

Healthy Minds Newsletter

November & December 2015

Edition 25

Healthy Minds is Calderdale's only local, independent, mental-health charity, led by people with personal experience of mental distress.



PARENTING AND MENTAL HEALTH CONFERENCE SUCCESS

Healthy Minds Calderdale held a conference about Parenting and Mental Health at the Elsie Whiteley Innovation Centre in Halifax on Friday 9th October. The aim of the conference was to celebrate World Mental Health Day and to bring parents and professionals together. It was attended by approximately 100 people. Delegates said that highlights included "hearing from people and networking" and "personal stories".



Speakers included Clinical Psychologist Sam Warner, Katrina Jenkins from the Mental Health Foundation and parents with experience of using mental health services. People took part in workshops, debates and networking.

Delegates described the conference as "Informative, interesting and inspirational". They also said "it was absolutely brilliant!", that it "felt inspired and productive" and that "listening to service users and watching the film* was moving and gave a real element that was profound".



** You can view the Healthy Minds film here: <https://youtu.be/h-s29npxL1A> and also read a blog here: <http://tinyurl.com/of2sckx> by Dr Karen Newbigging, Senior Lecturer in Healthcare Policy and Management at Birmingham University. Karen was also a speaker at the conference.*

How to reach us . . .



0 1 4 2 2 3 4 5 1 5 4



firstname@healthymindscalderdale.co.uk or info@healthymindscalderdale.co.uk



<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Healthy-Minds/363179503737471?ref=hl>



<https://twitter.com/healthymindscw>



www.healthymindscalderdale.co.uk

New Allotment Group



“On your marks, get set, grow!”

Healthy Minds now have a full size plot at the Pye Nest Allotment in Sowerby Bridge. Anyone can attend who has an interest in: -

- **Improving and maintaining their mental, emotional and physical wellbeing**
- **Meeting new people in a friendly and safe environment**
- **Learning more about the benefits of growing (and eating) a variety of fruit, vegetables and herbs**

The group meet at the site every Monday 1-3pm

No previous allotment experience or knowledge is needed, just come along and see what there is to get involved in. Some of the tasks might include:-

- **Planting**
- **General maintenance of the site**
- **Bed/plot design**
- **Contribute ideas for seasonal crops**
- **Or you could become a volunteer**

For more information

Ring Nicola on 01422 345154 or 07985 750592

nicola@healthymindscalderdale.co.uk

If you are feeling nervous about coming along for the first time, a member of staff can meet you at a central location and accompany you to the group



Samaritans and Cruse Bereavement Care are offering free group support to help you understand your grief and cope with your loss.

Have you lost someone close to you to suicide?

THE SUPPORT GROUPS ARE:

- FREE
- RUN BY SAMARITANS & CRUSE BEREAVEMENT CARE FACILITATORS
- HELD OVER A SIX WEEK PERIOD, LASTING 90 MINUTES PER SESSION
- MADE UP OF A MAXIMUM OF EIGHT PEOPLE WITH TWO FACILITATORS
- AVAILABLE TO ANYONE OVER 18

For more information and to sign up, please visit facingthefuturegroups.org or call 0208 939 9560

Facing the  future
support for people bereaved by suicide

 SAMARITANS

 Cruse Bereavement Care

VOLUNTEER NEWS & VIEWS

All opinions expressed in News & Views are the author's own and do not necessarily express those of Healthy Minds

Mental Health and Negativity

by **Natasha Bodley**

When I think about my own mental health issues and how I have handled them in the past, I can see that when my health was at its unhealthiest, I found myself surrounded by negativity or negative people. My social circle usually was with people who self-medicate in the various ways a person can self-harm. I was also more likely to be drawn in to co-dependent and unhealthy relationships. My mental health rarely got better. I would struggle to get myself together and back into a cycle of mental wellness. All I ever wanted was to be accepting of myself and for others to accept me. It seems, in my opinion, that no matter what I do or don't do, some people will always try to put their imposing views about who *they* think I am, onto me. When I am mentally unwell, I am more sensitive. I take what people say to me personally, and it can really create havoc in my day-to-day life and in everything I do.

