

14<sup>th</sup> May 2020

# KEEPING YOU IN MIND

## This issue:

- Improve Your Media Diet!
- Chitchat from the Cat
- Being Kind to Nature: Bats
- Mari Ellis Dunning on Being Kind

In a world where  
you can be  
anything - be kind.

Anon


veganposters.com

## Kindness



Plus Adult  
Colouring, Cake  
and Brainteasers!

How to be kind  
to yourself,  
others and the  
planet!



Welcome to the 2nd  
edition of Mind  
Aberystwyth's  
fortnightly newsletter.

We want to stay in contact with  
our service users during this  
difficult time, and realise that  
many of you may not have or do  
not wish to use the internet to  
keep in touch. The theme for our  
second edition is: KINDNESS

HELLO  
/  
SHWMAE

**"Kindness is a behaviour marked by ethical characteristics, a pleasant disposition, and concern and consideration for others. It is considered a virtue, and is recognized as a value in many cultures and religions."**

Humans are wired to co-operate in order to survive. Of course, just being nice to someone doesn't just randomly make you feel better, it has to do with the pleasure centres in your brain. The warm feeling that comes with acts of kindness is triggered by the 'feel good' hormones (serotonin, endorphins and oxytocin), which are responsible for

feelings of satisfaction and happiness. Darwin, who studied human evolution, believed that we are a profoundly social and caring species. He argued that sympathy and caring for others is instinctive. Science has now shown that devoting resources to others, rather than having more and more for yourself, brings about lasting well-being.

The lockdown is a great example of this, we have heard lovely stories of individuals and communities reconnecting, raising money, looking out for each other and helping those in need.

# Improve Your Media Diet!

Just reading about the amazing things that humans are capable of doing for each other every day can give you a sense of hope and positivity. But watching or reading the news can feel pretty overwhelming right now. Here are some sites that focus on the good things going on in the world:

<https://www.positive.news/>

Positive News is the magazine for good journalism about the good things that are happening.

When much of the media is full of doom and gloom, instead Positive News is the first media organisation in the world that is dedicated to quality, independent reporting about what's going right.

We are pioneers of 'constructive journalism' – a new approach in the media, which is about rigorous and relevant journalism that is focused on progress, possibility, and solutions. We publish daily online and Positive News magazine is published quarterly in print.

<https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/>

Since 1997, millions of people have turned to the Good News Network® as an antidote to the barrage of negativity experienced in the mainstream media. Because of its long history, staying power, and public trust, GNN is #1 on Google for *good news*.

The website, with its archive of 21,000 positive news stories from around the globe, confirms what people already know—that good news itself is not in short supply; the broadcasting of it is. From our 5-star app, to our new book (*And Now, The Good News: 20 Years of Inspiring News Stories*), to our weekly Good News Gurus podcast, and *Morning Jolt* email newsletter, GNN is a daily dose of hope for millions of fans.

<https://reasonstobecheerful.world/>

Reasons to be Cheerful is a non-profit editorial project that is tonic for tumultuous times. We tell stories that reveal that there are, in fact, a surprising number of reasons to feel cheerful. Many of these reasons come in the form of smart, proven, replicable solutions to the world's most pressing problems. We're here to tell you about some of them. Through sharp reporting, our stories balance a sense of healthy optimism with journalistic rigor, and find cause for hope. We are part magazine, part therapy session, part blueprint for a better world.

# BE KIND



"Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around."

- LEO BUSCAGLIA

Here are some small ways that you can show kindness to others, yourself, and the planet!

## BE KIND TO YOURSELF

**Clean your room** - a great way to show yourself kindness is by cleaning your personal space!

**Start a piggy bank for a trip, treat or activity** - pick a cause, get a piggy bank, and start saving

**Make a scrapbook** - create a home for your memories, then gift it to someone or keep it for yourself

**Flowers** - Buy or gather some flowers for yourself and place them somewhere you will see them regularly.

**Practice gratitude** - regularly allow yourself a few moments to close your eyes and think on the great things you do have in your life.

