



Newsletter

No 32

14/07/2022

Dear Students,

As another academic year draws to an end it seems a good point to pause, reflect and offer gratitude and thanks.



Things seemed to finally return to a new normal following the pandemic. We met around 25 new students to Recovery in Mind this past year and continued to offer courses and support to around 30 existing students. All our courses finally returned to 'face to face' last term which has been great. As a team we struggled with the concept and practicalities of being online at first, but we all grasped it in the end - some better than others - but we do enjoy seeing you all in person. We now 'have the technology' should we need to go back online and would like to thank you all for your patience and for getting online too. And thanks to Helen too who keeps the wheels turning on the admin and organisation front as well as doing the bookkeeping. Helen's patience and understanding helping both the training team and many students getting the most out of the online courses has been very much appreciated by us all.

Nick has joined us and will start in September as a Peer trainer/supporter. Welcome, Nick and we hope you enjoy working with us all. Lorraine, Shelbie, and Lynette are staying with us as Peer Trainers, and I'd also like to take the opportunity to thank them for all they continue to bring to Recovery in Mind and their experience that they so willingly share with us.

Toria, our first Peer Trainer who joined us at Recovery in Mind is off to pastures new after nearly 6 years. We'd like to congratulate her and thank her for all that she has provided us. Toria has utilised her own lived experience to inspire and help many of us during this time. I'd like to offer my most sincere thanks on behalf of all of us and wish her well as she begins mental health nurse training this coming September. We will most definitely keep in touch and hope she will come and visit from time to time. Thanks, Toria, you've been amazing!

So, with the Summer Break nearly upon us I'd like to turn your attention to this newsletter and all of the fantastic articles, ideas and opportunities it provides us. Thanks to all of the Recovery in Mind team for all their input. Please do send us any pictures of what you have been creating and doing over the break so that we can share your 'Recovery' moments with each other in the Autumn.

We also have put all the Autumn Courses up on the website. Fiona has been busy developing a new two-week course call 'Life Flow', which I'm excited about and it gives me a focus for September. Perhaps you will join us then or at another course or workshop opportunity this Autumn.

On behalf of the entire Recovery in Mind team we wish you a restful and enjoyable Summer Break and look forward to seeing or hearing from you in the Autumn.

Angela and the entire team at Recovery in Mind



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On Wisdom and Perspective taking

We do not receive wisdom,
we must discover it for ourselves,
after a journey through the wilderness,
which no-one else can make for us,
which no one can spare us,
for our wisdom is the point of view from which we come at last to
regard the world.
Marcel Proust

COME & JOIN US AT GREENFEST - SATURDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER

Greenfest is a community day in Hampstead Norreys focussing on the environment and how we can all make a difference to our planet. It's free and there's loads to do and see - 9 zones and over 30 exhibits.

Recovery in Mind will be there offering Mindful walks, a focus on creativity & recycling plus a breathing workshop in our aptly called 'Zen Den'.

If you would either like to help for a few hours on our stand or just drop by, we'd love to see you! You can find out more information at

www.ourgreenfest.co.uk



BANNER MAKING WORKSHOP AT SHAW HOUSE - FRIDAY 12TH AUGUST 10.30-2.30

As we will be having a stand at the GREENFEST we need to make a banner! Thanks to the Clothing Warehouse who are providing us with lots of green fabrics to upcycle. We will be making a banner with RECOVERY IN MIND on it. Sewing, sticking, embellishing letters onto white background fabric then sewing them together by machine. No sewing experience needed, just a willingness to get creative and enjoy some time together getting creative. Please bring any ribbons, buttons, or anything you would like to add to the creation. As a treat, we will be offering a sandwich lunch provided by the Shaw House coffee shop which will be free if you are joining us. Parking is free at Shaw House or a short walk from our offices in Newbury.

There are 10 spaces so book now on the website if you'd like to get involved.

Enjoying the outdoors and improving your well-being

Hopefully, the summer is here, although at times I have wondered if those warm days over Easter were the summer!