People are increasingly using technology and social media – it has made the world a smaller place and I've found that it can be harder to get on with my life and start a new chapter. I have had negative experiences from people who knew me when I was a teenager and who live in another continent who still try to goad me via social media and put me down or generally impose what I see as their problems/issues with *me* onto me. It has come across as rather aggressive at times. It affects my ability to do simple things. It feeds into my negative thoughts and I tend to fall back on old coping mechanism like isolating myself, having anxiety attacks along with different kinds of self-harmful thoughts.



I feel it is so important for a person who wants to maintain a healthy mind and body or who wants to become well again to meet up with likeminded people who will support a positive lifestyle. I can honestly say that I feel the benefits of this. I don't self-medicate anymore because I don't hang around certain people who I see as 'toxic'. These kind of people suck the energy out me, and won't let me forget how unwell I have been in my life.

These days, I go to groups and meet others who also want to live a better quality of life. There is an abundance of support groups, workshops, and courses available at Healthy Minds for people who are struggling with different mental health issues in Calderdale. I know from first-hand experience how difficult it can be to think about getting out of the house and going to a support group. The first step is always the hardest but once done half the battle is over. Why should I have to surround myself with negative attitudes and people who may or may not know that they are not helping my mental health? Indeed, I challenge you as a reader to ask yourself this very question! I have found that my mental health is at its optimum when I am engaging with likeminded people. People who want to better themselves without judgement.

Continued on the next page ...

HEALTHY MINDS VOLUNTEER NEWS

... continued from previous page

People that are supportive and helpful. Groups do help. I have found new ways of coping. Better ways of coping. Here are a few links to help you find a way to live a positive life and there is a link to my blog.

Here is a link to dealing with 'Toxic people' in your life: <http://www.heysigmund.com/toxic-people/>

Here is a link to a medley of quotes to take inspiration from on unwell days: <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/mental-illness>

Here is a link to my blog: <https://wordpress.com/posts/daisywillows.wordpress.com>



Change of Venue

Nic Etherington, our volunteer whose debut exhibition entitled 'Recovery' featured in the last newsletter has asked me to tell you her exhibition has moved to the Elsie Whiteley Innovation Centre, in Hopwood Lane, Halifax – just round the corner from Healthy Minds. This stunning photographic homage is the result of life-long fascination with beach-combing and is well worth a look. Why not pop along if you get the chance?

A Warm Welcome to...

Our new volunteers Nigat, Sarah, Sue, Tasha and Tony who have just completed their induction training. They are bringing a wealth of experience to the Healthy Minds team and have been a fun and dynamic group of people to train. We look forward to seeing them carve out their volunteer roles within Healthy Minds and wish them a warm, happy and productive experience!



HEALTHY MINDS AT CHRISTMAS

All opinions expressed in News & Views are the author's own and do not necessarily express those of Healthy Minds

Why I love Christmas Lights and Find They Help

By John Alan Ramsden (Volunteer Healthy Minds)

So the clocks have gone back and the dark nights are here. Seasonal Affective Disorder is something that a lot of people suffer at this time of year. It can last from September to April in some people and cause real problems such as depression.

I was walking through Cleckheaton the other evening about 8pm. I was doing some work for an organisation that I volunteer for within town, when it struck me that everything looked dark and rather unhappy. But at the same time there was a few workmen putting up the Christmas lights and it brightened up my spirits. The lights will be on by the time you read this as they were due to put them on, on the 14th of November.

These lights always cheer the place up and make it look lighter, brighter and colourful. Which in turn makes the whole place seem friendlier. There are the string lights that are hung across the roads, that change colour and the displays that depict elements such as snowflakes and things associated with Christmas. It definitely helps my mood when they are on and helps me cope with the stress of Christmas and this dark time of year.



Did You Know?...

Seasonal Affective Disorder (or SAD) is sometimes known as 'Winter Depression' as the symptoms are more apparent and tend to be more severe during the winter. Symptoms include low mood, lethargy and irritability. The exact cause of SAD isn't known but it is linked to reduced exposure to sunlight during the autumn and winter months. Around 30% of the population are thought to suffer with the condition to varying levels of severity.

HEALTHY MINDS VOLUNTEER NEWS

Why I Love the Snow

By John Alan Ramsden (Volunteer)

There is something about falling snow which is relaxing. For some reason the harder the snow seems to fall, the more it seems to have this effect on me. There is nothing better than sitting in a warm place watching huge flakes pass by the window – for some reason I find it very therapeutic. It seems to sooth my anxiety and depression and calms my mood.