**Eat your favorite food** - Make a tasty meal or maybe even order a takeaway to eat in the peaceful company of YOU.

**Have a judgement free day** - don't try to make yourself feel better by putting someone else down



## BE KIND TO OTHERS

**Gift an inspirational book** - have you ever read a book that changed the way you see the world? Give someone the inspiration to see things differently.

**Text someone good morning or good night** - kick-start someone's day or make sure it ends on the right note.

**Write down someone's best qualities** - this can truly make their confidence soar

**Send a handwritten letter or postcard** - when was the last time you received a handwritten note? Let's change that.

**Ask an older person about their past** - they have a lifetime of experiences to reflect on. Listen & learn.

## BE KIND TO THE PLANET

**Eat local** - eating locally can be a kind way of impacting local farmers and business, as well as being better for the environment.

**Unplug outlets and don't leave devices on standby** - do you ever consider how much energy you are using when you are asleep or not at home? Reduce your carbon footprint by saving energy when you can!

**Pick up litter** - take a carrier bag out with you to collect it and recycle what you can when you get home.

**Adjust the thermostat in your home** - changing the temperature by just one degree can save you 10% on your energy use in a year

**Have a vegetarian day** - don't feel the pressure to give up meat for life, but do your part by having one meat-free day a week



Got any other ideas? We would love to hear them! Write to Mind Aberystwyth, The Cambria, Marine Terrace, Aberystwyth, SY23 2AZ or email [emma@mindaberystwyth.org](mailto:emma@mindaberystwyth.org)

# ACTIVITY:

## ADULT COLOURING

“Colouring  
can calm the  
busiest of  
minds.”



Thanks to its basic, repetitive motions, colouring engages parts of the cerebral cortex while relaxing the amygdala, the brain's 'fear centre'.

A task that we could while away many hours on as children, but probably assumed isn't something we could be spending time on as adults. But recent studies have shown there are many surprising benefits to sitting down and getting stuck in to a bit of colouring. Here are the top seven:

1. Your brain will experience relief from constant thoughts, by entering a meditative state
2. Stress and anxiety levels have the potential to be lowered as you focus
3. Negative thoughts are expelled as you take in positivity
4. Focusing on the present helps you achieve mindfulness
5. Unplugging from technology promotes creation over consumption
6. Colouring can be done by anyone
7. It's a hobby that can be taken with you wherever you go

*We've included 3 kindness colouring sheets for you to get started, give them a go and send us a photo of your finished pictures!*

# CHITCHAT FROM THE CAT

## #2

Cat Philosophy #ObviousTruths



Written on behalf of  
Billybob by his mum,  
Pat Griffiths

The gardening project I spoke of last month seems to have run aground. This is due to a new pastime – TANNING.

Now I watch as everyone is draped over various outdoor chairs, as there seems to be an abundance of leisure. I have always found lying in a sunny spot very attractive and a good way to spend a few hours. Now everyone has decided to copy me. #IAmAnInfluencerOfNote

More garden furniture has arrived in the form of a bistro table and chairs. I watch as the family sit outside and pretend they are in a small Italian town. This eating outside idea lasts one day. They then return to the kitchen, as visits to the biscuit tin become more noticeable. I am, once again, the only alfresco eater.

However, following some altercations, I learn that eating food that moves is unacceptable (if spotted).

#AButterflyInThePawlsUnlikelyToGetAnyFurtherNearTheMouth

The neighbours have a new puppy. I regard this as a declaration of hostile intent as the said puppy is already bigger than me, and promises to be bigger. We eye each other across the newly established neutral zone. I am planning my next move, as he is on a lead, and I am not. Ha! I will feign friendship and wait until his guard is down.

#TimeSpentPlanningIsNeverWasted

Fridays have become full of anticipation. It is the designated shopping day. The ketchup and Branston pickle sandwiches have been causing discontent. Bags of plenty arrive to bolster dwindling supplies. Everyone is in high spirits as there is a choice of food again. The fridge is full, and has to be opened regularly to see if it's still true. It isn't. #ManyThingsInLifeMoveFastEspeciallyIfPutInOurFridge - Billybob

# Reduce feelings of anxiety, isolation and loneliness with these helplines



During this challenging period, **Porth Cymorth Cynnar** has established a virtual platform to ensure that we are able to keep in touch with vulnerable residents across Ceredigion. We are ensuring that all residents whom are known to our services, and others, are kept in touch with, through regular welfare calls, should they wish.

