselling?

THE SOLUTION

A redefined accessible leisure centre, focusing on low impact mindful sports, such as yoga and pilates, for those women who are on the SARC waitlist. The centre will use Biophilic principles to connect the users back to nature, a key element for improving mental health and wellbeing.

The Design Drivers:

If someone feel **STUCK**, I want them to be able to **MOVE**

If someone feels **SCARED**, I want to provide them the **PRIVACY** to feel safe.

If someone feels **ALONE**, I want them to **PLAY** in a community to rediscover that trust.

The Aim:

To reduce the effect of the waiting time on patients, so therapy can be more focussed on trauma therapy and therefore reduce the number of sessions someone may need. The hope is to reduce the effects of depressions and anxiety during the wait and reconnect women to their bodies with physical movement.



MOVE

What are the movement factors in this space:

1

Firstly, this is a space for mindful movement. An active space that breathes with the user. Natural locally sourced materials, such as English green oak, Douglas fir plywood and sheepswool insulation, helps to ventilate heat and reduce humidity.

2

How someone moves through the building is important for accessibility and inclusivity. Large paths move around and through the building, following desire paths from the site. All wheelchair accessible, with the paths gradually ramping down around to the entrances, with clear posters and signage to guide the way.

3

This is kinetic architecture, a building that moves with the environment. When the sun shines (if the sunshines!), a glass reinforced fibre polycarbonate shell will change colour, this colour will follow the sun around the building through the day. When the wind blows, this same shell will wave and flutter. When it rains, the shells water reactive element will show a new pattern. The same building, a different look every time you see it.

Why is this important?

1

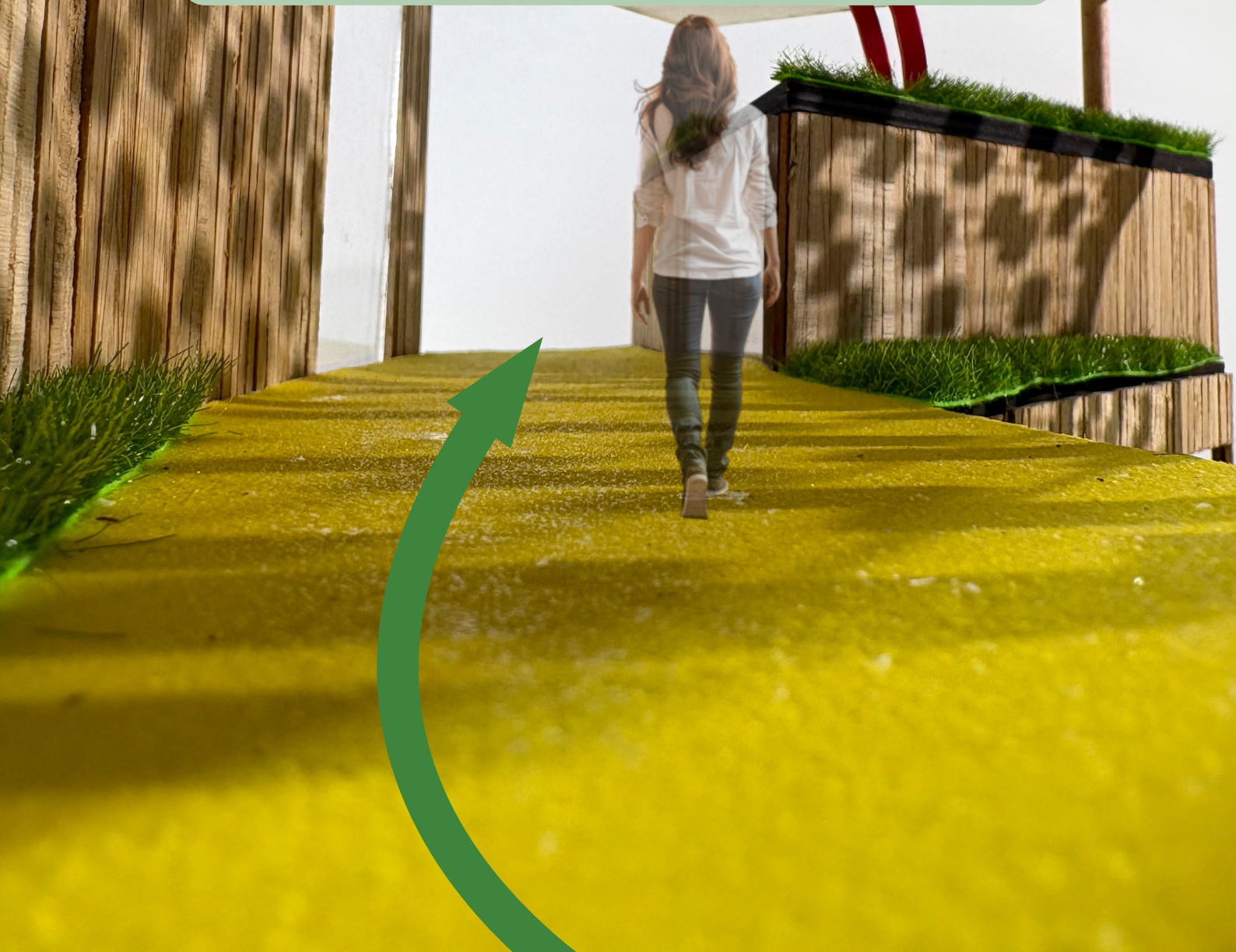
Natural materials helps to ventilate, heat and reduce humidity. Additionally they further a biophilic connection to nature which is known to improve mental health and wellbeing.