There are other benefits that snow has. It lightens and brightens the environment which I find helpful on those dark winter nights. This can help with coping with Seasonal Affective Disorder. Snow is harder to walk in but that too can help with health issues. If it is harder to walk in then you will be exercising and burning more calories while doing it.

Snow has an aesthetic beauty when piled up in drifts or laying thick on the ground. It can make an eyesore look far better than it actually is. It is photogenic; trees especially look incredible after newly-fallen snow. It is great to get the camera out and take photos after a particular heavy fall. There are a lot of paintings that depict snow-covered landscapes. There is the social aspect as well. Children love to play in it by having snowball fights and building snowmen. In some parts of the world they take this further and build snow sculptures that can be made to look like practically anything. There are of course winter sports and the Winter Olympics takes centre stage every four years.

The press and media would have us believe that everything is bad for the economy when it snows. Apparently this is not case. According to economists, while some business does lose out short term, that loss is only temporary. Most recuperate that loss later. There also other areas of the economy that will gain. The BBC put an article about this in their magazine on Friday 15th January 2010 which is titled “*Is snow actually good for the economy?*” and can be found with the link below.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/8460245.stm>



Poetic Minds

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Below are a selection of poems by our volunteer Sue ...

Kaleidoscope

I was tired of living,
Frightened of a future
Which felt like this.
Each day unforgiving,
A monochrome world,
Full of shadows.
But I had to go on believing
That the pain would stop,
And colour return.
Surely I was deserving
Of some hope and joy.
And happiness.

And now I see a kaleidoscope
Of colours so bright.
A rainbow across my heart.
The future is full of hope,
Simple pleasure in all I do.
I see everything through a microscope,
Enlarged and glorious, floating on a crystal sea.
So heartfelt thanks to my family
For helping me to cope,
Come with me on my journey
To the rainbows end.

Did you know?...

Poetry Therapy is a recognised method of promoting health and well-being.

It goes as far back as the 4th millennium BC, when patients in Egypt literally ate their words, which were written on Papyrus.

These days, poetry can be used as a form of self-expression, full of imagery and metaphors that resonate with both writer and reader, illuminating the range of emotions otherwise hidden.

As Ted Hughes, local Mytholmroyd poet said, "What's writing really about? It's about trying to take fuller possession of the reality of your life."

INSOMNIA

I LONG TO SLEEP LIKE A BABY,
PURE, UNTRoubLED, DEEP.
INSTEAD I LIE HERE RESTLESS,
COUNTING SHEEP

SLEEP IS A HIDDEN TREASURE
OR SO IT SEEMS.
ALL I CAN MANAGE IS
VIVID DREAMS.

I TOSS AND TURN AND FIDGET,
COUNT THE HOURS TILL DAY BREAK.
ALL I CAN DO IS LIE HERE,
WIDE AWAKE.

Progress

And yet, the sun is warm and kind,
Tincture for a troubled mind.
Gentle rain to cleanse and freshen,
Lift the cloud of my depression.

A gentle breeze blows cobwebs away,
I feel a little better today.
Go for a walk in the countryside,
Or stand on the shore and watch the tide.

Listen to music, read a poem.
Get the healing rhythms flowing.
Dream in the moonlight, wish on a star,
Feeling relieved I've made it this far.

WALKING GROUP NEWS

Foray into Judy Woods

On 17th October, the Walk for Wellbeing group enjoyed its very first Saturday walk through Judy Woods.



Judy Woods, Wyke, is the third largest woodland in the Bradford District. The woods are named after a woman called Judy North, whose 19th century cottage stood near the bridge where this photograph was taken. Judy sold ginger beer, Parkin Pigs and sticks of spice to visitors to the woods – hence her nickname was ‘Stick O’Judy’. We had our largest ever turnout for this 2-hour walk, with lots commending the accessibility of a weekend group, and everyone clearly had a lovely time calling it very “relaxing and refreshing”. We were even able to enjoy our lunch in a perfectly timed window of magical autumnal sunshine!

Look out for details of our new 2016 walk timetable – COMING SOON!

Not into walking?

Why not make some Parkin Pigs instead?

Parkin Pig has been produced in Yorkshire since the Middle Ages. It's traditionally eaten on Bonfire Night.