Around 2,000 residents from young people to families to carers, who may require or benefit from regular contact whilst their service is not operating in its usual form will receive communication from our staff.

To date, almost 2,000 welfare calls have been made, and have been well received by people across Ceredigion. Residents have said that it is great that someone is keeping in touch with them, to give them an opportunity to have a weekly phone call and someone to talk to.

If you, or anyone you know would benefit from the Keeping in Touch Service, please get in touch with Clic on 01545 570881 or [clic@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:clic@ceredigion.gov.uk) who will triage your query to Porth Cymorth Cynnar.

**Age Cymru** is to offer a check-in-and-chat telephone service for the over 70s in Wales who live alone. It is hoped that the initiative will provide some reassurance to older people, answer basic queries and link people to local services and support during the Coronavirus outbreak.

Anyone over 70 in Wales can register with Age Cymru free of charge, to receive a regular telephone call from the charity in either English or Welsh. All you have to do is call the Age Cymru Advice Number on 08000 223 444 or email [enquiries@agecymru.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@agecymru.org.uk)

**Shout** is the UK's first 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help. Shout is powered by a team of volunteers, who are at the heart of the service. Text SHOUT to 85258.

**HUTS Workshop** (the mental health charity in Newcastle Emlyn) is offering a free telephone chat service for anyone feeling lonely and in need of a friendly conversation. If you would like to register for this service, call 01239 710 377, you will receive a call back.



# Being Kind to Nature:

## Bats

Bats — these mysterious, enigmatic and often misunderstood creatures are the world's only true flying mammal and come in all shapes and sizes — in fact they make up a fifth of all mammals worldwide!

### Bat Benefits

With their voracious appetites for insects, many bats are a great natural pest control! A 2005 study found that Mexican free-tailed bats saved Texas farmers an average of \$724,000 in pest control costs and losses from insect-related damages. All of Britain's native bats are insectivores, with even the smallest bat eating up to 3000 insects per night.

It's not just insects that bats like to eat, many bats in more tropical climates live off a diet of pollen and over 500 species of plant rely on bats for their pollination. This includes the agave plant, from which we get tequila, along with species of mango, guava, durian and banana.



Bats such as the tent-making bats (so called for their habit of folding large leaves into a tent to roost in) have been found to play a crucial role in seed dispersal which spreads through their droppings, helping around 50 plant species to spread.

I'd love a cuppa!



# British Bats

Here are just a few bats that  
can be found in Britain:



The pipistrelle is the UK's smallest and most common bat, growing to a maximum size of 4.5 centimetres. They roost in a wide range of habitats and are a common sight in urban areas. Up until 1999 it was thought that there was only one species of pipistrelle, however it was discovered by the different frequencies in their echolocation calls that there are actually two types, the common pipistrelle and the soprano pipistrelle.



The horseshoe bat is the only variety of British bat which roosts hanging upside down, with other bats preferring to sleep upright in a hole or crevice. One of our largest bats, they roost in caves or in the roofs of old buildings. Their name originates from the distinctive horseshoe-shaped flap of skin on their nose which helps them to focus their echolocation.



Those bunny-like ears aren't just for show! Brown and grey long-eared bats have such sensitive ears that they can hear a ladybird walk across a leaf. This amazing hearing allows them to find even the quietest insects. They roost in trees or old buildings and feed along hedgerows, parks and woodland.

Did you hear about the  
two bats meeting?

It was love at first bite!

# Being Bat-Kind



If you would like to help our native bats there are a few simple things you can do!

## 1. Have a bat friendly garden.

Planting flowers which release their scent at night will attract nocturnal insects which will in turn attract bats. Try plants such as petunias, wisteria, honeysuckle or evening primrose. If you'd like to have bats roosting in your garden, you can find directions online for making a bat box, or buy one ready-made.