2

No matter who you are, and what disability you may have, having access to sports facilities should be possible. Improving movement in and around the site for everyone attracts more users, as well as create as a welcome space.

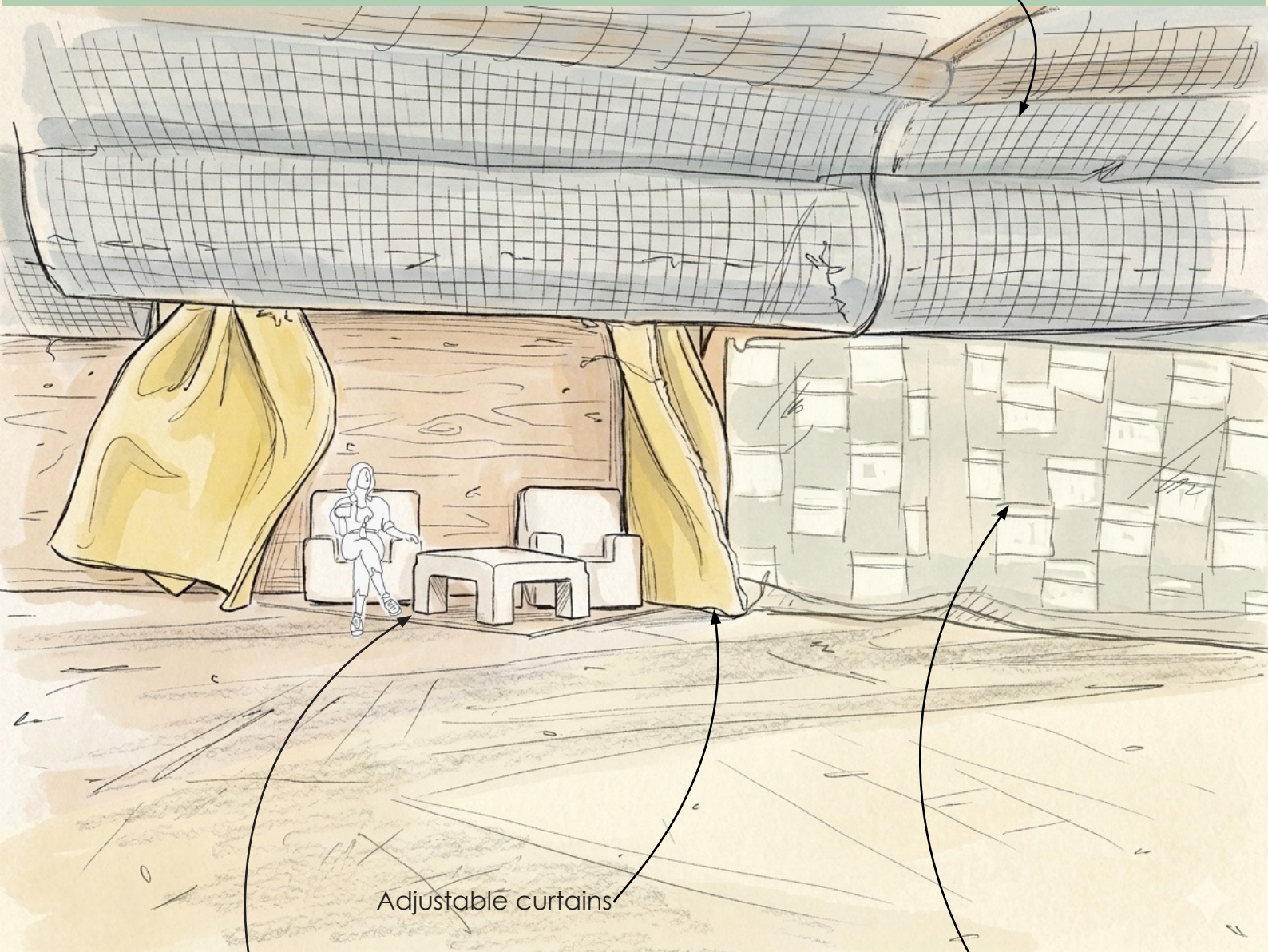
3

Having a shell that moves creates excitement but also increases trust by changing the way it looks eachtime someone visits, knowing that the same outcome is on the inside even when the outside isn't as they expected.



PRIVACY

Viscous textiles draped over ceiling



Adjustable curtains

Private Space

Viscous curtain allowing soft light in and stares out

What are the main privacy interventions?

1

Smaller private spaces should be provided to allow for private moments or smaller calming spaces

2

Textiles are used as a screen, opaque viscous in front of the windows

3

The textiles allow for corridors in the building to be under active surveillance, so no one is ever alone.

Why are these factors important?

1

Privacy is an important factor in this space, but is also dependent on personal needs. Flexibility of textile elements therefore help to provide **small pockets of private spaces** as well as allow for open spaces to form.