Being outdoors is well recognised as a way to enhance your well-being. Here are some ideas.

- o Listen to soothing nature sounds like birds singing or the wind in the trees.



- o Run your hands through running water or through sand.

- o Take a short walk.

- o Take a long walk.

- o Concentrate on one thing, eg looking for wild flowers, looking for different grasses.

- o Lie on your back and look at the clouds, turn them into things, eg trees.

- o Walk barefoot on the grass or a beach.

- o Stand outside in the fresh air.

- o Watch trees moving in the wind.



- o Watch water rippling.



- o Watch birds on water.

- o Watch the sun rise or set.

- o Watch the stars.

- o Use the 5-4-3-2-1 technique:

- Name 5 things you can see.

- Touch 4 things.

- Listen out for 3 things.

- Identify 2 smells

- What 1 thing can you taste?

Ideas taken from "54 Ways to Ease the Anxious Mind" by the Blurt Foundation

Enjoy the summer, whatever the weather.



Reflections

"Reflection" - a word with so many meanings
Which can bring about a lot of feelings
So, let's just reflect on the last two years
For some it has meant a lot of tears
Not to be able to go out and about
In case germs are lurking I have no doubt
Our student numbers really declined
Was our mental health having such a bad time?
I know many have been up and down with it all
The Strongest Even, began to fall
But that's in the past and Now is Now
Let us help if you will allow
Get back on the road you wish to go
The number of courses is long you know
With Support, Guidance and NO pressure to tax
You'll remember how good it is to relax
Recovery in Mind is here for you
We really look forward to meeting you too!



By Lynette, Peer Trainer, June 2022

Treating yourself well – with self-compassion and care

The ability to give yourself treats and rewards is one of the basic strategies for improving mental fitness. This stems from the fact that treats provide enjoyment and pleasure which contributes to feeling good and confident, whilst solely completing tasks done out of duty or guilt turns effort into drudgery and stops us from making changes for the better. Giving yourself permission to treat yourself means choosing the 'right treats for you' as an individual, which give harmless pleasure and do not exacerbate any problems you might have. (For example, don't choose to eat a large chocolate bar if you are watching your weight, a bowl of strawberries would be better for you). You may 'soften' the impact of unpleasant tasks by using the treat to reward yourself for facing and completing it (rather like a carrot not a stick, so don't beat yourself up with negative talk in your head).

Pick the treats that work for you, things that you enjoy or make you laugh or help you relax. Make a list of big and little things for you alone or to share with others, some cheap and others more expensive to save up for.

Get the timing right – treat yourself as soon as you can after having achieved your goal.

Treat yourself often but ensure they don't perpetuate bad habits (e.g., I'll have another cigarette after I clean the bathroom).

Give yourself variety, and update ideas (e.g. going for a walk on a sunny day may be more of a treat than when it's drizzling and cold).

Avoid the punishment trap and make sure that you're not serving other people's needs at the expense of your own as this can breed resentment, resulting in anger towards others or depression for you.

Some ideas for treats and rewards:

Eating or drinking – cup of tea, your favourite meal, a beer.

Activities – taking a walk, watching a video, enjoying a hobby, visiting a restaurant.

Relaxation – listening to music, having a bubble bath, calling a friend, reading a book.

Treats – bunch of flowers, getting up late, visit the theatre, buying new clothing.

Time – 10 minutes to yourself, proper lunch-hour, break away with a friend, a holiday.

Exercise – joining the gym, doing an exercise class, going for a swim, walking the dog.

Positive self-talk – 'you deserve a break', 'well done!', 'You're doing well,' or 'I can do it'.

Setting limits – 'time to stop work now', 'It's bedtime' or putting on the timer to do 10 mins vacuuming and then stop.

Other people – chat on the phone, visit a friend or relative or invite them over to you.

Rewards and treats always work better than self-criticism, so give it a go and treat yourself!

