



Newsletter

No 41

01/04/2025

Dear Students,

Whether we are trying to learn a language, or master a new skill or hobby, we all know that this requires time, practice and a certain amount of personal motivation. The same applies to our 'Recovery'. For many it may have taken several years of a slow decline in one's mental health or a sudden or unexpected life event that set things on a downward spiral. So perhaps it's unrealistic for us to expect a short intervention of learning and support to turn things around. Like the instrument learning, it takes practice. If I am trying to implement a new approach to my thinking, such as managing my anxiety, the tools and skills will require regular repetition before things begin to change. A little like exercise - we don't expect results over night - but we often do with our mental health. I, like you, am on an ongoing journey to improve, maintain and develop a healthier mindset and response to the complex and often difficult world that we inhabit and share. With time, effort, and making wiser choices, this can be done. I'm aware that life is busy; we all have demands on us and pulls on our time. But if you embed the concept that everyone else gets a better version of me and I have a nicer time living in my own mind, then it's an absolute win: win situation. Sometimes this means putting our phone away for half an hour (doomscrolling is known to be very negative on your mental health) to read our notes from a course; getting up off the sofa to do some exercise (proven to be excellent for your mental health); or focussing on your breathing when overwhelmed and remembering to be in the moment as we dash from one thing to another. These actions can pay us back 10-fold. We become more confident in our ability to manage our 'Tricky Minds', have the skills embedded in our way of thinking, and are able to keep on top and maintain better mental health.

With Spring around the corner let's not leave our own 'flourishing mental health and wellbeing' to chance. Be proactive, continue to learn and embed new tools and skills and make the most of the longer 'brighter' days ahead.

Best wishes
Angela and the entire Recovery in Mind team





Come and sing with Recovery in Mind.

This is in conjunction with Berkshire Music Trust (BMT) and Jamie from BMT, who, with his lively and infectious style, will bring the music and encourage everyone to join in.

This is a 10-week opportunity and everyone who has completed Welcome to Recovery is invited to participate. No previous singing experience is necessary - just come along and join in. A great way to spend a late spring/early summer evening with the tribe. Starts on Wednesday 30th April 5pm - 6:30pm at The Waterside Centre. Book via the website.

April Fool's Day

The first day in April is the day most commonly called "April Fool's Day". Practical jokes, silliness, and foolishness are a big part of the day. Nobody is exactly sure where the tradition started, though many people think it can be traced back to a change in the calendar in 16th century France.

When King Charles IX introduced the Gregorian calendar in 1582, it changed the first day of the new year to January first. Before that, it was celebrated during the week of March 25 - April 1. Those that refused to acknowledge the change continued to celebrate on April first and were considered "fools" for not changing. It became commonplace to play jokes on these people.

Now, people all over the world use April Fool's Day as an excuse to play practical jokes on friends. These are not mean-spirited tricks, just silly jokes. Many newspapers, radio personalities, television shows, and Internet web sites participate in the celebration.

One of the most famous April Fool's Day hoaxes was carried out in 1957. The BBC television news show, Panorama, announced that Swiss farmers had grown a wonderful "spaghetti crop" and showed a video of them picking spaghetti from trees! In 1998, Burger King advertised its new Left-Handed Whopper on April Fool's Day, saying that all of the condiments were placed especially for the left-handed eater. Both of these practical jokes fooled tons of people!



Student Course Reflections

Here are a few review articles by some students who have attended courses in this past year:-

Mindful Sewing

I have been a stitcher for most of my life in some shape or form so was very keen to give Mindful Stitching a go, however, having mostly used a pattern, instructions or a kit to guide me I was a little flummoxed by the no rules concept behind it. I needn't have worried though, with a handy starter pack thoughtfully put together by Gillian and Cath's encouraging words I soon got the hang of it and was off. The little pieces of fabric and thread seemed to suddenly just flow together as I focused in on them. I managed to create three different pieces of work and soon realised that the possibilities are endless, and it has been so inspiring to spend time with other like-minded people.

Mindful stitching has become something I do a bit of everyday now, often tucking a small project in to my pocket to do a few stitches while waiting in the car for my granddaughter at school pick-up or searching out interesting fabrics and vintage bits and pieces on my travels. The benefits of being absorbed into something so creative and calming gives my head a break, banishing the troublesome worries that can overwhelm it, so much so that it is definitely now part of my wellness 'tool kit'. I would encourage anyone who has completed the Welcome to Recovery course to try the excellent follow-on workshops or other activities suggested by RiM as you never know what you might discover! Christine.



Anxiety Management Course

My takeaway from the Anxiety Management course is that moderate anxiety is normal! Hard to imagine I know given how overwhelming it can make you feel. The effects of anxiety on the body (breathing faster or shallower, feeling sick, tense muscles, to name but a few), to the effects on the mind (having a sense of dread or fearing the worst, low mood & depression, thinking a lot about bad experiences or over thinking a situation) to our behaviour (avoiding situations). Within this course I found ways to learn how to manage my anxiety more effectively so that I can stay in control of my life rather than feeling that anxiety is controlling me as can sometimes be the case.