## 2. Keep cats indoors at night.

Sadly, the majority of bat injuries and deaths are a result of cat attacks. Cats do not eat bats but do enjoy playing with them and can quickly learn the location of a roost. Cats Protection also recommends keeping your cat indoors at night for its own safety. Approximately 78% of road traffic accidents involving cats happen at night, and keeping them indoors removes the risk of cats being injured by cars, animals or people.

## 3. If you find a bat, know what to do.

If you find an injured, stuck or grounded bat, call the National Bat Helpline on 0345 1300 228. The helpline is staffed by volunteers who can provide advice and put you in touch with a Bat Carer who is specially trained to rehabilitate and release injured bats.

## 4. Join your local bat group.

Bat groups are a fantastic way to make friends, learn about these fascinating creatures and get involved with your community. Many bat groups arrange night-time walks to spot bats or conduct surveys of roost sites to aid conservation efforts. The North Ceredigion Bat Group's Facebook page provides information on joining as well as any upcoming bat-related events.

# MYTHS



## Busting Bat Myths

### MYTH #1

**Will bats get tangled in my hair?**

Contrary to popular opinion, bats are not blind and can actually see quite well! However, they primarily navigate the world through echolocation, sending sound waves through their mouths and noses which bounce off objects and give them a clear picture of obstacles around them. This helps them to avoid crashing into obstacles like your head and to hone in on juicy insects to munch!

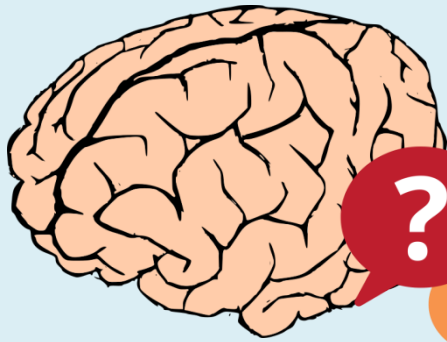
### MYTH #2

**Are bats the cause of Covid-19?**

Although studies are still underway, scientists now believe that the Coronavirus originated in a species of bat and may have reached humans through an intermediary species such as a pangolin. However, they also emphasise that it was human interference which allowed the disease to pass from wildlife to people. Deforestation forcing animals into closer contact with livestock and humans, along with cramped and unsanitary wildlife markets, allowed the virus to jump between species. That's why it is more important than ever to be kind to nature and make sure that natural habitats remain undisturbed.

How does Dracula keep fit?  
Batminton!





# BRAINTEASER

Thanks to the way our brains work, we have a very strong tendency to see what we want and expect to.

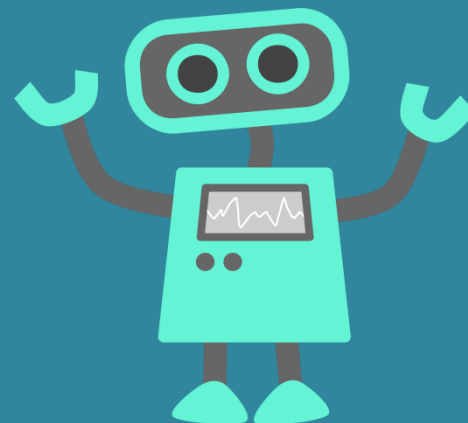
Our brain doesn't like information gaps, so we tend to jump at the first answer or solution that looks good, rather than take the time to examine all the information. This is especially true in a world where we receive more information every day than we have time to assimilate. Our brains love to see patterns and make connections. This trait serves us well in many ways as we move through the world. But the brain does not always get it right...

1. Johnny's mother had three children. The first child was named April. The second child was named May. What was the third child's name?
2. A clerk at a butcher shop stands five feet ten inches tall and wears size 13 sneakers. What does he weigh?
3. Before Mt. Everest was discovered, what was the highest mountain in the world?
4. How much dirt is there in a hole that measures two feet by three feet by four feet?
5. What word in the English language is always spelled incorrectly?
6. Billie was born on December 28th, yet her birthday always falls in the summer. How is this possible?
7. In British Columbia you cannot take a picture of a man with a wooden leg. Why not?
8. If you were running a race and you passed the person in 2nd place, what place would you be in now?
9. Which is correct to say, "The yolk of the egg is white" or "The yolk of the egg are white?"
10. A farmer has five haystacks in one field and four haystacks in another. How many haystacks would he have if he combined them all in one field?