Growing salad leaves (microgreens) on your windowsill



You can grow microgreens all year round on a bright windowsill, even throughout winter. There are lots of different seeds you can use e.g. mustard, kale, broccoli, spinach, beetroot, carrots, parsley, coriander. In fact, it's a very good way to use up those spare packets of seeds that may be half used or out of date.

Fill a shallow tray with a 1 cm layer of moist peat free compost (recycling a food tray is ideal and I make a few holes in the base for drainage, with a kebab stick) making sure that the compost is moist, firm and level. You can even use a double layer of kitchen roll for cress growing if you have no compost. Thinly sow your chosen seed on the top of the compost and then place on the windowsill to get warmth and light. Cover the tray with a clear plastic bag or clear food tray to act as a propagator and help keep the seeds/compost moist.

Check every so often to see if it has dried out, when you might need to lightly water it. After a week or two the seedlings will germinate and they should be ready to harvest when they are about 10 cm tall, using scissors to trim off the leaves. Some lettuces are 'cut and come again' so you can pick a few leaves from each plant and leave the others to grow on. These leaves are packed with vitamins and minerals and are best eaten raw when you will get a concentrated taste of the plant. To keep a supply of microgreens going, sow a tray weekly so that you always have something fresh to crop for your salads over the summer.



Happy growing and eating!

Monday Coffee Catch-up Group

A group of students have successfully started a student-led Monday morning coffee group, and if any other students would like to join them then you would be very welcome. It is a very relaxed group, lots of sharing of ideas on just about anything and everything (craft, sports, Corn Exchange Film Club to gardening!) and they like to raise a smile when they can. They meet on a Monday morning at 10am - 11:15am in Costa Coffee in Newbury and organise their get-togethers via a WhatsApp group. Please join them if you'd like to and they will add you to their WhatsApp group on your first visit. They are planning to continue to meet through the summer holidays so get yourself a coffee and look for a gathering of women; there are currently 7 regular attendees. It's a good support if you are struggling that day....and a good support if you're not!!



There's a Hole in My Sidewalk

Chapter 1

I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I fall in.
I am lost...I am helpless.
It isn't my fault.
It takes forever to find my way out.

Chapter 2

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it again.
I fall in.
I can't believe I am in the same place.
But it isn't my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.

Chapter 3

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it is there.
I still fall in...it's a habit.
My eyes are open.
It is my fault.
I get out immediately.

Chapter 4

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.

Chapter 5

I walk down another street,

Portia Nelson

30 Things to do to help you feel slightly happier this summer...

Everything's feeling a bit stale? These small tweaks to your routine may turn things around, boost your mood and could even make you feel like a better person ...

1 Borrow a dog. It will force you to get outside. If you want the joy of a pet without the expense and commitment, mooch with someone else's pooch. Try BorrowMyDoggy, or a more informal arrangement; one of our RiM students has been doing this very successfully for months. Taking a dog for a walk is instant serotonin. You play with the dog, plus you're plugged into a community of dog people. Everyone talks to you and only when you return home do you recognise, you're flush with fresh air and social interaction, and have more energy.

2 Get a Wi-Fi extender Then work/use your computer from your garden/balcony all summer long. Invert screen colours to make it easier to see in the sun.

3 Eat more salad. There's a lot of it around at this time of year and it's so good for you! Be inventive and add some fruit into a salad or fresh herbs.

4 Go to an art gallery and stare at a picture for ages (mindfully) "Think of looking at a painting as physical exercise - gym for the eyes. You'll get more out of paintings the more you move around them. Stand back, then up close, look from the left, then right. Above all, give it time. Views from different angles add up to slow absorption that will open the door to a life-affirming experience that can take you out of the ordinary, into the happy."

5 Start a recipe club Like a book club but for food - challenge yourself to try one new dish each week and share it (with any tweaks) on email.

6 Discover secrets about your immediate surroundings With Wikipedia Around (insert the address and it'll tell you all about the area). Don't forget to turn off your location when you're done.

7 Get some proper 'bin shoes' AKA garden/backdoor shoes that you aren't embarrassed to be seen in by the postie. Also for: hanging laundry, watering plants, feeding the birds and barbecues.