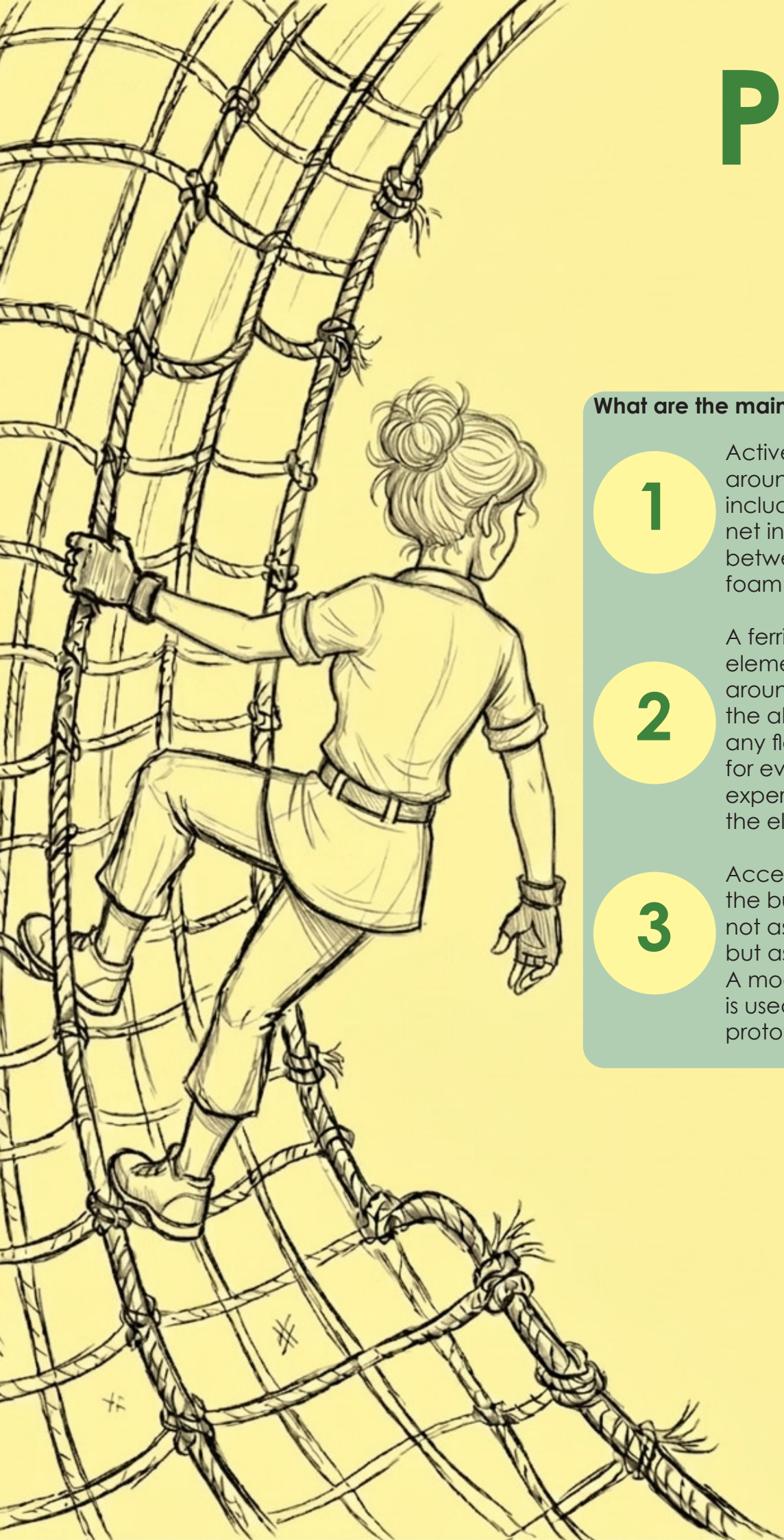
2

Opaque curtains allow for softened light to gently flood the space whilst blocking out any unwanted stares.

3

The **larger spaces can be broken into smaller zones** using curtains as walls, being changed for classes, times or at individual choice. Active surveillance of spaces increases reassurance and reduces possibility of crimes.

PLAY



What are the main factors of play?

1

Active and playful ways around the building are included. For example, a net inside the gym to get between the floors, with a foam pit at the bottom.

2

A ferris wheel is a central element to go on a journey around the building, with the ability to get off on any floor. This is accessible for everyone, a more fun experience than just using the elevator!

3

Accessible fun ways around the building are important, not as a second thought but as a primary function. A modified fireman's pole is used in the plans for the prototype building.



Why is play important?

1

To play and be adventurous is skills we learnt as children, to learn and make friends. It can also be utilised in adulthood, to regain your sense of trust and adventure. It can help you connect with others in the space, to laugh together.