Parkin Pig Recipe

4oz golden syrup
10oz sugar
4oz butter
16oz self-raising flour
2tsp ground ginger
1beaten egg

Melt the syrup, sugar and butter in a saucepan. Then add the other ingredients. Stir into a soft mass and roll out as quickly as possible. Cut into shapes and bake at 120 degrees for 10-15minutes. As soon as they are done cut into shapes using a pig cutter. Use a currant for an eye!

With thanks to Bernie



VOLUNTEER NEWS, VIEWS & REVIEWS!



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Snuggle into Christmas with a heart-warming festive film!



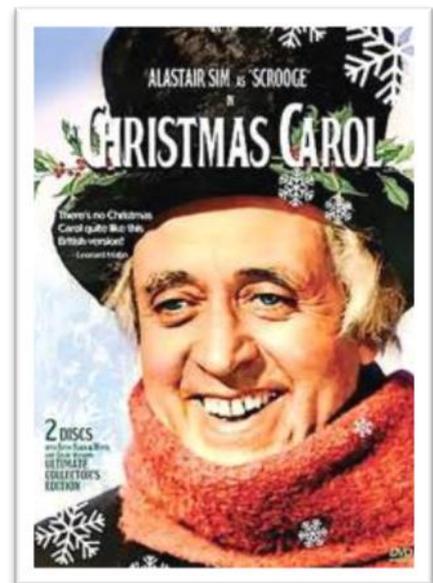
It's a Wonderful Life

It's a Wonderful Life is a really brilliant, feel-good movie that never ages - a Christmas film to cheer you up and help you re-evaluate your life or lifestyle. So, what happens? George Bailey (James Stewart) is a popular and well-liked man who falls on hard times and starts to feel desperate. Luckily, his Guardian Angel, Clarence, is sent to help and if he succeeds in his mission he will gain his Angel Wings!

With Clarence's help, George is shown what life would be like if he had never been born. Everything he's known has changed and the people he loves are hardened. George comes to his senses and, realising the wonderful things in his life, peace is restored.

Christmas Carol

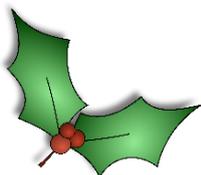
There are many lessons to be learnt from this film adaptation of the timeless classic by Charles Dickens. Ebenezer Scrooge (Alistair Sim) is a miser and a miserable man who never celebrates the joys and spirit of Christmas (Bah Humbug!). At 12 o'clock midnight on Christmas Eve, three spirits visit Ebenezer one by one in an attempt to show him the error of his ways. The ghosts of Christmas past, present and future appear to him and show him visions of his faults. When he wakes the next morning, on Christmas Day, he is a changed man, a kinder man, buying food for his poor employee Bob Cratchit and his family, including of course, Tiny Tim! What a happy ending!



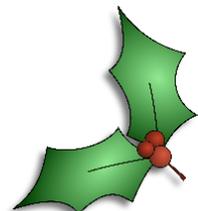
MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE!

Sheila

A FEW OTHER FESTIVE FAVOURITES FOR YOU TO ENJOY!...



- Miracle on 34th Street
- Elf
- White Christmas
- The Snowman
- Love Actually



Take a Break!

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Flex your Mind with the Healthy Minds Wordsearch...

P H Y P P A H E D L T Y L D O
A T N D D J D Q E O F A I X O
N G P S E Y F T P C W S E Z T
I N A V T T H O P E C N Z R S
C E T N O I S S E R P E D K G
J R H S F Q G U I J D Z C K O
Z T G W M E C M A N W A H E O
Y S I R W P I N A H T T G V D
Y H R M X N A T X T X L B Y S
F N U A A C P I A F H E B E F
X E R T W O R R I E S Q V Z F
W B I M A X V S W Z U I W V V
G O Y L S N M C O I G D Q Y F
N Q S Y N C S B T F J C Q Q U
X J J B B F B E K A R U X N I

ATTACKS
DOWN
GOOD
HOPE
QUITE
STRENGTH

DEPRESSION
EXHAUSTED
GREAT
LET
RIGHT
WORRIES

DISCRIMINATION
GIVE
HAPPY
PANIC
STIGMA

Compiled by Bernie.

VOLUNTEER NEWS, VIEWS & CARTOONS!