8 Paint your nails in rainbow colours with each nail a different shade; looking at them will instantly cheer you up.

Paint your nails ... and borrow a dog.



9 Wear one colour head to toe It may make you see your wardrobe in a new light! Cheerful clothes can be your armour against a day-to-day that threatens to grind you down. Embrace colour. Think pink today, be true blue tomorrow. Mellow out in yellow to bring the sunshine in. Make the world a little jollier, one pair of red socks at a time.

10 Put up a bird feeder Here's how to get birds to come, says the RSPB's Anna Feeney. "Finches, tits, and sparrows love sunflower hearts; the latter will also enjoy a mesh feeder with peanuts. Many birds like fat balls, though robins, blackbirds and dunnocks prefer a ground feeder tray (avoid this if there are cats in your area). Place hanging feeders and bird tables high, and a couple of metres away from thick cover so birds can retreat from aerial predators such as sparrowhawks. Avoid anything

with salt, cooked food, loose peanuts and dry, hard foods or bread in spring and summer (chicks can choke on them). Clean your feeder with a mild disinfectant and hot water once a week."

11 End your working day properly Do something, anything, when you clock off - a walk; a swim; a free online yoga class or take some deep breaths in your outdoor space. Especially important when working from home.

12 Pick some flowers and foliage Head to your garden (or local countryside), pick, then arrange beautifully, says Alys Fowler. "A simple jar of the soft, brilliant green of new growth is uplifting and needs little else to adorn it. There are plenty of grasses in flower now and you'll be surprised how elevated they look once placed in a pretty vase. A single arching branch of foliage can make a statement or think of the vase like a clock: looking from above, place beech leaves, say, at 12, 3, 6 and 9 o'clock, lime leaves in between, then add the next thing. Knock the symmetry off with the odd stem placed here or there. If foraging, remember to pick sparingly from several plants. With woody stems, bash the bottom to help water uptake." Angela is inspirational to me, by doing this whenever she can.

13 Head to the water Paddle, kayak, or watch it flow past, it doesn't matter- enjoy the change of pace and perspective.

14 Learn a new, achievable skill on YouTube. It could change your life. These days you don't need to worry about not knowing stuff. Just type your personal failings into YouTube and there'll be a big, bearded American come along to explain. From simple life hacks such as destalking thyme (pull it through a colander) to longer-term projects such as teaching your child to ride a bike, YouTube is there to enrich your life. So, fix that leaky tap, discover the joys of rollerblading ... or dare to dream bigger.

15 Read a new book The local charity shop will have some great books that you've never read. The cost is minimal and the possibilities endless. Mine sold me 5 books for £1 the other week and I've thoroughly enjoyed the ones I've read so far...cheap escapism, plus I've learned a lot!

16 Invent a cocktail or a 'mocktail' Here's one to start with: lemon juice, vodka, ice, sugar and crushed mint leaves.

Invent a cocktail ... and wear one colour head to toe.



17 Draw something every day Make a quick sketch of one interesting, funny, uplifting, memorable thing that happened. Keep in a notebook to build a visual diary, instantly carving out a moment's breathing space and lifting your spirits; zero talent required.

18 Change your lighting It can shift the mood of a room. "Switch off bright overhead lights in favour of side lamps that emit a softer, more soothing glow. 3 light sources per room, with a mix of floor and table lights, plus task lighting for activities, is good. If you do want overhead lights, soften with shades and use 'warm white' LED filament bulbs."

19 Keep a commonplace book Use it to jot down quotes, lines or jokes you like. For private consumption.

20 Switch to silicone-free shampoo Ideally in soap bar form, to save on packaging. Your hair will be thicker, and you'll barely need to wash it.

21 Burn incense Scents are subjective but choose one you like.

22 Surprise someone with something small but nice Think a takeaway (picked up, ideally) or a home-cooked meal, rather than a puppy.