Within this course you will learn that by making changes in any one of these: 'our bodies, our thoughts, our behaviours' we can break the cycle of anxiety. This course provides you with exercises to complete, to review and repeat again and again by yourself or with one you trust, so you will see what works and maybe where you have to challenge your thinking and how to best continue your journey. Within the course another aspect to look at will be your eating, drinking & lifestyle habits. A die-hard 'full fat' coffee drinker was I, but after reading the impact caffeine can have on body and mind, I have begun my switch to decaf coffee and reducing my overall intake, a definite positive step in the right direction.

There is a lot of information to take on board and it may feel overwhelming, however under guidance and support from Fiona & Cath plus the fantastic discussions from all who attended made this feel less overwhelming and more achievable. Sinead

WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan)

What a game changer WRAP was for me!

I finished the course feeling up lifted, supported, informed and in control of my mental health. Well done, recovery team!

Nikki



Winter Wellbeing Day - Some student comments from the day....

Amazing good fun, amazing good laughs, amazing good food, amazing great organisation, thank you all....especially Rowena fundraising too!

Absolutely loved every minute of today, so lovely to see everyone and be a part of it. I appreciate you all, thank you so much.

Such a brilliant uplifting day. A kickstart to 2025 which I needed badly, thank you all so much.

Thank you so much for having me and to show us how to play the drums. I never thought I would sit in front of one. Lovely day, time went so quickly.

Creativity

We arrive at the creativity session wondering what's on offer - painting, drawing, crafting maybe. Is there a theme? With spring around the corner, we're greeted with some delightful tulips & daffs, a fine array of drawing materials and a large blank piece of paper each. Your imagination then takes you wherever you wish... no rules, all abilities, just have a go. At its heart, this creative space is a chance to distract and rest the mind from its often-unwelcome chatter. Instead, explore your artistry.

What flows from everyone's minds is always fascinating and varied. This time some abstract creations, some gentle still life, vivid psychedelia, and a nod to art nouveau. An enjoyable way to de-stress in easy company. Sarah

Action for Happiness Calendar

I used the January Action for Happiness calendar. January is quite a challenging month for many people, and I have a friend who was feeling particularly low so when I received the email with the calendar, I thought it would be a great idea for us to do it together. I forwarded her a copy of the calendar and each day we checked in with each other by messaging and sharing our 'action'. We had great fun doing it, got to connect each day, realised it didn't take too long to stop and give yourself the time, and found it a great way to reflect also. My friend said she was really enjoying doing it and I found it so much better doing it with someone else too.

I didn't see the February calendar until a few days in, but we had already been inspired to get something going for ourselves since we enjoyed it so much!! We decided to think of a positive feeling/word of the day and use the alphabet each day, ie, 1st Feb = A / 2nd Feb B etc. We've had quite a few laughs with our word of the day and have again connected daily to share our thoughts, which has been wonderful. So, thank you Recovery in Mind, and I look forward to the next Action for Happiness calendar soon. Linda

Active April 2025

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY



7 Get natural light early in the day. Dim the lights in the evening

14 Relax your body & mind with yoga, tai chi or meditation

21 Regularly pause to stretch and breathe during the day

28 Meet a friend outside for a walk and a chat

1 Commit to being more active this month, starting today

8 Give your body a boost by laughing or making someone laugh

15 Get active by singing today (even if you think you can't sing!)

22 Enjoy moving to your favourite music. Really go for it

29 Become an activist for a cause you really believe in

2 Spend as much time as possible outdoors today

9 Turn your homework or chores into a fun form of exercise

16 Go exploring around your local area and notice new things

23 Go out and do an errand for a loved one or neighbour

30 Make time to run, swim, dance, cycle or stretch today

3 Listen to your body and be grateful for what it can do

10 Have a day with less screen time and more movement

17 Be active outside. Plant some seeds and encourage growth

24 Get active in nature. Feed the birds or go wildlife-spotting

4 Eat healthy and natural food today and drink lots of water

11 Set yourself an exercise goal or sign up to an activity challenge

18 Try out a new exercise, activity or dance class

25 Have a 'no screens' night and take time to recharge yourself

5 Turn a regular activity into a playful game today

12 Move as much as possible, even if you're stuck inside

19 Spend less time sitting today. Get up and move more often

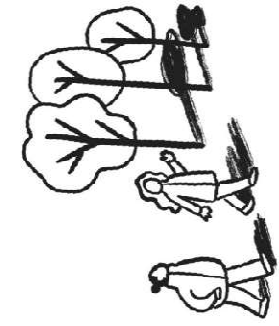
26 Take an extra break in your day and walk outside for 15 minutes

6 Do a body-scan meditation and really notice how your body feels

13 Make sleep a priority and go to bed in good time

20 Focus on 'eating a rainbow' of multi-coloured vegetables today

27 Find a fun exercise to do while waiting for the kettle to boil



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Happier • Kinder • Together

Exhibition at the Base

What fantastic feedback we have received from students and the wider community in response to our exhibition of student creativity that was held recently at The Base in Greenham.

