



# Newsletter

No 36

20/07/2023

Dear Students,

Another year has flown by. In fact, we have just celebrated the end of our 7th year here at Recovery in Mind (RiM) and you are all the reason it exists. As we reflect on the last 12 months it feels as if we are more of a Community now rather than 'just' a Recovery College. I was given the advice, just after I had started RiM was to 'Build a Community, not a business' (although we have always been a non-profit making one) and together that's what WE have created. By joining a course, you are giving someone else 'Hope' that they can turn a corner - we all remember the first time we came along and feeling less isolated or alone. By having a chat during coffee time, encouraging someone who might appreciate it during a walk or a creativity activity or simply welcoming someone with a smile. Our community can develop further by sharing your experiences of RiM more broadly, which might help someone else feel able to attend.



The Monday morning group are a lovely mix of women who share positive experiences, have a laugh together and who 'get each other' - they are always happy to welcome new people. Sue started the group so that she and other women had something to get up for and get going on a Monday morning - our community in Action! There is also the new Men's Shed group led by our enthusiastic peer supporter, Nick. At present they meet at the allotment to do some gardening together, add something new to the allotment and also support one another in the informal setting of our wonderful allotment just off Craven Road. If either of these opportunities interest, you then please email Helen who can link you in to either Sue or Nick. ([helen@recoveryinmind.org](mailto:helen@recoveryinmind.org))

In the spirit of mutual support can I ask you to take a look Claire Vincent's article in this newsletter about her Cross Channel swim planned for this Autumn. Claire is swimming to raise funds for Recovery in Mind so that we can help more people living in West Berkshire. Claire is amazing and inspiring. If you would like to support her and make a donation then please take a look at her Just Giving page, Claire is aiming to raising £5,000.

May I thank our staff team, whose hard work, commitment, and enthusiasm is second to none and make Recovery in Mind a shining beacon of hope and recovery.

We have lots of new, exciting courses and workshops planned for the Autumn Term starting in September. Take a look at the website and make some bookings or recommend us to someone else. In the meantime, enjoy the sunshine (I hope it lasts) and get reading!

Best wishes

Angela and the entire Recovery in Mind Team

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### **Summer Sun** by Robert Louis Stevenson

Great is the sun, and wide he goes  
Through empty heaven with repose;  
And in the blue and glowing days  
More thick than rain he showers his rays.

Though closer still the blinds we pull  
To keep the shady parlour cool,  
Yet he will find a chink or two  
To slip his golden fingers through.

The dusty attic spider-clad  
He, through the keyhole, maketh glad;  
And through the broken edge of tiles  
Into the laddered hay-loft smiles.

Meantime his golden face around  
He bares to all the garden ground,  
And sheds a warm and glittering look  
Among the ivy's inmost nook.

Above the hills, along the blue,  
Round the bright air with footing true,  
To please the child, to paint the rose,  
The gardener of the World, he goes.



## Action for self-care over the summer



We find ourselves at the end of another academic year with RiM (our 7<sup>th</sup>!) and are reflecting on the weeks ahead. During times of crisis, whether it's a pandemic or a personal crisis (like a break-up, the loss of a job, or of a loved one), self-care may seem like a low priority. However, research shows that our ability to take care of ourselves whilst experiencing stress is vital.

### What is self-care?

The phrase "self-care" gets thrown around a lot in the media. You might think of it as activities like having a spa day, or getting your hair done but there's a whole lot more to self-care than that.

*Self-care is the act of intentionally engaging in habits and behaviours that support your well-being.*

Here is a list of self-care activities and additional ways you can take care of yourself during the summer in these unprecedented times.

### Wellness & Exercise

- Eat regularly and keep in mind that grocery stores are open with plenty of choices. It's okay to eat boxed and canned food but fresh is good too. Have fun experimenting with recipes. Bake and enjoy tasty treats. Frozen fruits and veggies can be good to stock up on, so you always have them to use in case of need or if you become ill for any reason.
- Make sure you're getting enough sleep. Keeping up a good sleep schedule is important and will help your mind and body regulate itself. On very hot days you could keep your curtains or blinds closed in your bedroom to keep the sun and heat out of the room and so it's cooler at night and easier to sleep.
- Do something physical every day. Go for a walk, a run, a virtual yoga class, gardening, or a bike ride. It's good for health but will also help with your sleep.
- Take a few minutes to stretch every morning or evening and give yourself the gift of a time for relaxation too.
- Practise regular meditation. There are lots of great apps with meditations you can use. Check out [Calm](#), [Insight Timer](#), and [Headspace](#), just to name a few. Even just 5 minutes of meditation a day can be helpful. If that feels like too much, start with 2-3 minutes. See our RiM website too for breathing exercises.

