

# Wellbeing Week

## “Тиждень підтримки”

Five Evenings of Community Mental Health Support

23-27 February 2026 | Online via Microsoft Teams | Free & Open to All

In February 2026, OPORA delivered its first dedicated Wellbeing Week — five consecutive evenings of free, online therapeutic sessions for displaced Ukrainians across the UK. The timing was intentional: the week coincided with the third anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine — a period many in the community find particularly difficult emotionally. Each evening featured a different format and facilitator, creating a week-long journey of support, reflection, and community connection. The programme drew over 380 registrations and reached more than 228 unique attendees across the five sessions.



**Total registrations across all sessions: 385+**

### Programme Overview

<b>Mon 23/02</b>	Stabilisation Group <i>Iryna Sachenko — Gestalt Therapist, BACP Member</i>	<b>63</b> /98 registered
<b>Tue 24/02</b>	Support Circle + Breathing <i>Anna Nohol — Clinical Psychologist, PhD</i>	<b>49</b> /68 registered
<b>Wed 25/02</b>	Open Conversations with Psychologist <i>Maryana Petryk — Psychologist</i>	<b>42</b> /68 registered
<b>Thu 26/02</b>	Art Practice: My Source of Strength <i>Olha Voychuk — Somatic Experiencing</i>	<b>41</b> /78 registered
<b>Fri 27/02</b>	Visualisation: Resource & Hope <i>Tetyana Malko — Existential Psychologist</i>	<b>33</b> /73 registered

### Why This Programme Matters

Three years into displacement, Ukrainian refugees in the UK face a new phase of mental health challenges. The acute crisis has passed, but chronic isolation, grief, identity questions, and visa uncertainty persist. OPORA's 2025 community survey found that **71% struggle to communicate with others** and **65% feel hopeless**. The anniversary of the full-scale invasion is a particularly difficult time — many experience heightened grief, guilt, and anxiety in the days around 24 February. Wellbeing Week was designed to address this directly — offering a free, low-barrier, culturally grounded space for people who might not yet be ready for individual therapy but need community and support.

Each evening was designed as a standalone session — accessible to anyone, with no commitment required. The open format meant that people could join one evening or all five, making it genuinely accessible to those with complex schedules, caring responsibilities, or high anxiety about group settings.

## Participant Feedback & Outcomes

Following Wellbeing Week, OPORA collected feedback from participants through an anonymous survey. Responses revealed meaningful shifts in emotional wellbeing and consistent themes across all five sessions.



**Average improvement: +2.8 points** — a 74% increase in self-reported emotional wellbeing.

## What Participants Valued Most

- Not feeling alone: The most consistent theme across all sessions — participants found comfort in hearing others' experiences and recognising shared feelings.
- Safe space to speak: Many noted that the Ukrainian-language setting, without fear of judgement, was uniquely valuable.
- Practical tools: Breathing techniques, grounding exercises, and somatic practices were particularly appreciated.
- Community connection: Several participants reported forming meaningful peer connections that extended beyond the sessions.
- Accessible format: The open, no-commitment structure made it possible for people who couldn't attend every evening to still benefit.

## Voices from the Community

*"Through the Support Circle, I found a sense of understanding that eased my feelings of isolation. The sessions noticeably reduced my anxiety and gave me the opportunity to look at my own challenges from different perspectives. Your work makes a meaningful difference."*

**— Iryna T., Wellbeing Week participant**

*"I want to thank the OPORA team for this wonderful project. It is so warm and peaceful after these meetings — hearing the girls, their pain and experience, and the psychologist's comments. It helps me understand myself and find calm. A light appears."*

**— Iryna O., Wellbeing Week participant**

## Reported Changes After Participation

- One participant registered with a psychologist for individual therapy after feeling the need for support through the group
- Multiple participants reported a reduction in anxiety and feeling of loneliness
- Participants described gaining perspective — realising others share similar experiences
- Several noted improved emotional regulation through breathing and somatic techniques
- One participant described feeling 'a light appearing' and a growing sense of stability