23 Sign up to be a telephone befriender Try Age UK's service.

24 Don't be greedy - be generous. Greed is competition in material form. "It's about wanting more, often as a result of needing to feel safe or superior to others: accumulation as protection. At its heart is vulnerability. Think about why you want something and what need you think will be fulfilled by having it - will it fill that need? Having 'stuff' feels exciting to begin with, but then we habituate possessions; experiences actually become more golden as time passes. Being generous takes confidence, and it shouldn't be about leaving yourself with very little. It shouldn't hurt."

25 Go outside every day before 9am Morning light, says Russell Foster, director of the Sleep and Circadian Neuroscience Institute at Oxford University. This kickstarts two important components of health. "For most of us, it acts to synchronise our biological clock, or circadian rhythms, and the sleep/wake cycle, to the 24-hour rotation of the Earth. This harmonisation allows the delivery of the right materials, to the correct organs, at the optimum concentration, at the right time of day. Without this daily reset, our health slides into mush. But flicking the bedside lamp on is not enough! The clock needs bright light. So, fling back the curtains and sit by the window for at least 30 minutes. Better still, go outside. Bright morning light also drives an increase in alertness and mood. Toria, our Peer is good at doing this!

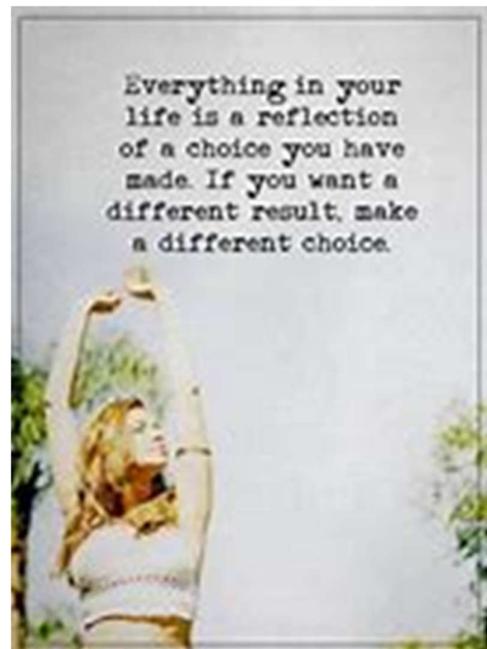
26 Make a playlist for a friend with different music tastes from yours Then ask them to make one in return.

27 Find one practical way to make a difference "Few people set out to be a community champion: instead, they find something they're passionate (even angry) about and try to change it. They're appalled by litter on their street or feel lonely and want to reach out to others who feel the same or have a skill they'd like to share. They start tentatively making changes: they organise a litter pick, a coffee morning, or a workshop. One event turns into many. Friends are made. People begin to know them for their community efforts. But really, they just noticed something small and decided to do something about it. That's how it starts for them, and that's how it could start for you."

28 Push up your toast Add olive oil, a rub of garlic and a few tomatoes; or butter, cinnamon, and brown sugar; or butter, honey, or peanut butter and top with banana slices. Yum!

29 Literally count your blessings Writing them down can help focus on the good things in your life, especially during bleak times.

30 Plant one (manageable) plant and tend to it Indoors, how about aloe, spider plants or cacti (that don't need much watering) or for outdoors, tomato and strawberry plants are especially cheering at this time of year.



Personal Reflections

I have been reflecting on how important and how much I have used self-compassion in the last few months, I need to give myself more credit than I do. I always said this was the one thing I lacked the most. And it was not until I completed the self-compassion course with RiM that I began to realise and practise this every day after that; now it has become more natural without me trying. On reflection, practising these techniques does work and becomes natural, without thinking of how that should be the way you feel. My mind has begun naturally to be more self-compassionate without feeling guilty or thinking I'm being selfish.

We do get told to be kind to others even from a young age but never told to be kind to yourself.

And having evidence that self-compassion comes more naturally now, I have hope that other areas and tools etc I still practise will always become more natural too.

On reflection, it's the small things as well as the huge success goals achieved that means a lot to me. Whether that being my children's successes or my own.