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'Alcohol' by Artist and Volunteer Zeke



Did you Know?...

Alcohol is a depressant. While that first drink can have a positive impact on our mood, the more alcohol is consumed the more likely it is that the initially pleasurable feelings will turn to anger, aggression, anxiety or depression. Over time, if we drink heavily and regularly we are likely to experience low mood and feelings of depression because drinking interferes with the neuro-transmitters in our brains that are needed for good mental health while also lowering the levels of serotonin – our feel-good chemical.



Recommended weekly intake: Women = 14 units Men=21units

LISTINGS

free



events

LISTINGS

DECEMBER/JANUARY

DECEMBER

DAY/DATE	WHERE	CONTACT
Tuesday 1st		
1-3	Disability Group St George's House, Lilac St, Lee Mount, HX	Just turn up or call Kath
Wednesday 2nd		
6-8pm	Recovery Group (closed group) For people who have done the Recovery course	Call Nicola
Monday 7th		
2-4	Bi-Polar Group Fielden Centre, Todmorden	Just turn up or call Lou
1-3	Allotment Group Pye Nest allotments	Call Nicola
Tuesday 8th		
12.30-2.30	Anxiety and Depression Group Saint Mary's Church, Elland, HX5 0RU	Just turn up or call Nicola
2-4	Wellbeing Works Group St Paul's Church, Sowerby Bridge	Just turn up or call Lou
Wednesday 9th		
12.30-2.30	Men's Group Victoria Theatre, Halifax	Just turn up or call Lou
Thursday 10th		
11-1	Chronic Pain Group Noah's Ark, Ovenden	Just turn up or call Kath
12.30-2.30	Self Harm Group Victoria Theatre, HX	Just turn up or call Nicola
6pm-8	Anxiety & Depression Group Hebden Bridge Town Hall	Just turn up or call Kath
Friday 11th		
10.30-12.30 approx	Walk for Wellbeing: Sowerby Bridge to Healthy Minds Allotment. Meet Sowerby Bridge Market café at 10.15am	Booking essential & in case of cancellation
Monday 14th		
1-3	Depression Group Noah's Ark, Ovenden	Just turn up or call Lou
1-3	Allotment Group Pye Nest allotments	Call Nicola
5.30-7.30	Forum Meeting Orange Box, Halifax	Call Tamsin
Tuesday 15th		
1-3	Disability Group St George's House, Lilac St, Lee Mount, HX	Just turn up or call Kath
2-4	Wellbeing Works Group St Paul's Church, Sowerby Bridge	Just turn up or call Lou
Weds 16th		
12.30-2.30	Men's Group Victoria Theatre, Halifax	Just turn up or call Lou
6-8	Recovery Group (closed group) For people who have done the Recovery course	Call Nicola



for info on all events call 01422 345 154





LISTINGS free events LISTINGS

DECEMBER/JANUARY

Thurs 17th		
	Healthy Minds Winter Party! Green Room, Victoria Theatre, Halifax	YOU MUST RING AND BOOK. LIMITED PLACES.
Monday 21st		
2-4	Bi-Polar Group Fielden Centre, Todmorden	Just turn up or call Lou
1-3	Allotment Group Pye Nest allotments	Call Nicola
Tues 22nd		
12.30-2.30	Anxiety and Depression Group St Mary's church, Elland	Just turn up or call Nicola
2-4	Wellbeing Works Group St Paul's Church, Sowerby Bridge	Just turn up or call Lou
Weds 23rd		
12.30-2.30	Men's Group VIP room, Victoria Theatre, Halifax	Just turn up or call Lou

JANUARY 2016

DAY/DATE	WHERE	CONTACT
Monday 4th		
2-4	Bi-Polar Group Fielden Centre, Todmorden	Just turn up or call Lou
Tuesday 5th		
1-3	Disability Group St George's House, Lilac St, Lee Mount, HX	Just turn up or call Kath
Wednesday 6th		
6-8pm	Recovery Group (closed group) For people who have done the Recovery course	Nicola
Thursday 7th		
6-8pm	Anxiety and Depression Group Hebden Bridge Town Hall HX7 7BY	Just turn up or call Kath
tbc	Walk for Wellbeing Salter Hebble Trail	Please call Cath for details
Monday 11th		
1-3	Allotment Group Pye Nest allotments	Please call Nicola before
1-3	Depression Group Noah's Ark, Ovenden	Just turn up or call Lou
5.30-7.30	Forum Meeting Orange Box, Halifax, HX1	Call Tamsin
Tuesday 12th		
12.30-2.30	Anxiety & Depression Group Saint Mary's Church, Elland, HX5 ORU	Just turn up or call Nicola
2-4	Wellbeing Works Group St Paul's Church, Sowerby Bridge	Just turn up or call Lou
Wednesday 13th		
12.30-2.30	Men's Group Victoria Theatre, Halifax	Just turn up or call Lou