### Learning & Enrichment Activities

- Use an app to learn something new. [Duolingo](#) is great to learn a new language.
- There are lots of free classes available online now. If there's a hobby you've always wanted to try, now's a great time to pick it up. Enrol on a new course for September - Recovery in Mind has some new workshops to try!
- Take a tour. Many museums, zoos, and national parks have created online tours available to the public - for free!

- Discover a new park or walk or activity to try out.
- Read a book that's of interest to you. Try a new author or subject matter, to stimulate the brain cells and help move you forward!



### Chores

- Clean out your cupboards or drawers.... or even the garage!
- Deep clean your house.
- Put your loose photos into albums or make a scrap book.
- Re-arrange your furniture.
- Weed the garden.
- Re-decorate a room.

### Stay Productive at Work

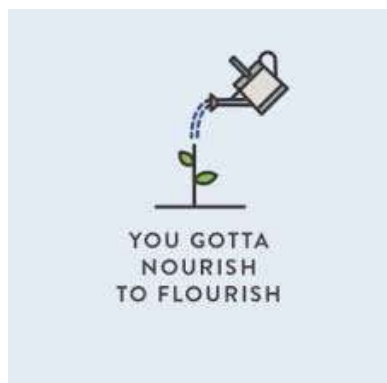
- Stick to a work schedule as best you can. Putting a boundary around the hours you work can help you separate your personal life and work life (especially while you might be working from home).
- Tackle the "back burner" projects you've been putting off for months. By staying productive, you will help ease your anxiety and give your mind something to focus on.
- Clear out your inbox of unwanted emails.
- Take regular breaks to keep your focus and keep hydrated.

### Stay Sociable

- Have a date night - at home if necessary.
- Plan a virtual happy hour with your work buddies or meet outside if good weather.
- Do a movie night with your friends. Netflix has created a way to watch movies "together" through their platform. Chat about it afterwards.
- Check on your friends and neighbours. Many people are reconnecting with old friends and loved ones during this time. Check on a friend from college, text a neighbour to see how they're doing, or call the family member you haven't seen in a few years.
- Meet others for a picnic - in the better weather it's an ideal way of meeting safely with others. If everyone brings a dish it's a more affordable way of getting together too!

### Indulge Yourself

- Do things that make you feel good. Give yourself your own pamper session.
- Spend a day outdoors. Sunshine is nature's antidepressant and while some activities might be limited, you can still spend as much time outside as possible. Remember the sun cream though!
- Wear your favourite outfit.
- Make your favourite meal.
- Summer's the time for ice creams! They're 'essential' for keeping you cool on hot days! Hahaha.





# SELF-CARE IDEAS



## Get Support

One of the things to be most grateful for right now is how digitally connected our world is. Though we've been socially distanced we aren't cut off from social support. Giving and receiving support though this time is crucial. Make sure to check in regularly with the people you love, reach out for help if you need it. Look back on the notes you made on 'support and our supporters' in the Welcome to Recovery course. Look after yourselves well!

## Summer Self-Care

Make a list of goals	Sit in the sun shine	Make lemon water	Go on a hike or walk	Spend time in water	Let yourself be a kid
Eat lunch outside	Unplug for the day	Drink your water	Make a fruit salad	Relax to nature sounds	Go out for ice cream
Dress up to feel cute	Make a summer playlist	Make your own popcicles	Eat a water-melon	Take a mid-day nap	Go to a Farmer's Market
Make s'mores or grill	Try watergun painting	Take a ton of pictures	Watch the sun rise	Go on a road trip	Do yoga outside
Focus on being happy	Use sidewalk chalk	Read a good book	Spend all day laughing	Write something beautiful	Go star gazing

## Claire's Cross Channel Swim Fundraiser



In the summer of 2021, a long-term friend asked me if I would join her in swimming the English Channel as a relay team. My initial thought was that sounds like an amazing opportunity and said yes immediately, but when I thought about it properly, my excitement was equalled with fear. It still is, but after 2 years of training I feel ready.

We are now a team of 5 middle aged women, we will swim for an hour, one after another continuously from Dover until we reach the French coast. We have a piloted support boat carrying the officials from the Channel Swim and Piloting Federation who will adjudicate.

