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We are all living through an extraordinary and new experience. One thing we do when confronted by something new is flick through our mental filing system for a similar experience, to give us some pointers on how to react. A global pandemic such as we're facing now is not within our living memory: there is no point of reference. A recent survey (Office of National Statistics) found that four in five of us is worried about the effect of the pandemic on our lives, and over half of the population report increased anxiety affecting wellbeing: everyone is feeling their way with this.

Covid-19 brings with it so many unknowns and we seek comfort in facts that seem to change daily as we learn more about it. Every interaction, every time we step outside (if we can), carries a risk. Many of us will have to endure painful hardships. There are solid reasons to feel anxious. How we deal with uncertainty is a major part of our wellbeing and everyone's resilience is being tested.

One of the biggest things I have learned from Healthy Minds is that people have the inner strength and ability to overcome adversity. It isn't always

easy to find and many of us need a helping hand. "Stay safe" has become a new mantra: if you need help to feel safe, we are still here – but, of course, things are a little different right now.

At Healthy Minds, we have always worked to help people get well and stay well through coming together to share experiences (those points of reference) and support one another – we can't do that at the moment so have had to adapt quickly. This has been a difficult process, and we are still figuring out some of the details, but the main thing is that we are still here for the people of Calderdale.

In this newsletter, you will see how a brilliant and creative response from the team is keeping all services going, albeit remotely. That creativity is also shown in the contributions from volunteers and people who support, or get support from, Healthy Minds – thanks to all. There are messages here of positivity, and struggles – what unites these is our urge to connect, and we are all finding ways to do this despite lockdown.

Together, we will get through this: we have seen people cooperate to slow the spread of the virus whilst connecting with our communities; having to make more of an effort seems to have spurred us on to make sure we check in with neighbours, colleagues, friends and family. The ONS survey also found that 77% people say that staying in touch with others is the most important thing that supports wellbeing. When we emerge from this, perhaps we will have learned something about what we really value, and this seems to be human connection.

We look forward to seeing you again when that time comes. For now, please stay in touch, and stay safe.

Jonny Richardson Glenn,  
Chief Officer



## **Volunteering During the Coronavirus**

Most of what we do at Healthy Minds is supported by a strong team of dedicated and hard-working volunteers. We simply couldn't provide the wealth of services we offer without them.

While volunteers can no longer visit our schools, co-facilitate our workshops, groups and drop-ins, cover reception and fill in benefits forms for claimants, many are still working hard behind the scenes to support our staff teams and service users.

From co-producing materials for workshops and courses, to writing articles for this newsletter, tending our allotments and hosting Internet Yoga workshops, our volunteers ensure we are still able to reach all corners of our community and are ready with new and exciting ideas when we are finally able to come together once again.

On behalf of each member of staff and all of the Calderdale community,  
We thank you.

Cath  
Volunteer Coordinator



### ***Allotment***

***By Helen Banbury***

Fingers digging in the dirt  
Carefully putting the worms  
Safe within the mounds of earth  
Potatoes gently placed  
Shoots up, trough refilled  
Worms and all, watered in.

Beans grown sturdy on the sills  
Six -inch- tall, five green leaves,  
Ready to plant outside.  
Cloches placed skewered down,  
Are they French or Runner?  
Does not really matter?

One seed tray, cabbage packed,  
Bursting out, more space needed  
Water dribbling down slowly  
Quenching their sun- dried roots

Ready for their release  
Into the waiting soil

**Please Note:** The Pye Nest and Todmorden allotments are currently closed to members of the public. We have a small band of volunteers and staff who are keeping everything going (and growing) for when we are once again able to welcome people back to these happy, peaceful and supportive spaces. Please keep an eye on the website [www.healthymindsalderdale.co.uk](http://www.healthymindsalderdale.co.uk) for details on when we are able to reopen and for the days and times of the groups.