Over the last few months, I had to search and even come across new interests/coping strategies. Reinventing new ones and trying old interests/hobbies that made me enjoy life more.



I have always loved music and music has been an important part of my support for my mental health since I was a little girl. But recently I have a new love of a new genre, Northern Soul. I didn't know of any songs but since going to an evening of Northern Soul without hearing the songs, the next day I was asking Alexa to play them all again, so I must have liked it. Wish I had vinyl to play instead! I'm fascinated by the whole story behind the dancing of Northern and how it all started.

I would definitely go to an evening that has a dancefloor instead of dancing in the aisles. I noticed I didn't have a care in the world whilst up dancing that evening and did not care who saw me or what they thought. I was just being free and that felt amazing. I wouldn't have thought that way without attending the courses at Recovery in Mind. Hope you all have found something new or old that you enjoy or used to enjoy?

Difficult situations that life continues to deliver in recent times reminds me yet again how resilient I am, and it's those moments that make me remember how far I have come.

Lorraine, Peer Trainer



Course Updates and Reflections

NEW COURSE - 'Life Flow' or 'Kawa' Course

This new course has come about in response to students' feedback from the talk we had from Psychiatrist Gwen Adshead in April entitled 'Living with uncertainty'. We hope this 2-week course will enable students to step back from everyday life to look at their current situation and where they would like to be, and thereby feel more comfortable with the inevitable uncertainties of life.

Kawa means 'River' in Japanese, and this OT theory was put together by a Canadian, Japanese OT some years ago. Having been on a course with him, we have adapted his ideas into a practical format so RiM students can produce their own visual representation of the flow that their life is taking, and possible changes that could be made to improve how you live your life and improve your wellbeing.



This course is suitable for students who have completed Welcome to Recovery plus some of the other courses we offer and wish to view their life challenges with a different perspective. You are welcome to join us for a 'unique variety of journey down the river!' (...on paper not in real life!)

Wednesday's 12th and 19th October, 10am - 12:30pm, Broadway House

Reflections on Recovery Street



We have recently completed our 'Recovery Street' course which has been a great success after its 3-year absence. One of our first activities was 'alphabet photography' - finding letters in the objects students saw in the local environment. It's a great exercise in slowing down, taking notice of and paying careful attention to the things around you, and looking at things from a different perspective. So, good for mindfulness and a lot of fun too - why not give it a go? You could try photographing the letters of your name (as the Recovery Street students did), or any other word that's meaningful to you.

Following on from that, students took different images each week that represented various aspects of their recovery journey. Below is a selection of photos taken on the theme of 'what inspires my recovery?' together with comments students made about the course:

'Recovery in Mind has been the turning point for me and changed my life for the better as I feel a lot more positive about things and find them easier to deal with, and everyone is so supportive and helpful. It's a journey worth starting'

'It was lovely to be able to express my feelings in camera imagery.'

'Recovery Street is a great course to do as it's so inspirational and very thought-provoking. I recommend it to anyone. I loved doing it and it's a very exciting course to do. It's also a very reflective course and makes you think of how far you've come.'

'Recovery in Mind is better than therapy. Family and friends have noticed a change in myself doing Recovery in Mind. The staff don't judge as they actually all had their own mental health battles.'

Recovery in Mind is very good. It makes you look at everything differently and see things in a different way!

'Joining and being part of the 'Recovery in Mind Tribe' has been and continues to be life changing. In terms of my own recovery, it has been amazing, but even more, it has allowed me to find and become a much better version of myself.'



'I just wanted to say that I have enjoyed/loved every minute of the recovery street course, as it was so inspirational, thought provoking and very reflective, and I was so glad that I had the chance to do the whole thing, not only has it changed the way I think about things but made me a lot more mindful of the things around me. It has also made me realise how far I've actually come from where I was to where I am now and it's quite emotional/humbling. It's been a very long/tough road to get there, but I made it and its now spurred me on that little bit more to keep going and never give up. There is always hope out there that things will improve and get better.'



