

We would love to hear from you and share any good news or your stories of how you are keeping yourselves well during this difficult time. Please get in touch / submit articles to: Recovery.kirklees@swyt.nhs.uk. Please note all content correct at time of writing.

Dear Learner,

Here is our fourth 'Keeping Connected' newsletter! Thanks to everyone that has contributed. I have really enjoyed seeing what you been up to. It feels like things are getting harder as the reality of the situation surrounding the coronavirus sinks into our everyday. The numbers of deaths are truly shocking but it is the stories of personal loss and grief that seem to hit the hardest. The full extent to which these personal traumas will impact us will be felt for a long time. The media are reporting about the mental health difficulties that many are suffering, lack of sleep, worry, anxiety and depression. Some of you have lost family members and I know some are struggling with the isolation and it saddens me. There is both help and hope out there. I sincerely wish that this newsletter offers you a moderate dose of both. Please stay in touch and keep sharing your ideas, stories and hope. We can't change the painful reality we find ourselves in but we can change the way we face it - together.

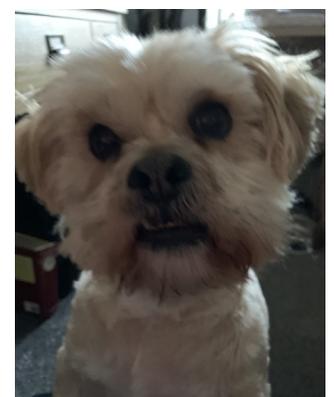
Matt Ellis, Principal

17 April 2020

Our lovely volunteer, Carrie at Calderdale RC has given us a bit of an up-date, here's how she is getting on:-

"This week has been a tough one and in these strange times I am really missing my family, however I have to concentrate on the here and now and what I have with me today. I have two little dogs, a Lhasa Apso called Kiwi and a Yorkshire Terror (yes, I did mean terror) called Jax and these two definitely help my wellbeing. They make me do stuff when I don't want to, they gang up on me at walk time and use manipulation and cuteness to break my low mood. Sometimes I think they're the ones caring for me! They need everything I need, food, water, exercise as well as communication, playfulness, cuddles and lots of love.

They have supported me through some bad times. Yesterday, I felt a panic attack coming on, so I went and laid on my bed, put on a natural guided meditation and started breathing, then Kiwi came up and curled up between my knees and Jax snuggled into my neck and we meditated together. When the meditation ended, they were ready for a play and so was I."



Recovery College Recommends....

Have you recently lost your job?
Do you want help and support?
Visit www.properjob.org.uk

Interested in classes to spark your creativity?
Offered by the world's best practitioners
Visit: www.skillshare.com



Why not check us out on Facebook? We have received some great feedback to our daily links and social media posts:

“I've been a bit anxious and low in mood today. Your video has brought me my spark back”

“Can I just say a big thank you for these regular updates and posts - really helping with the monotony”

<https://www.facebook.com/DiscoverRecoveryCollegeKirklees/>

<https://www.facebook.com/Calderdale.RC/>

TV Quiz

Okay, we reckon you have got the hang of this now, so please let us know how you get on!

1. Highest Cog
2. Humpty Dumpty & Family
3. Money in the loft
4. A Labrador on your wrist
5. Ancient act on the street
6. Reverse Intelligence
7. Staying in
8. 5,4,3,2,1
9. Anonymous Medical Practitioner
10. Weekend Chinese
11. Best of Buddies
12. Quiet Bystander
13. Frozen 12 Inches
14. A Broken Pencil
15. A Singular Production
16. Indigo Earth
17. The first thing to do when someone goes into labour
18. Hoping to win the lottery
19. Not tight females
20. Captain Cook's Ship

Our Meditation Guru, Ben facilitates our fabulous Quiet the Mind course. As it turns out, he is also a Poet! Who knew?

Simply Sat On A Bench

It's just a pleasure sat on a park bench

I can see from this point into my life

If you look, listen and don't think too much you then experience it the best

I'm finally at rest from the complicated mess

Just be here with me for these next few moments

All I used to see was a mirage of thoughts, the running commentary of mind

Now I sense an atmosphere, a positive one made by the songs of the birds

The memories of halcyon days are part of this as the sun shines and I listen to the sound of the children play

Talking of the sun I feel it's warmth cast on me

The minutest of insects buzz on their way, on a job that only they may understand

My feet are close to the floor, the earth, the soil ,this British land

Cars and lorry's drive the road in the distance giving the world a much needed hand.