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LISTINGS

free



events

LISTINGS

DECEMBER/JANUARY

Thursday 14th		
11-1	Chronic Pain Group Noah's Ark, Ovenden	Just turn up or call Kath
12.30-2.30	Self Harm Group Victoria Theatre, HX	Just turn up or call Nicola
3-4.30ish	Allotment Group Pye Nest allotments	Call Nicola
Friday 15 th		
5.30-7.30	Forum Meeting - Holly Lynch MP Orange Box, Halifax, HX1	Call Tamsin
Monday 18th		
1-3	Allotment Group Pye Nest allotments	Please call Nicola before
2-4	Bi-Polar Group Fielden Centre, Todmorden	Just turn up or call Lou
Tuesday 19th		
	Disability Group St George's House, Lilac St, Lee Mount, HX	Just turn up or call Kath
Wednesday 20th		
6-8pm	Recovery Group (closed group) For people who have done the Recovery course	Nicola
Thursday 21 st		
2-4	Bi-Polar Group Fielden Centre, Todmorden	Just turn up or call Lou
6-8pm	Anxiety and Depression Group Hebden Bridge Town Hall HX7 7BY	Just turn up or call Kath
Monday 25th		
1-3	Depression Group Noah's Ark, Ovenden	Just turn up or call Lou
1-3	Allotment Group Pye Nest allotments	Please call Nicola before
Tuesday 26th		
12.30-2.30	Anxiety and Depression Group St Mary's church, Elland	Just turn up or call Nicola
2-4	Wellbeing Works Group St Paul's Church, Sowerby Bridge	Just turn up or call Lou
Wednesday 27th		
12.30-2.30	Men's Group VIP room, Victoria Theatre, Halifax	Just turn up or call Lou
1-3	Art Group St Paul's Church, Sowerby Bridge	Just turn up or call Dianne
tbc	Forum Meeting - Welfare Orange Box, Halifax, HX1	Call Tamsin
Thursday 28th		
12.30-2.30	Self Harm Group Victoria Theatre, HX	Just turn up or call Nicola
11-1	Chronic Pain Group Noah's Ark, Ovenden	Just turn up or call Kath



for info on all events call 01422 345 154



Credit where it's due . . .



Here's to the whole team of Healthy Minds volunteers who have once again generously given their:

- Time
- Effort
- Knowledge, skills, experience
- Sheer good will and comradeship

Throughout 2015 you have:

- Raised awareness of mental health issues
- Challenged the widespread stigma that exists
- Given all of us the benefit of your experience and expertise
- And in doing so, supported others as well as yourselves.

So sincere thanks, everybody.

Really looking forward to working together once again in 2016.

Keeping Well over the Holiday

The Christmas period can be a stressful and difficult time for many people.

It's important to remember to look after ourselves, keep the focus on knowing what works **for you** as an individual and, if you can, **take some time to relax.**



USEFUL NUMBERS

Samaritans: 08457 90 90 90 or 01422 349 349 WEBSITE: <http://www.samaritans.org/>

Saneline: 0300 304 7000 – a national, out-of-hours mental-health helpline for **anyone affected by mental illness**, including:

- family,
- friends
- carers

They offer:

- specialist emotional support and information
- practical information about mental-health services in your local area

Open every day of the year from 6 to 11pm. WEBSITE: <http://www.sane.org.uk/>

Getting through to the helpline: It may be easier to get through after 8pm on weeknights; it may also be easier to get through on Saturday and Sunday nights.



Calling an 0300 number costs no more than calls to geographic (01 and 02) numbers from a landline, and is included in inclusive and free minutes on mobiles.

And last but not least . . .

Very best wishes for Christmas and the New Year from all of us at Healthy Minds!