



Newsletter

No 29

21/10/2021

Dear Students,

I hope you have been enjoying the recent sunny days of Autumn. The mornings are certainly a bit chilly, so much so, that I have had to give up wearing my shorts! This reminds me that Autumn is another time for change and embracing that, rather than worrying about things, like the weather, which we can only do a very little about. Instead of complaining that I don't like the Winter, I'm going to remind myself of the opportunities it brings, like being able to go to bed early. Oh, and I do like a snow day (one is enough!).



Here at Recovery in Mind, like all of us, we have had to endure lots of change over the past 18 months. It hasn't been easy and some of us are still struggling to find and work out our new normal, make sense of how we are feeling, adjust to things we had no control over, and continue to work on our recovery. So, if you feel you need some ideas to get back on track, recognise you need to work on a certain challenge, or simply would like to reconnect with us, then we would love to see you at a workshop, student social, mindful walk, or course of your choice.

I'd also like to give a note of thanks to all of you who got involved in the research we have been doing for the past two years. The Lottery gave us some funding to run a two-year research project on the work of Recovery in Mind. The research 'paper'/report was written like a journey in a campervan, comparing our story and experiences in that way. As such, like any journey, we are planning where to go next. So, here's the plan from the findings of the report:-

1. To continue to work with people who experience difficulties in their mental health.
2. To increase our appeal to work with younger people aged 18 to 25 years old.
3. To support and deliver courses to culturally diverse adults across West Berkshire.

So that should keep us busy over the next few years. If you have any contacts, ideas or suggestions as to how we can help more people (especially those in the above areas) we would love to hear from you. Also, on that note, if you come across anyone who might benefit from our courses then please do encourage them to have a look at our website. Your support is always appreciated.

So, as the year moves towards another season, we hope that, like others, you found Recovery in Mind provided a constant guiding light during the past 18 months. We are here and ready to continue to support you through the different seasons and the changes of life.

Best wishes, Angela and the Recovery in Mind team

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Autumn

The sun shines on my desk,
Such joy, such joy it is
To work as if at music
On such clear autumn days.
When the rowans all in red
Bend over water and
Above the arranged dead
There is no breath of wind,
And eternity is this
Tranquillity and poise
Of orange-coloured trees
And flame -red bare displays
As if a visible fire
Were and image of itself
Both fact and its idea
Trembling in double leaf.

Iain Crichton Smith



Trees and Well-being



In the autumn edition of the National Trust magazine there is an article by Ray Mears, bushcraft expert and woodsman, about the benefits of spending time amongst trees. It states that, "Research has revealed that time spent outdoors boosts self-esteem and encourages calmness."

In modern-day life we direct our attention to everything going on around us: people, technology, news, problems, traffic etc. In nature our attention is grabbed in a more random way by stimuli that intrigue our curiosity. This provides relief to our over-exploited, direct attention, thus enabling us to improve our ability to concentrate when we need to.

The Japanese have invented the concept of "Tree Bathing". This involves taking a short leisurely walk in a woodland, allowing your senses to freely explore the surroundings without direction. Being led by your senses gives your mind a rest from active thinking.

Our bodies benefit from walking amongst trees. Our blood pressure drops, and our pulse rate slows. Interestingly, the chemicals released by plants that help them resist infection can help boost our immune systems by being near them. It would seem that the trees provide a natural aromatherapy.



Take the opportunity to explore local woodlands and enjoy their restorative qualities. At this time of year, the trees are so beautiful as they change colour.
Gillian

Coffee Morning Fundraiser

Advance notice of a coffee morning at the Art Café at The Old Stables in Whitchurch on Thames, opposite the ferryboat pub.

10:30am - 12:30pm on Saturday 27th November

Lovely cafetiere coffee, tea and a selection of homemade cakes, plus a raffle.

All proceeds to Recovery in Mind.



Getting going after lockdown - a personal reflection

Whilst out walking around Newbury today I was reflecting on my reaction to the end of the lockdown, the relaxation of Covid rules and the consequential increase in the number of people about and at what level others are being cautious.

Having become used to everywhere being fairly quiet, socially distancing and face coverings, I find myself becoming anxious about people's behaviour. This is not helpful to my well-being and I started to think how to become more resilient. I remembered a phrase from mindfulness which is "drowning or fighting". This describes a reaction to a stressful situation: either you are "drowning" by letting it overwhelm you, or you "fight" which makes you angry. Neither of these are particularly helpful reactions. What I need to do is notice what the other people are doing but not connect with how that makes me feel. What I need to do is to work out what works for me and allows me to feel comfortable in public.

I regularly challenge myself to try different situations and work out a coping strategy, e.g, going into shops when they are not busy, going on public transport when it's not busy, carrying hand sanitiser with me, maintaining a social distance. By having a plan, I have increased my level of engagement with the public and feel good about having done that.

We are all different and tolerate different levels of anxiety and risk. But give it a go and learn from that experience. You might find it helpful to watch the nano courses "Anxiety Management Parts 1 and 2" using the link below.

<https://recoveryinmind.org/category/nano-courses/>

Good luck! Gillian

The Door by Miroslav Holub

Go and open the door.

Maybe outside there's
a tree, or a wood,
a garden,
or a magic city.

Go and open the door.

Maybe a dog's rummaging.
Maybe you'll see a face,
or an eye,
or the picture
of a picture.

Go and open the door.

If there's a fog
it will clear

Go and open the door.

Even if there's only
the darkness ticking,
even if there's only
the hollow wind,
even if

nothing

is there,

go and open the door.

At least
there'll be
a draught.



Pumpkin Soup - ideal for Halloween!

