

Going to a conference, starting a new course, if you are a little worried read further...

I (Helen Motteram) remember attending my first few courses and I'm going to tell you a little secret, I was so worried! What will they think of me? Who will I talk to?

But meeting offline, whether it be a conference is good for the soul, forms connections and when it comes to practical courses, you really can't beat them. It's important to remember we are all in a similar boat. We are all keen to make the most of the experience but feeling a little apprehensive.

So, here's a few tips to boost your confidence and make the MOST out of events and offline learning!

- I like to find out who is going before the event, being a little shy in big groups at times, this boosts my confidence, to meet people outside the event, even car share.
- I often post on the event to see who's going and do a little introduction!
- I like to plan my route, know the break times, and get an ideal of the event facilities.
- You'll need time to process new information, so note taking is essential, you can let it sink in slowly for weeks after.
- Ensure you've covered for extra time (note taking rewatching).
- Invest in extra time to get to know the speakers, their topics before and after the event.
- Don't put too much pressure on yourself, it's ok to take a break or go to a quiet area at the location.
- Remember to reconnect with people you've met afterwards.
- Bring your own snacks and drinks, you'll never know if you'll need extras!
- You can always reach out to the speaker beforehand if you have any particular needs or are feeling a little anxious (I've done this many times).