No wetsuits allowed means that we will have no protection against the cold and the jellyfish as well as contending with the diesel fumes of the boat, floating debris, not to mention crossing one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world!

Although this is a physical challenge, it will be tough mentally. This is why I want to raise as much money for Recovery in Mind as I can. Angela and the team have been a huge help and support to me over the last few years and no doubt will continue to be part of my life for years to come.

I'd be so grateful if you could support my challenge and give something back to Recovery in Mind by donating, please visit my just giving page via the link below:

[https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/clairevincentchannelswim?utm\\_term=GQb8mvYbr](https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/clairevincentchannelswim?utm_term=GQb8mvYbr)

Test swim passed on June 13th on a lovely sunny day in Bude, but the water was still cold. One and a half hours in the sea, followed by an hour and a half out to warm up and another hour in the water. It was tough without wet suits, but it was achieved!



*I'm sure you all agree that Claire's swim across the English Channel is inspirational, and we really do wish her the best. Hopefully, she can tell us all about it later in the year. It would be great if we could support her to raise funds for Recovery in Mind. Perhaps you could make a donation, whatever you can, and share the article and request for donations via JustGiving with family, friends and colleagues. It would be much appreciated. I'm sure you will all agree that Recovery in Mind makes a huge difference to many of us at present and we want to ensure that its around for years to come so that others too can benefit from the courses, workshops, support and friendship that it offers. Thanks Claire, and best of luck - we're all behind you! Angela*

## Goals to Nourish Your Mind, Body and Soul

**Goals to Nourish Your Mind.** We often get caught up in our to-do lists and worry how we're going to get everything done, or waste our time worrying, so it's important to give your brain some time to rest. After all, if your brain isn't working correctly, nothing is going to work correctly!

Here are 10 things you can do to **nourish your mind**:

- Stay offline one day per week.
- Meditate or do a relaxation session every morning.
- Read 10 pages per day.
- Write in your Journal every day.
- Get up when your alarm goes off.
- Limit screen time in the evening.
- Start a gratitude journal.
- Do a media detox.
- Take a 'me' day.
- Treat yourself!

**Goals to Nourish Your Body.** We all know how important exercise is, but finding the motivation and time to actually do it is always a struggle. If you break this larger goal into smaller chunks, you'll find it much easier to find something that works for you and stick to it. (Small, achievable goals work best).

Here are 10 ways to **nourish your body**:

- Go for a walk after lunch or dinner.
- Drink a glass of water instead of coffee/tea or coke.
- Squeeze in 10 minutes of exercise per day.
- Eat more veggies.
- Try some online Yoga or Pilates.
- Try meal planning in advance & before you shop.
- Develop a workout routine you can manage.
- Develop a skin and hair regime that works for you (don't forget sun lotion/block).
- Challenge yourself to do a short exercise session daily.
- Try a new form of exercise that you've not tried before.

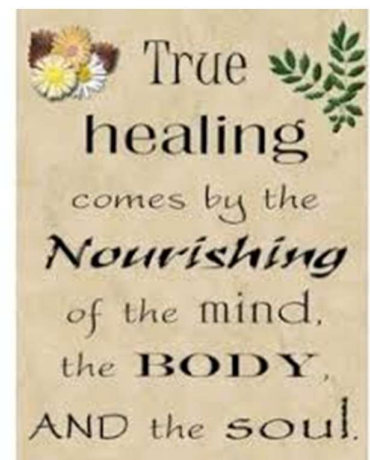
### Goals to Nourish Your Soul

The soul, also referred to as the spirit, doubtlessly means something different to everyone, but it refers to everything that makes up who you are aside from your mind and body. It could involve your relationships, religion, job, hobbies, interests, etc.

Here are 10 ideas to help **nourish your soul**:

- Go to bed at a reasonable time.
- Explore two new places (in reality or online!).
- Learn something new.
- Declutter your home (start with a drawer!).
- Look after your finances.
- Get started on one thing you've been putting off.
- Pay attention to a part of your spiritual and religious life.
- 'Volunteer' somewhere in the community.
- Reach out and make contact with someone.
- Clear out your wardrobe or cupboard.

Fiona





## To a butterfly

I'VE watched you now a full half-hour;  
Self-poised upon that yellow flower  
And, little Butterfly! indeed  
I know not if you sleep or feed.  
How motionless!--not frozen seas  
More motionless! and then  
What joy awaits you, when the breeze  
Hath found you out among the trees,  
And calls you forth again!