500g Peeled pumpkin cut into 2.5cm dice (any squash will be fine!)

1 tbsp oil (I like to use olive oil)

1 medium onion, chopped finely

2 cloves garlic, crushed

1 tsp chilli flakes (or powder)

1 tsp each of ground coriander and cumin if you have them.

1 litre vegetable stock

1x 400g tin of chickpeas (drained)

Salt and pepper



Method:

Heat the oil and cook onion and garlic until softened.

Stir in the spices a cook for a minute, (if you're using them) and add the pumpkin and stock. Bring to the boil and simmer for 10 mins or until veg are tender.

Add the chickpeas and taste for seasoning. Add extra water if you want a thinner consistency.

Puree with blender until smooth and serve with hunks of bread.

NB: I like to add an inch of freshly grated ginger along with the spices for a 'hotter' flavour. You can swirl a spoonful of yoghurt on top of each portion before serving and sprinkle with freshly chopped coriander.

Fiona

8 Benefits Of Pumpkin



1. Pumpkin is very rich in carotenoids, which is known for keeping the immune system of an individual strong and healthy.



2. Beta-carotene, found in pumpkin, is a powerful antioxidant as well as an anti-inflammatory agent.



3. It helps prevent build up of cholesterol on the arterial walls, thus reducing chances of strokes.



4. Being rich in alpha-carotene, pumpkin is believed to slow the process of aging and also prevent cataract formation.

5. Pumpkins have been known to reduce the risk of macular degeneration, a serious eye problem than usually results in blindness.

6. The high amount of fiber, present in a pumpkin, is good for the bowel health of an individual.

7. Being loaded with potassium, pumpkin is associated with lowering the risk of hypertension.

www.healthfuldietandnutrition.com

8. The presence of zinc in pumpkins boosts the immune system and also improves the bone density.

Eco Christmas. By Christine Whild

They say the climate's changing. There's too much CO₂,
And if the planet's to survive, it's really up to you;
I took it all quite seriously, recycled all my trash,
I started to buy Fairtrade food, (till I ran out of cash).

But Christmas came, I got fed up, I said "I'll not be green,
I'll generate more CO₂ than you have ever seen".
I threw out last year's stockings, more trendy is a sack,
And as for all those silver trees, the "in" design is black!

I piled new purple baubles like an Ideal Home designer,
And spent two hundred pounds or more on plastic gifts from China.
I plugged the wall and windows in, made day out of the nights,
My partner's working overtime to pay for all those lights.

You should see our Garden Centre; it's not what God had planned:
Instead of winter cabbage, there's a manmade wonderland.
No time for mixing puddings, and Tesco sell so cheap,
With two for one on deep mince pies, and half price chocs to keep.

Too tired for fixing canapes, or making up a jelly,
But work and slave to buy, buy, buy means time - for watching telly?
With blueberries from Chile, and strawberries from Brazil,
I ravaged all the planet so we could have our fill.

The rain is falling steadily, I'm fed up with this island.
The family will love me, 'cos we're flying soon to Thailand.
Now the freezer's full to bursting, the toys piled eight foot high,
The heating's up to twenty-five, our dear earth gives a sigh.

Dear God - what am I doing? So selfish and so mean,
To plunder earth's resources so, instead of being "green"
Like children, spoiled and crabby, we adults blithely go,
But no more give that poor excuse - "we simply didn't know!"

And our dear younger people - Will their world mean just despair?
If we don't choose the better path, we'll have proved we didn't care.

So this then be my mantra, buy less, use less, no waste,
The tipping point may be so near, and thence the need for haste.
Spread out this simple message - "stuff" will this world destroy,
Conserve, re-use, should be the plan - Do recognise the fate of Man,
And leave this "home" for others to enjoy



This poem was written some years ago by a lovely lady I know, who in her eighties has been an inspiration to many of us to change our 'old-fashioned' ways and to think more carefully about how to live a sustainable present and be aware of our impact on the world and how to protect it from climate change. This poem gives an important message for this time of year and one which I hope will prove useful to us all, especially as finances may be tight after the many challenges of 2021! Fiona

How to make a leaf print hedgehog

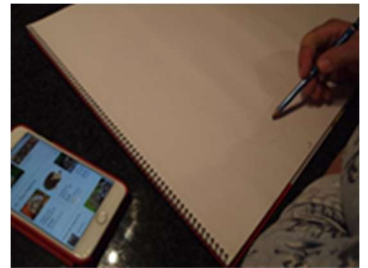
For this you will need:

- A selection of leaves (green ones) of different shapes
- Paint - several colours
- Paper to print on - coloured if possible
- Paper to stick prints to
- A brush to apply the paint
- Scissors, Pritt stick and a marker pen



Method:

1. Brush paint onto the veiny side of a leaf and then press the leaf (paint side down) onto printing paper. Repeat this process with various leaves in different colours. Allow prints to dry.
2. Cut out all the individual leaf prints.
3. On large mounting paper draw the outline of the hedgehog in pencil.
4. Arrange your leaf prints where you would like them for the effect you wish to achieve. Stick the leaves down with glue.
5. Draw on the head, eye and nose of the hedgehog as required.



External Links

Some different activities to try.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/things-to-do/woods-through-the-seasons/autumn/>

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/education-learning/gardening-children-schools/family-activities/activities>

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/create-artist>

<https://www.explorationoftheday.com/>

Autumn songs...



Van Morrison [Autumn Song - Bing video](#)

[John Coltrane and Johnny Hartman - Autumn Serenade - Bing video](#)

[Vivaldi Autumn The Four Seasons High Quality - Bing video](#)

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.