



News Bulletin

No 22

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I don't know about you, but I have found I've had to make a real conscious effort to try and keep moving forward positively over the last few weeks. Being back in lockdown, it can be tempting to feel that we've moved backwards instead of forwards. However, there are signs of progress and cause for hope, with the vaccination programme now underway.

Looking ahead and moving forward may feel particularly difficult at this time, mid-winter, when it might feel as though there isn't much to look forward to. I wonder how many of us made New Year's resolutions this year? And, if we did, how many of us have managed to keep them?! It may be that we didn't bother this year because of all the uncertainty surrounding the pandemic - perhaps it hasn't felt worthwhile making any plans for 2021?

I would like to suggest that continuing to move forward positively in our recovery is really important, especially at this time. Here at 'Recovery in Mind', we're big advocates of setting goals to enable us to achieve this. Goals can be more helpful than annual resolutions, which can sometimes just remain good intentions. Goals, when set properly, are concrete, practical, realistic and achievable - and can make a huge difference to our motivation, sense of purpose, accomplishment and satisfaction in life.

Goals may be short, medium, or long-term, and can cover any and every area of our lives, eg self-care, work, family/relationships, exercise and activity, leisure/hobbies, etc. The important thing is that they're **our** goals, that we've chosen because they're meaningful to us, not because someone else thinks we should.

Our final newsletter of the summer term last year focussed on 'Moving Forwards and Setting Goals', and in there you'll find lots of inspiration, ideas and practical tips for developing a positive mindset with regards to moving forward, and setting and achieving relevant and meaningful goals for yourself. You can find it on the website under 'Tips & Tools', and then 'Newsletters': it's no 15, dated 16/7/20.

At 'Recovery in Mind', we are doing our best to keep moving forward in adapting our service in ways which we hope will continue to encourage and support you all in your ongoing recovery. In addition to our weekly 'Coffee Catch-up' online session, we have added three new 'nano-courses' to our website: one all about getting into the flow, and two on anxiety management, which we are aware is a significant issue for many people at this time. We'd encourage you to watch them - they're only 5-8 minutes long - and, as well as hopefully being informative and helpful, are quite fun to watch, as we've been fortunate enough to find someone to put visual 'infographics' into our recordings.

We are continually considering how we can provide the most effective service possible under the current circumstances, so we would welcome any feedback or suggestions you might have about what you're finding/have found/would find helpful, to assist us with our planning.

Take care, stay safe, and best wishes from us all at the 'Recovery in Mind' team.



Pedalling Forward - One Push at a Time!

I was reminded of the need to keep moving forward last week when I went for a bike ride. I'm not a great cyclist, so it was a bit of an effort, especially when having to pedal uphill. But there was only one way to do it, and that was to keep going, by pushing one foot down and then the other, to keep pedalling and keep the wheels turning, in order to keep moving. And to keep breathing!

I was only out for 30 minutes, but it made a significant difference - I felt much more energised and motivated afterwards, with a sense of achievement. It would have been so easy to have stayed indoors and not moved at all.

I have actually set myself a goal of going for a walk or bike ride each day, and I found that that in itself was quite a powerful incentive to get out and do it: I'd kind of made that promise, that commitment to myself, which helped motivate me to put it into practice and not just leave it as a good intention, or wishful thinking (especially on a cold, grey day!)

I wonder whether you've had similar experiences of setting a goal (however small or simple) and enjoyed the feeling afterwards of having achieved it, even if it was difficult at the time? If not, I'd recommend giving it a go! Good luck! Cath



Snowdrops

When out walking over the last couple of weeks, I've seen the first snowdrops of the year in my area: small clumps, pushing up out of the ground. It was a reminder and reassurance that the natural world is moving forward, to its own rhythm, through winter and towards spring. Our own lives and recovery journeys can be a bit like that too: we go through different seasons - times when not much seems to be happening, when we maybe feel a bit stagnant or stuck - and other times when we see real tangible signs of growth and change. But if we keep moving forward, working towards our goals, one step at a time, we can push through the difficult times, all the while building up our 'toolbox' of coping skills and resilience, to reach our end goals. A bit like the snowdrops!



'The Hill We Climb'

Some of us may have watched the powerful performance of Amanda Gorman, 22-year-old activist, writer, and America's youth poet laureate, when she recited her poem 'The Hill We Climb' at Joe Biden's inauguration last month. The poem offers hope and inspiration to a nation, and indeed the world, in setting forth a bold vision of the re-building of justice, freedom, unity and peace.

You can find the recital on YouTube, and also a transcript of the poem, by googling 'Amanda Gorman'.

Watching it again, and reading the words of 'The Hill We Climb', it struck me that there is a great deal in the poem that speaks into our own personal lives, in terms of recovery and moving forward, as well as to an entire nation. The description of 'a nation that isn't broken but simply unfinished' could just as easily apply to our lives as individuals. Similarly, as individuals we might decide that,

"We will not march back to what was, but move to what shall be...."

"We will rebuild, reconcile, and recover."

There is an acknowledgment of the pain of suffering and loss, but also hope within it:

"That even as we grieved, we grew...even as we hurt, we hoped...even as we tired, we tried."

And the closing lines of the poem:

"For there is always light,
if only we're brave enough to see it.
If only we're brave enough to be it."



Further Help and Support

If you are struggling with your mental health and feel that you need further help & support here are some contact numbers for you:

West Berkshire Community Mental Health Team- 01635 292020

CRHTT (Crisis Response and Home Treatment Team)- 0300 365 9999

Samaritans - 116 123

NHS - 111 (number to call should you feel you are physically unwell with Coronavirus or indeed any other physical health condition which is deteriorating).

West Berkshire Community Hub is where you can find out information and support locally for a variety of matters relating to Coronavirus - look at their website (cut and paste this into your internet browser) <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/coronavirus-communityhub>

The Age UK Berkshire Befriending and Buddying scheme is now open for referrals. Enquiries should be made directly to Age UK Berkshire by emailing info@ageukberkshire.org.uk or calling 0118 959 4242

999 is for **EMERGENCY** calls only.