*(Answers can be found on page 25)*

Tyler and Tarek's

# TECHNO- BABBLE



Hi everyone! Tarek and Tyler your resident techies here with some technology resources to help you stay well, entertained and connected. During this difficult time many of the positive benefits of tech are becoming more apparent as we discover new ways to stay in touch with people, look after our wellbeing and distract ourselves while stuck indoors. Below are some of the apps, games and sites we think are a good way to be kind to yourself.

## Staying Well: *SilverCloud*, *C25K*, *Strava*, *Map my Walk*, *Insight Timer*

Tarek: Technology is opening up new ways for people to look after their wellbeing and one of those is online CBT. CBT stands for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and is a form of talking therapy that focuses on helping people to overcome their problems by changing negative thought cycles and breaking problems down into smaller, more easily manageable parts. One particular platform is *SilverCloud*. This online CBT resource offers a variety of courses on different topics, including a new one on staying well during the Covid-19 crisis. Called *Space From Covid-19* this course covers topics such as dealing with change and a feeling of loss of control, grounding yourself, journaling and relaxation.

Mind Aberystwyth has been given access to *SilverCloud* for the next few months to help people through this difficult time, so follow the instructions below to make use of this valuable resource:



- 1) Go to: [mind.silvercloudhealth.com/signup](https://mind.silvercloudhealth.com/signup)
- 2) Choose the programme you'd like to make use of and click 'sign up.' For example, if you're interested in the 'Space from COVID-19' programme just click on the 'sign up' button and enter your details. You'll need to do this for each programme.
- 3) It will ask for a PIN when signing up. Use the following PIN: **ABERYSWYTH** (NOTE: Make sure you type it in exactly as it appears (with the missing T before the W!))

Once you've signed up for a course you can follow the instructions to proceed- get in touch and let us know if you need any help with this!



**C25K** is great for people who want to run but struggle with the stamina, and with getting started. It's available for free from the app store and the play store. The app coaches you through starting to run, for short bursts at first, gradually building up to running 5k!

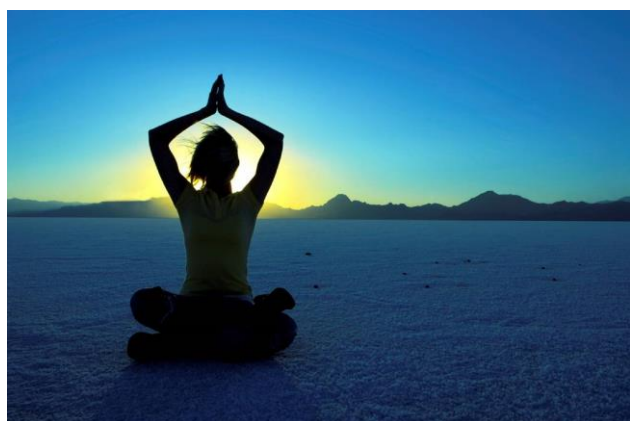
Tyler: Exercising has never been something I'm particularly keen on, and I've always found it pretty hard to motivate myself to do it. But I've felt the urge to move more now than ever, whilst stuck at home! So, I've included some of the apps I've been using to get me moving!



**Strava** tracks your movements when you're out for a walk, a run, or cycling, and lets you know how far you've gone so you can monitor your workouts! It's also free and can help you make the most of your daily outdoor exercise.



**Map My Walk** by Under Armour also uses a GPS signal to record how far you've walked and how long it took, which can be a fun way of keeping track of where you've been!



**INSIGHT**  
Peace in our Timer

Tyler: Meditation is a great way to ensure some time for yourself in the day, and to practice some self-care. If you can start to make it a routine, for as little as five or ten minutes a day you'll really start to see the difference in your wellbeing. For meditating, I use **Insight Timer**. It's free on the app store and play store. The app has some courses which you can pay for, but there's plenty of free content as well. If you select the category "guided" you can choose from the beginner kits which deal with specific challenges such as "dealing with anxiety", "managing stress", "improve your sleep" and more.