**COPING CALENDAR: KEEP CALM. STAY WISE. BE KIND**

30 actions to look after ourselves and each other as we face this global crisis together. Please use & share 🙌

- 1 Make a plan to help you keep calm and stay in contact
- 2 Enjoy washing your hands. Remember all they do for you!
- 3 Write down ten things you feel grateful for in life and why
- 4 Stay hydrated, eat healthy food and boost your immune system
- 5 Get active. Even if you're stuck indoors, move & stretch
- 6 Contact a neighbour or friend and offer to help them
- 7 Share what you are feeling and be willing to ask for help
- 8 Take five minutes to sit still and breathe. Repeat regularly
- 9 Call a loved one to catch up and really listen to them
- 10 Get good sleep. No screens before bed or when waking up
- 11 Notice five things that are beautiful in the world around you
- 12 Immerse yourself in a new book, TV show or podcast
- 13 Respond positively to everyone you interact with
- 14 Play a game that you enjoyed when you were younger
- 15 Make some progress on a project that matters to you
- 16 Rediscover your favourite music that really lifts your spirits
- 17 Learn something new or do something creative
- 18 Find a fun way to do an extra 15 minutes of physical activity
- 19 Do three acts of kindness to help others, however small
- 20 Make time for self-care. Do something kind for yourself
- 21 Send a letter or message to someone you can't be with
- 22 Find positive stories in the news and share these with others
- 23 Have a tech-free day. Stop scrolling and turn off the news
- 24 Put your worries into perspective and try to let them go
- 25 Look for the good in others and notice their strengths
- 26 Take a small step towards an important goal
- 27 Thank three people you're grateful to and tell them why
- 28 Make a plan to meet up with others again later in the year
- 29 Connect with nature. Breathe and notice life continuing
- 30 Remember that all feelings and situations pass in time

“Everything can be taken from us but one thing: the freedom to choose our attitude in any given set of circumstances” ~ Viktor Frankl

**ACTION FOR HAPPINESS**

[www.actionforhappiness.org](http://www.actionforhappiness.org)

Find out more about the Ten Keys to Happier Living, including books, guides, posters and more here: [www.actionforhappiness.org/10-keys](http://www.actionforhappiness.org/10-keys)

**Hello from Jonny M, Christine and Lou from the Hebden, Royd and hilltop areas team!**

We have been working from home, its safe to say with various degrees of success. What's been great though is managing to keep in touch with you by phone, video link, Facebook and email during this time.

Can't wait to see you all again soon. We've been running a couple of phone

'drop-ins' and one using zoom. Both Christine & Jonny have been in touch with our regular support day and evening groups. Some of you are reporting that you're well prepared for 'isolation', others struggling more so.

If you want any more info about what's happening in the area, or you'd simply like us to just give you a check in call us on 01422 417357 or email [lou@healthymindscalderdale.co.uk](mailto:lou@healthymindscalderdale.co.uk) or find us on [Facebook](#). We love this coping calendar, and we hope you do too.



### **News from Time Out**

#### **Tara Guha, Time Out Team Leader**

Like everyone else, we've been busy working out how best to respond to this unprecedented change in our day-to-day environment. Normally we'd be in schools delivering workshops and wellbeing groups; instead we've been in

touch with schools to suggest how they might support students during lockdown.

Our website ([www.timeoutcalderdale.co.uk](http://www.timeoutcalderdale.co.uk)) has been revamped and we've been running a daily activity for children and young people to get involved with, promoted through Time Out [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) (example below!). Thanks to Emma for being our online guru, and welcome to Alex Abel, our new Time Out project worker, who will start to lead on website and social media from here. It's certainly been an induction she won't forget!

Our website is also hosting a variety of [blogs](#) written by young people, sharing how lockdown has been affecting them and what's been helping. If you know any young person who would like to write a short personal account, please email [timeout@healthymindscalderdale.co.uk](mailto:timeout@healthymindscalderdale.co.uk).

Kim meanwhile has been busy linking with Phoenix Radio, where our volunteers (big shout-out to Caroline!) and young people have been offering daily wellbeing tips, including positive affirmations, mindfulness and breathing techniques. This is also linked to Healthy Minds Facebook, so do check it out.