If it wasn't for this I would be gone, lost from a world as barren as sand

The light is bright and the grass is clean, trees stand afoot and it's all serene

The detail is obvious as the breeze blows the clouds across the wonderful sky

Mankind always seems to be in sort of crisis, but nature is free in some synchronicity

It is comforting sat here in this time of need

If you want to know, the Sun is bright it's certainly not dark

Its nice sat on the bench just here in the park..;)

Answers to last week's Music Quiz

1. Razorlight 2. Black Eyed Peas 3. T Rex 4. UB40
 5. Queen 6. Black Sabbath 7. New Kids on the Block 8. Blur 9. Guns & Roses 10. The Police
 11. The Shadows 12. The Bangles 13. The Three Degrees 14. Boyzone 15. The Cardigans 16. Wet Wet Wet 17. Madness 18. Hot Chocolate 19. Green Day 20. Earth Wind & Fire

“Remember Kindness is contagious too”

Culture Club.....



When we think of art forms, photography may not always spring to mind. Since its invention in 1839 the camera has given us the opportunity to create a historical narrative for our lives, whether that's your annual family holidays or looking back at long forgotten ancestors. Capturing a brief moment in time is something any of us can do with a mobile phone or camera, at home or in the garden. Or why not take a snap while out on your daily exercise, like our volunteer, Ian did with this lovely shot of this amazing blossom tree. Photography can also be a wonderful wellness tool!

We would love to see some of your efforts, so please send us your pics.

Altered Images! Did you know that if you have multiple jigsaws of the same size and brand then most likely the pieces are interchangeable? Why not while away the hours and create your own montage, like this one from Canadian Artist, Tim Klein?



Karl at The Richmond Fellowship is a familiar face at Kirklees Recovery College and he has kindly shared with us some of his words of wisdom.....

Hi all, I know how difficult the current situation is for everyone in regards to maintaining health and wellbeing and I just thought I would share with you some of the things that are helping me during this time.

Firstly, although we are in lockdown it is important for our general health to remain as active as possible, so in line with guidelines I do go for a walk each day to blow the cobwebs away and help to release some of those feel good hormones. Just a stroll around where you live can do wonders for your mind and body! If you are lucky enough to have a garden then use it, especially now the weather has changed for the better. Try and take notice of the change in the season. Whilst in my garden I have noticed the warm sun on my face, the birdsong and the blooming flowers.

Whilst I am lucky enough to still be working, for those who are not needing to isolate there are still many volunteering opportunities to help your community during this time, from food banks, phone support for isolated people and even supporting the NHS. A list of these can be found at: <https://volunteeringkirklees.org.uk/> <https://calderdale.gov.uk/v2/residents/jobs-and-volunteering/volunteering/>. Volunteering can not only help others but has a very positive effect on your own sense of wellbeing and self confidence. It might just a simple act of checking in on an elderly or vulnerable neighbour to see they are okay or get them some shopping if they can not get out. Although at times we all turn to comfort food, it is still important to maintain a reasonably balanced diet. I include fruit, vegetables, fish, white meat, nuts and even 70% dark chocolate in my diet. These all contain compounds that help to release chemicals in the brain help to lift spirits and improve mental health.

Lastly, relaxation in times of stress is extremely important. If you would like to try relaxation techniques or meditation there is plenty of on-line help for this. Alternatively, if you have always wanted to learn something new then why not try it? I'm attempting to learn some French, but it could be anything! Equally ,chilling out with that film or boxset you always wanted to watch is also great way to reduce stress and anxiety.

I hope some of the things that help me maybe of benefit to you and I wish you all well, Karl.



**Support
to
Recovery**



S2R are offering 6 Wellbeing Packs which will be available between April - June. Like us, they know it can be difficult to connect with others, remain engaged and stay motivated in the unusual circumstances we are living in, so they wanted to create a little something to keep you feeling connected. Also getting creative is a great way to keep your mind occupied, and feeling calm and relaxed.

The Wellbeing packs are designed around the national 'Ways to Wellbeing' initiative, these are recognised to keep you fit and healthy in different ways, each pack will have different tips and a creative activity for you to try. To download the first pack visit:

www.s2r.org.uk



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