## Staying Entertained: *Coursera.org, Alto's Adventure, SurajFineArts, Yoga With Adriene, Animalogic, Netflix Party*



Tyler: Keeping ourselves entertained might be a little difficult at the moment, and perhaps some of you are getting a little cabin feverish at home? Learning something new can be a great way to keep our minds busy, and Coursera.org offers a wide range of free courses that can be undertaken online. Have a look and see if there's anything that grabs your attention – I've just enrolled in a four-week introduction to psychology!

Tarek: One thing technology is really good at is providing a million different ways to distract ourselves! One way I do this is through games. A fun little game for phones I stumbled across recently is Alto's Adventure. This is an 'endless runner' style game where you play as person skiing down a mountain trying to catch their escaped llamas! It's really relaxing and easy to learn – and it's free!



### Did you know?

In 1936 the Soviet Union built a 'water computer'! This unusual device used water levels in chambers to represent stored numbers and the flow of water between tubes represented mathematical operations. These water computers were used by the Soviet Union for mathematical modelling into the 1980's!

### Jargon Buster

What's a CPU? CPU stands for 'central processing unit' and is basically the 'brain' of a computer. It's a piece of electronic circuitry within a computer that's responsible for carrying out most of the instructions that make up what we call a 'program' or 'app'. Modern CPUs are built from billions of tiny electronic components called 'transistors'.





For those who don't enjoy games, YouTube is a great resource for both entertainment and learning. Some channels I've stumbled across recently include the abstract artist SurajFineArts for those who enjoy painting, Yoga with Adriene for follow-along yoga sessions of all lengths, and Animalogic for those who love learning about creatures big and small!

## Jargon Buster

What are internet cookies? Cookies are small pieces of information which are stored on \*your\* computer when you are browsing online. Cookies are how sites you visit regularly, like Facebook or Twitter, know who you are by logging in for you, or remembering what you put in your basket if you're shopping online. It's also how you get targeted advertising for things you've looked at on other websites!

## Did you know?

56 million hours of music is streamed daily! That's 6392.7 YEARS!



Tyler: If you have Netflix already, Netflix Party is a cool new browser extension (so only available for laptops and desktop computers at the moment) which allows you to watch films and TV with your friends at the same time, and features a chat box for all that show-related banter!

- To install, go to the website [www.netflixparty.com](http://www.netflixparty.com) and click "Get Netflix Party for free!"
- Follow the on screen prompts to install the browser extension
- Open Netflix and start the film or show you want to watch with a friend, then pause it!
- Look to the right of the web address bar for the little grey NP icon – it will go red when you click it.
- Click "Start the party" and send the link you're given to your friends.
- They have to have Netflix Party installed too, and when they click the link they'll join your party!

## ACTIVITY:

# RHUBARB LOAF CAKE

### YOU'LL NEED

- 140g unsalted butter (or butter substitute, 'vegan block' works very well)
- 280g caster sugar
- 2 large eggs (you can also use vegetable oil, silken tofu or mashed banana to bind)
- 300g plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 250g chopped rhubarb
- A 2lb loaf tin
- A pinch of ginger, cinnamon or mixed spice (optional)



"I think that 'cake' is a very good word, in general, and that people should use it as answers to questions more often."

### TO MAKE IT

1. Chop the rhubarb into 1-2cm pieces, wash and leave it to drain on a tea towel for at least an hour.
2. Preheat the oven to 170C and line your loaf tin.
3. Melt the butter and set aside.
4. Beat the sugar and eggs together well and then add the flour, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda.
5. Pour in the butter a little at a time and mix together well
6. Dry off the rhubarb and toss in some plain flour so it has a very fine coating.
7. Fold the rhubarb into the batter and then pour it all into your loaf tin.
8. Bake it for about 50 minutes. It will have risen well above the top of the tin and a skewer should come out clean.



