Luke Calver 0:16

This podcast has been brought to buy uhi and the Careers and Employability team. My name is Luke calver. And in this episode, we'll be focusing on the BSc Psychology degree, showcasing one of the many career paths you could take after graduating. I am joined by Amy Hendon, who is a graduate assistant for the degree as well as alum, Wilma goodlad, who will be talking about their career. Over to you, Amy.

Amy Hendon 0:39

Thanks, Luke. Hello. Wilma, thank you very much for joining us. The first question I have really is them take some time to introduce yourself. Let us know what your you graduated. And then we'll move on to the next questions. But I'll hand it over to you.

Wilma Goodlad 0:52

Thanks to me, thanks for inviting me back. Good to be back at UHI. Again, because I am a graduate of that in the psychology department. I graduated with a BSc in psychology in 2020. And the I thoroughly enjoyed it I studied part time. So it took me a period of seven years to do my degree. And it was the second time in my career that I had come to psychology, because I had been a teacher, all my working life. And I had studied a little bit of Psychology at the outset of that. But that's that's my I should also see me that I did my studies in the Shetland Islands. So I could not have done this BSC had it not been online, I couldn't have left my home and Shetland to go on to the mainland to study. So it worked so well for me being a remote student.

Amy Hendon 1:46

And so in terms of your career path, you said that you were a teacher before you came on to this degree. Could you tell us about any current roles that you're doing right now that may have sort of come about through your psychology degree at all?

Wilma Goodlad 1:57

Yes, certainly. I continue to teach part time when I was studying for my degree. And it added some up to date research, especially on topics like neuro diversity that I could share with other colleagues and my students. But during my degree for psychology, I started volunteering for the local branch of Samaritans for Shetland Samaritans. They were looking for other people to become listeners. And I felt it was a perfect match for working alongside that volunteer group along at the same time a study in psychology and behaviour. So I volunteer trained with that at the same time as studying for psychology, and became a listening volunteer. And then I graduated, I stopped teaching. But within a few months of graduating, it was a bit of a fertile wind with the pandemic going on. I reinstated myself a re registered as a teacher, because there was such shortages and teaching that time, and our branch director of the Samaritans left and Shetland. And I was appointed to become the next director of the shepherd and Samaritans branch, just six months after graduating. So that is my current role. I am still doing a bit of part time supply teacher. But most of my work at the moment is as director of Chef and Samaritans. In fact, I've been in the local branch today of the USI and heightening awareness of our charity and adult emotional health. That's why I've worn my T shirt. I know you can't see that Samaritans t shirt right now.

Amy Hendon 3:44

Oh, wow. So did you say six months after you graduated you

Wilma Goodlad 3:51

immediately after I graduated, because we were in the pandemic by them. I graduated in June, July. And we'd been in the pandemic since February that year, I'd leave registered as a teacher because I could see there was a shortage of teaching. I felt I had skills and knowledge I'd built up in my degree. And I felt I should go back into teaching. So I did that immediately after graduating because I had retired from my teacher. And I carried on as a listing volunteer. But six months after my graduation, I was appointed to be director of Shetland Samaritans.

Amy Hendon 4:30

Wow. That sounds like a fantastic role. And can you give us an idea of sort of the main responsibilities in your role? Is there any particular aspects of your job that you really enjoy that that you can see sort of a direct link towards psychology at all?

Wilma Goodlad 4:45

Yes, definitely. In psychology is a wonderful subject. It's a very valuable subject and all sorts of work and in life, but it really does the knowledge that I gained, the skills that I gained, really usually helps me in my work with Samaritans. My main work with Samaritans is as a listener. So I listened to people who call us. But as director, I'm responsible for organising our branch with 20 volunteers. So there's quite a bit of motivating of other people going on, they're reaching out into the community, sometimes a bit of feeding into research Samaritans does its own research. I'm not directly involved in that. But there was a very interesting piece of work done by Scottish Samaritans on self harm. And it was commissioned, I think, by the Scottish Government, it was Samaritans that did it. So I've been really interested in picking up on that and the skills that I developed the scientific skills that I developed and reading research papers and so on, I can see that I have been able to use that and get a lot from that, that has crossed over into this this work with Samaritans and then being able to have my voice heard in meetings, and then put in bids for grants. These are all statistical skills that were transferred from my psychology degree. So it's been, it's been excellent for that. Definitely. No,

Amy Hendon 6:23

that's fantastic to hear. And I think it's really good to hear about the different avenues where the Samaritans I mean, a lot of people that are in the psychology degree right now being volunteer, as a listener, but to know that they also do research. And there's there's other opportunities within this role. That, as you said, directly relate to psychology is fantastic. And you talked a little bit transferable skills there. But going back to sort of this psychology degree, in terms of your teaching, I know you said that you went back up there just as a teacher, and you said that you noticed some changes, what specifically sort of did you notice as a change before your psychology degree to after and a teaching sort of role?