'Brilliant. Being able to express myself in photos much more easily and fully than with words is such a relief! It's got a lot of negatives about being ill out of me by feeling able to say, "That's how it is!" in pictures. It's been great finding so much common experience - plus laughter! - with the rest of the group. I'm looking at things in new ways.'

'I'm so glad I signed up for Recovery Street. It has made me see what's around me in a different light, you start taking notice and see things you would never have thought were there as well as interpreting what our pictures mean to us in a different way and understanding there are positives in front of us. I'm not a great photographer at all but it was great: you just point and press the button; you don't need any experience which certainly takes the pressure off. The group has been very welcoming; we have all shared our pictures and the meaning behind them and the tutors have been great. I have actually done week 1 with our local scouts which was great; you can do these activities with your family as well. I totally recommend this course and you will see your surroundings in a different way.'



Reflections on the Reading Course

We have now been running this course, once a term, for four years. It may be a course you have looked at on our website and thought, reading isn't for you, it's a bit like being at school, or you may struggle to concentrate. Our reading course is not like any other Book Group or Book Club. There is no reading to do beforehand to prepare for the course: it's just a case of turning up and enjoying the written word.

The course meets weekly at Newbury library for up to 6, 90-minute sessions. We also aim to run one taster session a term so students can try it out before signing up for the course. You don't have to attend the taster session to enrol on the course.

The aim of each session is to read aloud a short story or part of a longer book and a poem. The facilitator starts by reading aloud and then students can read aloud if they choose, but there is no pressure for anyone to do this. At regular intervals in the text, we pause reading and chat about what the story is leading us to think about. Again, there is no pressure for people to comment if they do not want to.

You might be wondering how this may help your recovery. Here are some thoughts that have been voiced by students in the past:

- It offers a safe place to discuss ideas without being judged.
- It gives the opportunity to consider things from a different point of view. "Through the stories I have realised that life isn't black and white, there are shades of grey and that's helpful."
- Over the 6 weeks trust and confidence grow which enables some people to have their voice heard for the first time.
- It may open new doors in life. One student enrolled on a creative writing course after attending a reading course. They realised that the written word is valued by people.
- It helps improve concentration and attention.
- Feeling connected to the written word and the people around you.
- Encouraging or re-engaging with reading.
- Opening one's eyes to different sorts of the written word.
- It's really enjoyable and fun.

We are planning to run a taster session in October and a 6-week course in November/ December. If you'd like to try something new, we'd encourage you to give it a go, and would love to see you there!

Student comments....

'A reading group is a get together of people reading a short story or paragraph from a book and commentating on the story. I love these sessions, so good to get together with a group for 6 weeks.'

'For me it is a weekly anchor I feel committed to and look forward to. It is being in a safe and a like-minded group talking freely about a random text. We're all in this together, let's have a laugh, a chat, a smile but with someone to guide us. Also gives me the opportunity to browse books at the library.'

'Reading for Recovery is a great place to enjoy reading or just listening to short stories and poems in a small friendly relaxed group that's cool in summer and warm in winter!'

Students' Corner

A new hobby...

I have just taken up and started learning a new hobby called quilling (rolling paper into different shapes, sizes and combinations of different colours or just plain colours to make a picture), I am just learning the basics at the moment and have done some simple pictures.

I started learning to quill as I always like learning new things and have always been interested in learning it. A friend of mine that I met through Recovery in Mind has taught me how to do it as well as watching YouTube and Pinterest videos.



Some of the equipment you need to start off with is:

- A pack of quilling papers which you can get in many different colours and sizes from craft shops or online (eBay or Amazon etc)
- A slotted tool for rolling the paper which usually comes in a set, or you can buy them individually, again from craft shops or online.
- PVA glue/glue gun
- Card or paper to do your picture on
- Crimper which you can buy if you wish to, to make crinkly lines etc with
- Most of all, A LOT of patience!

Some of the challenges I faced with it at the beginning was trying to slit the paper strip through the tool as it's quite fiddly to do, but once I got the hang of it, it was easy to do; also remembering to glue the end once you've made the shape as quite a few times I found that it unravelled because it wasn't glued properly so I had to start again, which was frustrating.