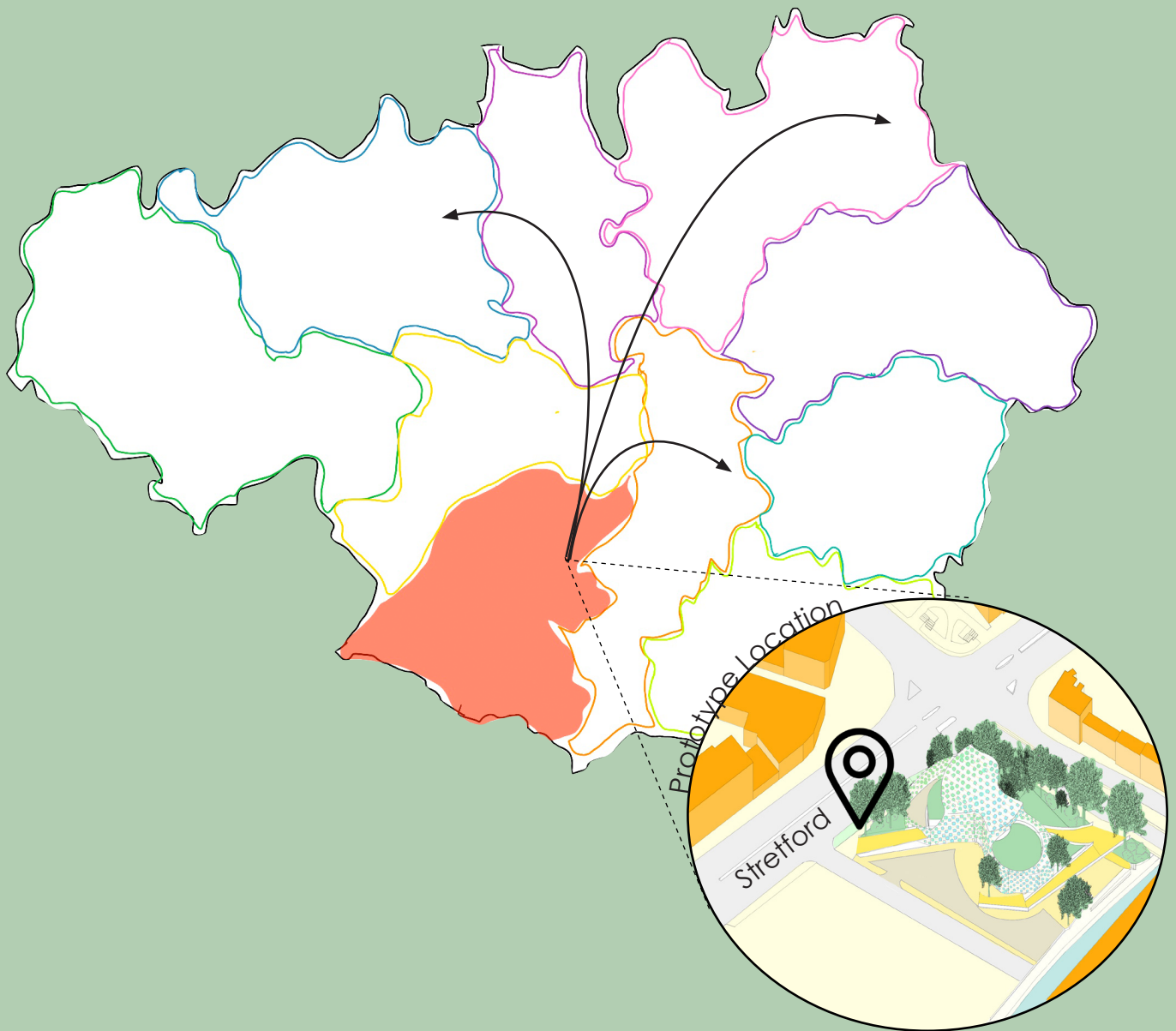
2

Views from the path that runs through the building will show you the ferris wheel turning, in the public areas of the building. This sparks excitement and curiosity from those who walk by.

3

Accessibility of this building is not a second thought because 3.7% of disabled adults aged 16 to 59 years experienced any sexual assault (including attempts), compared with 1.9% of non-disabled adults (Davis, 2019)