This plot of orchard-ground is ours;  
My trees they are, my Sister's flowers;  
Here rest your wings when they are weary;  
Here lodge as in a sanctuary!  
Come often to us, fear no wrong;  
Sit near us on the bough!  
We'll talk of sunshine and of song,  
And summer days, when we were young;  
Sweet childish days, that were as long  
As twenty days are now.



William Wordsworth



## Course Reflections

As we reach the end of the summer term and the end of this academic year, we thought we would reflect on some of the courses and workshops from this term. The following articles have been written by a mixture of students, peer trainers and the course leaders. We hope that they may encourage you to enrol on one of our courses in September, please have a look at the website and if you have any questions please get in touch.

### Lino-Printing Workshop

We held a lino-printing workshop in June, something new for Recovery in Mind! It was run by an external tutor, Charlotte Adcock, independent artist and printmaker, who joined us at the allotment that we share with Sport in Mind.

We took advantage of the summer weather to enjoy the outdoor space and took inspiration from the surrounding environment (as well as students' own creative imagination, which always seems to be in abundant supply!) to find images for the prints. We began by sketching our designs on paper, then on to the lino. The next stage was etching out the design with the tools supplied, then covering the lino with our chosen coloured ink, using rollers to ensure a smooth coverage. We then printed the inked designs onto coloured card, producing a wide variety of effects and results.

Thank you to everyone who took part and embraced the opportunity to learn a new creative skill. Cath



### Haikus spotted by Gillian recently in a garden.....

In the morning breeze  
Skylarks  
Dance straight up in the sky

Grasses are misty  
The waters silent  
A tranquil evening



## The 'Take Notice Walk'

Ever since my very first session as a new Recovery in Mind student I have noticed the easy connection students have to each other and this really showed during the Take Notice walk in May. Of course, there is a connection and one that immediately helps just by being with others with similar issues, who acknowledge and understand your difficulties is always a relief.

The friendly unpressured environment was instantly showing itself upon arrival hopefully helping students

forget any negativity going on in our lives. I have to add, it did for me, removing and minimising some of my complications over the last two weeks!



I find it interesting to see some students wanting to talk to others straight away and some just wanting their own space and possibly more importantly the ones that start off on their own and then integrate as time goes on.

I know the pandemic caused a big setback with many people's mental health and wellbeing and of course with periods of isolation becoming law was the biggest problem to overcome once we could all socialise again. Even now some are still struggling but I feel this is one of the best ways to help oneself by a walk or social activity with others, as you are doing something that takes your mind off those nasty little negative gremlins that just love to try and spoil any enjoyment you seek.



It was a beautiful day, which magnified the colours and new fresh growth of the countryside all around us - the birds so very busy feeding young in a very unusual nesting place in Donnington Castle.

I couldn't resist showing my favourite picture of some very attractive ponies.



The view from the castle could not have been clearer and it was fun trying to work out where various places were in Newbury and we spent some time just 'taking notice' and enjoying the moment.

To end the session, we had much appreciated drinks and fruit and here a general discussion took place about Recovery in Mind, The Courses, What helps you? What doesn't? Has the Pandemic affected you, your friends and family? It was the total inclusion of Students and the Team that turned this interesting and important discussion into valuable learning. I feel we all enjoyed those few hours and gained much positivity from them..... I know I did.

Thank you everyone. 😊

Lynette x (Peer Trainer)



## Reading For Recovery

I went to the very first Reading for Recovery course years ago, and have been to almost all of the reading courses since. The reading course, for people who haven't done it, consists of a different short story or a chapter from a book each week. There is no preparation or reading to be done in advance. Gillian, the Reader Leader, reads aloud and stops at a certain point, and we discuss the text. We usually have good discussions about what we have read. You can choose



to read a section out loud, but there is no pressure to do so. At the end of the session, we look at a poem that matches the theme of the text we have just read. I find the sessions really interesting, and it is very relaxing to have a story read to you. Julie (Student)

## Recovery Street - The Next Chapter

Last year I attended a Recovery Street Course, where we took photos in and around Newbury town centre, of images that best represented the different stages of our journey to recovery. It was a very enjoyable time as it was lovely meeting other students and sharing our photos and the reasons why we took them. At the end of the course, we each had a book of our photos! I was therefore very excited to receive an email from Recovery in Mind inviting me and other students from the Recovery Street courses, for a visit to the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, to take photos for the "Next Chapter" of our recovery for our own individual magazines!