Laura has started an initiative for care homes, where we're encouraging children and young people to write letters, draw pictures, or write stories which will be sent (either by post or electronically) to isolated residents. So far we've had a great response from both children and residents. This is what Leo from Lightcliffe Primary School has done. If you know any young person who would like to be involved, please email [laura@healthymindscalderdale.co.uk](mailto:laura@healthymindscalderdale.co.uk)

Finally, we are acutely aware of the huge emotional rollercoaster this situation is creating for children and young people, and are reaching out directly to them and also to partner organisations to try to understand what the most pressing needs are and how we can help. We are exploring the possibility of launching a young people's listening line: watch this space for more developments. Time Out prides itself on being a flexible, responsive service, driven by young people – never before has there been such an opportunity to put our money where our mouth is! I'm really proud of the

team, our young volunteers, and how we're responding.  
Stay safe and stay in touch!



## **The Journey**

**By Penni Dickinson**

Our journeys through our mental health conditions is unique to us.  
Some go down the traditional route trusting the experts  
Some explore and experience different ideas and strategies  
We may talk to other people about our journey, this can be a dicey detour,  
Some folk will get on board others may put obstacles in our way, dismissing  
or minimizing our experience,  
Ultimately its up to us  
Choose your way  
Explore different techniques  
Find out what "your" thing is

Take your time  
Find people who do get it  
Be kind to yourself  
Try not to fight with it, it always wins  
Listen to yourself and your body  
You are your own best expert  
We know what we need  
Listen



**By Carolyn,  
Todmorden Healthy Minds Group Member**

I love crocheting/knitting and take great pride in what I do. I've always knitted etc since I was 9 years old, but since losing Roger in 2014 I've been doing a lot more especially the displays for Todmorden health centre.

I joined the knitting group there, and have to say the best thing I did, it introduced me to lots of new people I've made some lovely friends, and also I realised there was other

groups out there that could help me especially with my mental health.

I started going to Healthy Minds and haven't looked back, just knowing other people are going through the same as you, you're not alone. It's taught me I do matter, I have a voice and people will listen to me. I still have good and bad days but I just get on with my knitting, and know I will get through this.



## **The Art of Collage By Sue Gardiner**

I had never done anything arty (apart from stuff with the children) until about

6 years ago. My sister, who is an artist, tried to get me painting, but I fell in love with collage instead. It's cheap, satisfying, and distracting, and anyone can do it! Grab some old magazines, a glue stick and some scissors, put some background music on and away you go!

Find a photograph, or a memory for inspiration Paper can be torn or cut, small pieces to fill a bigger shape like mosaic, or larger pieces. Alternatively, just go through some magazines cutting out random things that appeal for whatever reason, and then compile into a collage later- who knows what you will find. You could pick a theme such as the four seasons, the seaside, faces, hands, flowers and butterflies, or try a limited colour palette such as black,white and red, or blue and yellow.



## **Corona Virus Lock Down, Self-Motivation While Isolated at Home**

**By Septimus Williams**

I would like to begin my narrative by saying, please don't expect too much from yourself during these difficult times, you can only do your best.

Let's start our day by doing something which can help self-motivate people. Everyone awakes first thing in the morning feeling different and has their own daily routine. I will be honest; what I've written is based on my own mental health experience, and how I've managed to develop my coping

methods through personal development studies, exercise, healthy eating and meditation. I believe we all can find our own niche.

Being realistic, not everyone bounces straight out of bed into action! Personally, first thing I do is drink two tall slim glasses of water room temperature to flush my digestive system to detox. I enjoy a cup of tea shortly afterwards while reading a book etc. I find this is great way to become mentally stimulated and get myself motivated into being active.

Morning exercise: Start your day with a routine of light exercises which is very important before engaging in any strenuous activities. Believe it or not exercising first thing in morning will benefit anyone before engaging in any home domestic chores, or before going to work. For those who are not accustomed to being active or working out and wish to improve their physical health please source information from books, or on-line at beginners' level.