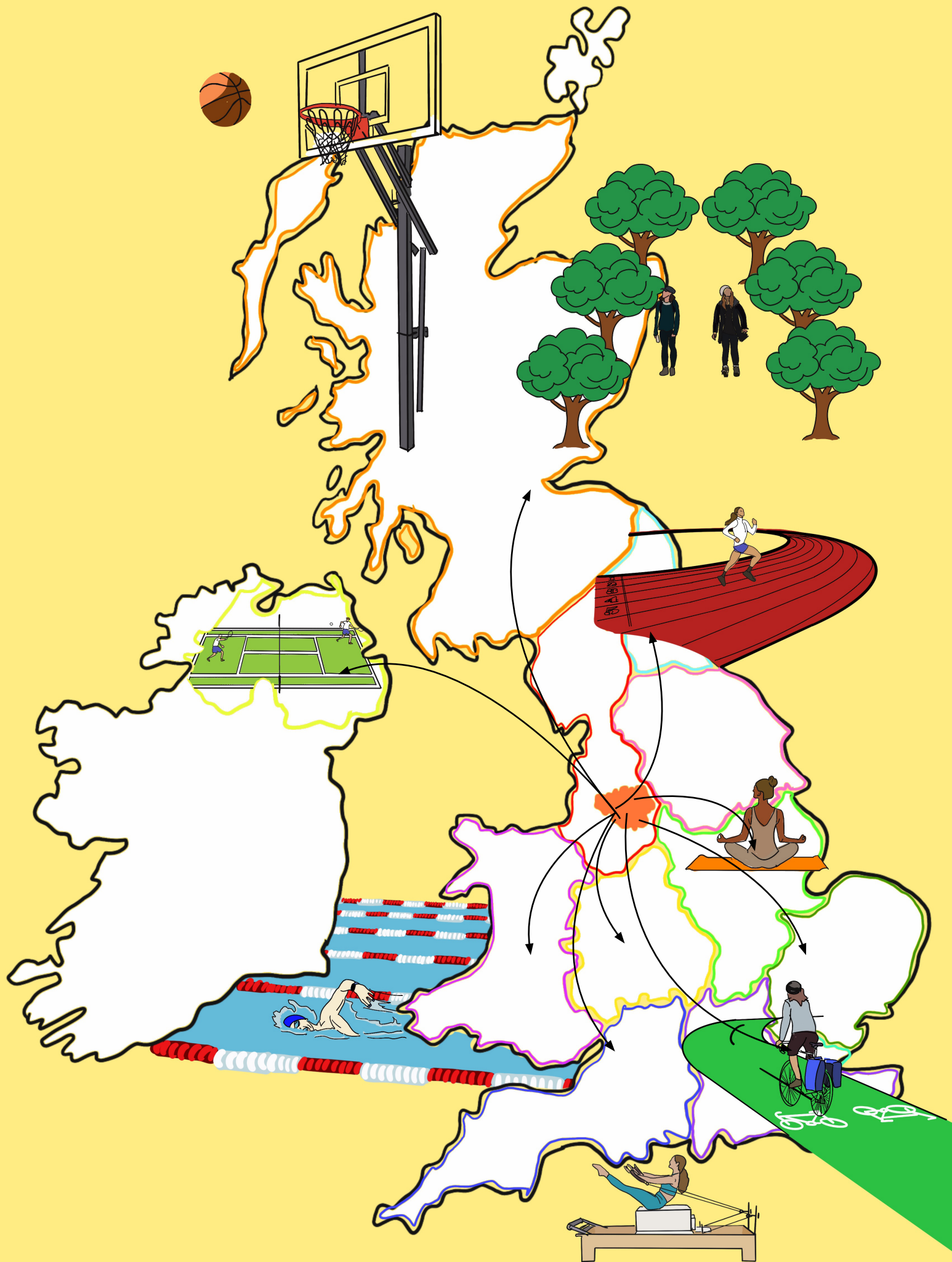
THE POTENTIAL



This site can be used as a prototype for what can be achieved throughout greater Manchester and the rest of the UK. Different locations can house different sports, some as mindful sports and others as cardio sports (such as run tracks and swimming pools). All with the aim to give people on wait lists something to do as they wait.

Providing this centre will:

- Reduce the pressure on NHS mental health services for emergency intervention
- Promote health and fitness in line with Trafford Moving Strategy
- Improvement of sleep quality, body positivity and ownership, distraction from rumination and reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression, therefore requirement for potentially less sessions in therapy and faster moving waiting lists.







**START
YOUR
JOURNEY**