Wilma Goodlad 6:59

Well, as teachers, we are registered with something called the general teaching Council of Scotland. So we have to be registered with that body. And before we can teach, and the general teaching Council of Scotland, we're happy to accept that modules in particular that I had studied as being part of my career development, modules and forestiere, such as food and behaviour, developmental disorders, there was a module called abnormal behaviour. Now, I don't know if it's still called that. That name didn't sit very well with me when I was in fourth year. So I would have, I hope it's changed there was talk about that change in there. And, of course, as a teacher, we have to be really aware that children come in all ranges of attributes. And it's a very diverse group of people that we're teaching. So the module on developmental work, cognition and developmental work, was really very interesting and very, very relevant to me on that. And something that I noticed too, going back into teaching is that quite rightly, that is a more of an awareness of children, the importance of promoting good mental health amongst children, and adults working with children quite rightly know what a lot we're aware of the importance of supporting young people emotionally, and then helping young folk to develop resilience, and take care of themselves and their friends emotionally know, that said, directly in from my psychology learning, because so much of the learning was all about that. And not just the learning, but my own experience. In my fourth year, a lot of things collided for me personally, and also in my studies. And my pa t at the time, recommended that I speak to the student counselling service. So I had a couple of support sessions with the student counselling service, which was excellent. And so I took that learning on self reflection. That's the first time I had had that in my life. But, oh, I would have benefited from that 40 years ago. But that wasn't available. So I'm quite open about that. And I took that back into my classroom too. So that was like an unexpected bonus from me doing this BSc in psychology.

Amy Hendon 9:33

No, that's fantastic. Thank you for sharing that as well. I think it's not just necessarily the learning resources and the assignment side of things. It's the whole experience of a psychology degree that, as you've said, there's a plethora of sort of transferable skills across the board. I mean, you work with Samaritans but you're also in the education realm. You can sort of have different avenues and psychology seems to sort of overarch a lot of different areas within your career. I guess the other thing as well as advice for students we're really interested to know. So like you've said, you had your own personal experiences, would you have any advice for other students? Maybe going through the psychology degree right now, or people thinking about joining, and any advice to them at all would be would be greatly appreciated?

Wilma Goodlad 10:16

Yeah, of course, well, because it's a science degree, there's a lot of statistical work in there, don't be put off by that. Just do not be jump in and avail yourself of this extra support that is in the UI to build up on your statistical knowledge. Because that was something that kind of daunted me. And I thoroughly enjoyed it, I surprised myself at how much I learned from that and how much I enjoyed how much I'm still using that side of it. So do not be put off by that. Another piece of advice was given to me, which was invaluable was given by my P A T. Shirt advised me that since as I had no biology, or physics or chemistry in my background, or anatomy, she suggested that I do the anatomy module in my second year, I think it was an option. I did that anatomy and physiology, I studied that module. Because these are two plants within our psychology degree that you really have to be aware of the methodology with the statistics, but also the amount of biology and anatomy that you will, you'll get more from your degree, if you have a little bit of a background in that now you maybe have higher biology or equivalent of that in chemistry or physics, I didn't. So I found that module invaluable. So these are two subject areas that I would say, Hang on to that, another piece of advice. Don't let somebody else do all the talking for you. Speak up every chance you have and whether it's residential, or a postgraduate, if you're asked to talk, think to yourself, yes, I could do that, as well as anybody could. A lightbulb moment for me was in third year in one of the residentials. And there were a group of 12 of us discussing a paper on neurons, I think it was I can't remember. And 12 of us, one of us was a meal, and the other 11 were female. And he was a very pleasant person. But we all sort of hung back and let the male in the room feedback on our tutorial. And Dr. Wendy Olinsky. She was happy with that work. But she came right in there. And she said, Look, statistically, there were 12 people in that room. And there was one of them. Emile, you your stem subject, and you all let the male person be your voice. Now that was a light bulb for me. I thought, yes. Write it off. Why did we vulgar tongues? Why did we let the man speak for us. So don't wait until you're my age before that light bulb is switched on. And find your voice you. All of you have got us important things to see as the next person. Find Your Voice use it respect for me. But use it with assurance. And if you don't feel confident, practice, practice and get comfortable hearing your own voice and keep on practising, you have as much to see as any of you does, and believe in yourself. So that's some of my advice. Also, be prepared for the unexpected. And be prepared for just be prepared for surprises in your learning journey.

Amy Hendon 13:41

No, definitely. No, that was fantastic advice. So much. I'm probably going to take myself. Thank you so much. Is there anything else that we haven't sort of covered in this chat at all about your experience about the course, the fact that it's sort of online, anything at all that you'd like to see as sort of a final thoughts or a final message,

Wilma Goodlad 14:01

it was all online, except for the residential. And of course, that happened before the life changing circumstances of the pandemic. So our university was right up there, preparing people for this new world of remote learning, and so on. So as well as psychology itself, the subject market itself being sought, relevant, and so valuable, and the way that we learned prepare this wealth for this modern way of working.

Amy Hendon 14:31

No, that's fantastic. It's really good point. But yeah, thank you very much. I have run out of questions. Thank you so much. We'll be back.

Wilma Goodlad 14:39

Back here. Thank you for asking me all the best to you all.

Luke Calver 14:44

Thank you very much, Amy and Wilma. We hope this podcast episode has been very helpful for you and has shown you a potential career path from the psychology degree. If you do have any questions about the degree do contact uhi. If you are a current student and have any questions on this career path, do contact The Careers team and we'll be able to help you out of any of your questions. Thank you very much for listening and thank you again Wilma, participating in this podcast episode