Our sincere thanks again to all of you who have participated in this exciting project.

We are hoping that the exhibition might go 'on tour' to a couple of other venues around Newbury over the coming months so keep an eye out for where it might appear next!



Recovery in Mind Courses Summer Term 2025

All the following courses can be requested via the website for students who have completed the Welcome to Recovery course. Please do get in touch if you need any help with choosing what to do next. We do reserve the right to guide students to the most appropriate course for them or to restrict repeat bookings if you have done it before to enable new students to have a place, so please don't be alarmed if you are put on a waiting list whilst we check availability or your suitability for the course or workshop!



Here is the link to the booking page [Step 2: All Courses | Recovery in Mind](#)

29th April - Building Your Resilience - The last few years have presented challenges for us all, and the ability to build resilience in our own lives to enable us to cope with the challenges that come our way and move forward positively is vitally important. This 4-week course has been developed by the whole Recovery in Mind team, and we'll be looking together at 6 key areas to enable us to 'bounce back' from our challenges and setbacks so that we can 'bounce forward'.

30th April - Sing with Recovery in Mind - This is in conjunction with Berkshire Music Trust (BMT) and Jamie from BMT, who, with his lively and infectious style, will bring the music and encourage everyone to join in. This is a 10-week opportunity and everyone who has completed Welcome to Recovery is invited to participate. No previous singing experience is necessary - just come along and join in. A great way to spend a late spring/early summer evening with the tribe.

30th April - Seasonal Creativity - Join Sarah and 'get in the flow' with a creative project.

14th May - Speen Moors Walk - Join Angela for a slow-paced circular walk at Speen Moors in Newbury. Approximately 3km on rough ground as well as well-trodden paths, taking time to appreciate nature and being together.

3rd June - Reading for Recovery - Join Gillian and Cath at the library to enjoy reading together. The aim is to enjoy reading and listening to reading; a variety of texts will be explored during this 6-week course. No prior reading is required; just sit back and enjoy the literature and perhaps take a turn at reading if you would like to.

4th June - Nourish & Flourish Written Word - Playing with and using words together in the outdoors.

5th June - Allotment Visit - Visit the allotment and join in with a Sport in Mind session.

11th June - Nourish & Flourish Sketching - no previous experience necessary, come along and join in with the outdoors providing our inspiration.

18th June - Flourish Light Gardening - Appreciation of the outdoors with some light gardening - tending the garden and to ourselves!

19th June - Summer Wellbeing Day - date for your diary, more information to follow soon.

25th June - Nourish - using food from the allotment we will cook a simple lunch together and think about how we nourish ourselves.

25th June - What's this thing called Self-Compassion? - An introduction to self-compassion before the 4-week course in the autumn term.

External Links

ASD Adult Social daytime and evening groups

An opportunity for adults with Autism to meet and socialise with one another in a friendly, relaxed environment and plan and participate with support. These are small groups that are already well attended but we have some space for new attendees.

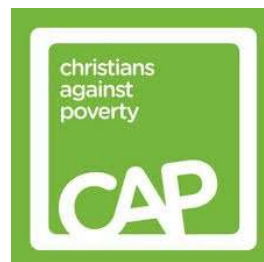
Social group for ASD adults 18 to 30 meets twice a month on a Monday (12pm - 2.30pm) and a Thursday (6.30pm - 8.30pm). The group decide where to meet by making suggestions for venues and then voting for where they would like to go. We usually visit cafes, restaurants and pubs in the Newbury and Thatcham area. The Monday daytime session is mainly a board game/card game session, and members can buy some food/drink at the venue. The Thursday evening session is usually for members to have dinner and a drink and, if appropriate, we play a card game. Due to the need to book tables members are requested to let group administrators know in advance that they plan to attend sessions. Members pay for their own food/drink.

Social group for ASD adults over 30's This group meets fortnightly on a Wednesday (2pm - 3.30pm). This is a new group; we meet at The Two Watermills Pub near Newbury College fortnightly. Chat and card/board game if appropriate on the day.

For more information about referrals, venues, dates and times contact organiser Tony Young (Support Time Recovery Worker, Newbury CMHT) email tony.young@berkshire.nhs.uk Mobile: 07796 276290

CAP Money Coaching Course

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) are now offering their **CAP Money Coaching** course in Newbury, which is superb for helping people think about their spending habits, create their own personal budget, and then most importantly how to stick to it. Essentially, it should help people from all walks of life (working, retired, students, on benefits) to avoid getting into debt.



The course is completely free and is held across 2 sessions. Currently, an evening and daytime course is available at St. Nicolas church hall in March and April respectively. Details and registration can be found at the following website when you enter a Newbury postcode.

<https://capuk.org/get-help/money-coaching>

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.