I enjoy doing it as you can just come up with random ideas when experimenting with the different shapes, colours, and combinations etc and then you can turn it into a nice picture. It is very relaxing when you get into the flow of it and the possibilities are endless.

To get a shape with 2 or more colours combined, all you do is just glue one colour on to the end of the other etc and start rolling. You can even cut them all to shorter lengths to make smaller shapes as well. The tip for that is to fold the strip in half and cut it down the middle.

It takes quite a while to build up to doing a picture: my first proper basic picture that I did took me 2 days on and off as each quill takes a lot of work and then you have to make sure that the end is glued properly, otherwise it will just unravel and you will have to start again.

One of my favourite pieces that I have done so far is the rainbow picture, as I love to work with different colours, and it looks effective when it's done. I also like adding quotes to pictures as well which mean something to me and are inspirational.

So, guys, if you want to try something new, give it a go. If you wish to and see what you come up with, you might be amazed :) Elaine



Students' Corner Continued.....

Welcome to Recovery - Wellness Toolbox Week

We would just like to share this wonderful Hope and Wellness Cabin that was created by a student following week 4, the Wellness Toolbox week, of the recent Welcome to Recovery Course plus a few words about what it means to them.

'When I started the Welcome course, I felt lost, alone and in darkness. It really hit home for me about how my life was when we did the Hope session. I built the Cabin (with my neighbour who taught me new skills; I got to use power tools) as a symbol of the start to becoming well and staying well. I have been in darkness for so long I felt that I needed to have something that I could go back to if I needed to. The Cabin allows me to do this because I have reminders of the tools I can use, and most importantly I have light (shows me it's not all darkness). It showed me I can build new foundations for me to stay well and remain well. All the things I have been learning on my course.

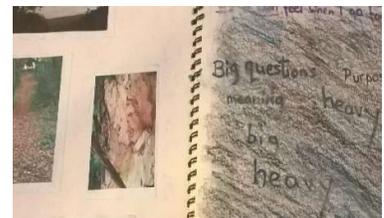
The Cabin is a labour of love that is inspiring me to start my journey for ME and keep going.'
Louise



Visual diary of your daily walks

The Winter RiM Newsletter had an article on "Make a visual diary of your daily walks". I really don't like going for walks, or any other exercise, even though I have a mini nature reserve almost behind my house to walk in. My head puts me off all the time, even while I'm walking. And so, it seemed a great idea to have this "mission" for my walks - especially as I love creating scrapbooks and journals.

So, I went for walks to find and take photos of just a few things that I saw that I really liked - even if I was hating absolutely everything else! Then I printed my favourite photos and stuck them in the journal, and also used paint, natural objects that I picked up, and even porridge oats (for bark texture), to make impressions of what I'd seen. And, also, words, especially to work through all the negatives in my head telling me not to bother to walk.



It worked! I did at least go for a few walks a week in the nature reserve near me through the Winter. I loved creating the journal and that gave me an incentive for the walks. I've got out of the habit again now, and so I need to add to the journal with summer pages based on further walks! Did anyone else try? Jenny

Students' Corner Continued.....

Allotment Thanks



Huge thanks to Ashley on his hard work making us this wonderful planter at the allotment. Ashley worked on the project over the summer term, and we are thrilled with the result!



Final Reflections

In our last April newsletter, I talked about the idea of our recovery being a bit like gardening, and how the natural healing process takes time, nurture, and care. I shared some photos of my plum tree, which at that time had just begun to blossom. Now it is growing its fruit which over the next few weeks should ripen. With a little more time and tending, I can look forward to enjoying ripe, juicy plums later this summer! The waiting and growth through the seasons will have all been worthwhile!



External Links

Mental Health & Debt - help, information, guidance and support for individuals and carers
[The MoneySavingExpert.com guide to mental health and debt](https://www.moneySavingExpert.com/guide-to-mental-health-and-debt/)

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.