Suffering from a mental health illness, stress, anxiety or getting motivated during the morning can be extremely challenging disregarding the present lock down. I think it would be a good idea, if you can't get motivated in the morning, to try to engage in something positive which you enjoy during the afternoon or early evening, so to create a sense of self achievement. Please make use of the permitted guide lines put in place by the government. Getting out could be a major cure to over thinking, feeling institutionalised and loneliness. Don't forget to engage with your neighbours to some social degree obviously keeping your social distance. Keep contact with family, friends through social media and phone contact.



**We're still here!**

**News from Recovery and Support: Halifax, Hebden Bridge and Todmorden**

We are of course working from home, and just like many people we have set up temporary office spaces with laptops and mobile phones – I've got the corner of the kitchen table in the mornings, and in the afternoons am sharing the sofa with my cats.

Our main focus has been on finding ways to continue to offer support. A bit tricky of course when under "normal" circumstances we would be offering group work – but groups have taken on a whole new dynamic. No longer can we spend time together in an actual room – sharing our thoughts and feelings with each other, with a brew and biscuits to hand.

Things being as they are, we have scrambled together resources and areas of expertise to offer support via phones, emails, texts, video links and in some cases good old pen and paper!

Drop-in's have become phone-ins; at the times when there would be generally be drop-in session, anyone can give us a ring for support or information. There are regular drop-in times throughout the week. In place of regular groups, we are inviting people to text in for one to one support. Group members receive a text reminder the day before the usual group time and asked if they'd like to set a time for a chat.

In some areas we have been able to run groups via Zoom. There's a weekly Zoom group based in Hebden Bridge and our yoga groups are running on-line too.

It's been a steep learning curve for some us facilitating on-line groups, and we've had some funny and frustrating moments getting to grips with the technology – but I think we're getting better.

We are lucky that we can take advantage of communication technology, but of course, that's not available for everyone. So if anyone has any ideas of other ways we can link up and support each other – I'm sure we'd be happy to see what we can do.

Our allotments are still being attended to. In Todmorden members of the allotment group have spent their exercise time, looking after the site and watering the beautiful new fedge – a living fence/hedge made of willow! While some members are rearing seedlings at home and staying in touch via Facebook, with updates. Just a small way to stay connected, experience nature and have a purpose.

The Halifax Art Group have been independently working on their own art projects at home, but when possible connecting to shared themes. Some lovely pieces have been shared on Facebook.

As I'm sure everyone is aware, this is a continually changing situation. Six weeks ago when we started to set things up, we had no idea how long the current situation would last, and of course we still don't. Planning for the future is difficult – but we are still exploring how we can best provide support and ways to connect.

We have a weekly timetable which is available on our website and via [Facebook](#) with details of the regular group and drop-in times. But you don't need to be a member of a group to get support – you just need to get in touch.

Call the Halifax number 01422 345154 or  
email [info@healthymindscalderdale.co.uk](mailto:info@healthymindscalderdale.co.uk)



Given the difficult times we are in and the extra pressures we face we're pleased to let you know Healthy Minds has been fortunate to receive some extra funding from Calderdale CCG to open Safespace every evening of the week over the coming months.

Staff across all our projects have rallied round to ensure we can provide telephone support 7 nights a week from 6.30pm – 10.30pm. Of course, we can't provide face to face appointments, and due to the various challenges of phone systems we can't currently provide support via text (we are working on this!); nevertheless you can call at 6.30pm to arrange for phone appointment. Our last appointment is at 10pm.

This service is for anyone finding themselves in emotional distress, overwhelmed and struggling. It's a safe confidential space to talk things through. You can also access Safespace via [Facebook](#).

You can contact Safespace in the following ways Call **01422 345154** or contact by Facebook (Safespace Calderdale) or email [safespace@healthymindscalderdale.co.uk](mailto:safespace@healthymindscalderdale.co.uk)

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That's all for this edition, but before you go, why not have a go at the Sudoku puzzle above.

Remember to get in touch with us if you are finding things tough, or just need a bit of extra support.

Stay Safe,  
The Healthy Minds Team.