As there was so much to see in the museum, we were advised to concentrate on the areas of interest to us. With this in mind, I headed for the art and ceramics section as outdoor spaces and nature are so important for my recovery. I wasn't disappointed as there were so many landscape paintings and many ceramics with beautiful birds, insects and flowers! Other students chose artefacts and other items of interest.

For example, one of the students looked for old maps and globes as she felt they represented her journey. We all had a very enjoyable time! The following week

we were back at Broadway House to share our images and arrange for the compilation of our magazines with Alex Hern, our creative tutor. We then went back the following month to collect our magazines. I was thrilled with mine and loved looking at the other students' magazines! There were so many great photos and thought-provoking quotations and texts! I would like to thank Angela, Cath, Fiona and Nick for making this great experience possible! I would also like to thank Alex for his great creative skills in producing our magazines! Sue (Student)



## Wet Felting Workshop

A few of us participated in a wet felting workshop at the end of April, kindly run for us by one of our students, Marja. We held it in our allotment polytunnel which proved to be a wonderful, relaxed space in which to 'get into the flow' of the shared activity, learning something new together. We discovered that the peacefulness of the environment, surrounded by all manner of flowers and produce, was very conducive to getting our creative juices flowing!

Marja led a superb session for us, demonstrating how to make a piece of wet felt from a variety of materials which she brought with her, enabling each of us to have a go at producing our own piece. It was a lot of fun, and we enjoyed learning and experimenting together with different fabrics and effects.

We would like to say a huge thank you to Marja for sharing her passion, skills, expertise, time, and resources so generously with us. And we'd love to encourage any of you who may feel you have something you'd like to share with the Recovery in Mind community to get in touch with us. It might be a particular interest or skill or knowledge /experience - anything, really, that might encourage other students. That might feel like quite a scary thing to do but could be a great opportunity to 'step out of your comfort zone' and grow your confidence. We're always looking to expand our offerings and embrace new opportunities, so would love your involvement, if anyone feels inspired. Cath.



## Speen Moors Walk

We had an enjoyable slow-paced circular walk at Speen Moors recently with lots of time to appreciate nature and being together. A chance to reflect and make new connections with each other and the four-legged friends that joined us too! Angela.





## Student Creativity

We do enjoy seeing and hearing about the interesting hobbies that our students have and we wanted to share with you Julie's amazing artwork....



I made this collage on canvas, using found objects, (litter I found whilst litter picking), small items I bought at car boot, (such as the little football), craft paper and pieces torn from magazines. The blue sky is made from bits of a hair net, stretched out and glued on. I found the sweet wrappers and food packaging, the lace for the foam on the sea was lace from a baby's sock that I found. The little bottle was originally an earring I got at a car boot sale. I was inspired to

make this collage by visiting the Open Studios where professional artists displayed their work. There was one collage of items the artist had found at the beach called 'High Tide', and that inspired me to make my own beach scene. I don't live near a beach, so I used objects found in the Newbury area.

This collage is again a beach scene. I used items I found or bought cheaply, (such as the yellow flannel which I ripped and frayed to look like the ocean washing on to the sand). I thought the little dog on a surfboard would make people smile. I really enjoyed making both of these collages.



I have been attending some free art classes for mental wellbeing at first through the Thrive programme, (through the Corn Exchange), and then through 'Creative Communities". Two artists, Tanya and Sarah, run the classes on different days of the week at different locations, they run fortnightly. The courses are ending for the summer in July but should hopefully run again in September if they can secure the funding needed. Julie (student)

## Men's Shed

We started our Men's Shed group down at our allotment this term with great success. We were able to complete a number of jobs from cutting back branches, woodworking new bedding posts, weeding and watering, we even found time to have a BBQ! We'll be starting back again on 6th September 4:30pm- 6:30pm so do come and join us, you can book a place via the website. Nick (Peer Trainer)



## Coffee Catch-Up

We're a small, friendly group of women who meet every Monday morning for a coffee and a chat, and there's often a laugh or two.

If you'd like to join us, you would be very welcome - just email Helen to find out more..... [helen@recoveryinmind.org](mailto:helen@recoveryinmind.org)

## YOUR HELP PLEASE.....

We have created a short survey for some end of term feedback, and we would welcome your responses to help with planning future courses and workshops. It should only take a few minutes to complete, here is the link....

<https://forms.office.com/e/fyiTt6rHug>

## 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**- 0118 904 3200

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

**Samaritans** - 116 123

**NHS** - 111

999 is for **EMERGENCY** calls only.