# YOUR WORK

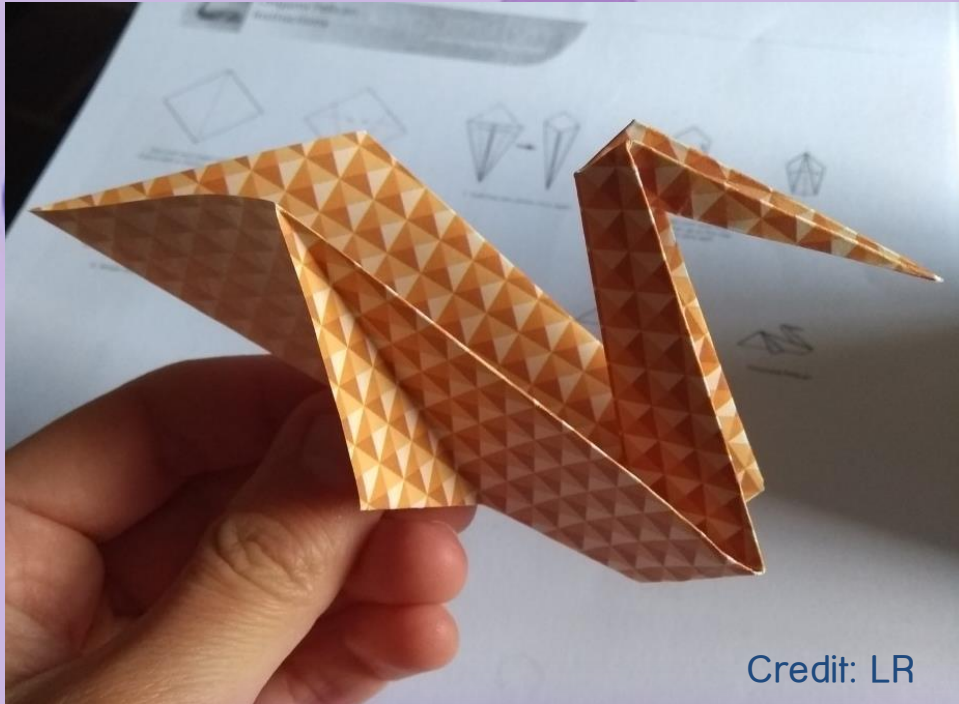
A big thank you to Lisa and Jo, who took on the storygami and photography challenges from our first edition, and have produced some beautiful shots using light, shade and water.



Credit: above – JH, below - LR







Credit: LR



Credit: JH

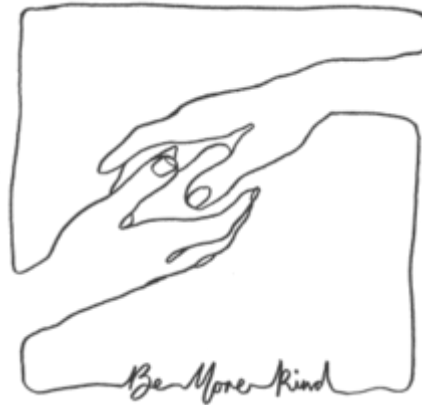
Contributions are always welcome and appreciated; we would love to see what you are up to and how you are managing to keep your creative side alive!





*For those of you who don't know Mari, she is a poet, researcher and workshop facilitator who we have had the pleasure of working with during our creative writing project, 'Writing for Wellness'.*

*We asked her to jot down some of her thoughts on being kind...*



## On Being Kind

*By Mari Ellis Dunning*

Whatever your current situation, most of us have found ourselves living through a strange and unusual time.

We're uncertain of how and when this will end, and constantly subconsciously aware of a new threat, which is both tiring and traumatic. We're also unable to connect with others aside from virtually, and might be prevented from doing the things that most support our mental health (spending time

with friends, travelling to a particular place, visiting a counsellor, and so on.) It's no wonder it's difficult to concentrate or find motivation on certain days.

It's important to be kind, not just to others, but also to yourself. Allow yourself a slow morning, or an early night. Don't worry if you don't manage everything on your to-do list day to day, or if you need to spend a day in your pyjamas. Accept that you're not always going to feel 100% and that's perfectly okay.

It can be a struggle to be kind to ourselves, and is sometimes easier to imagine we're speaking to a friend. If a friend called and said they were feeling down, and not coping very well, would we berate them like we do ourselves (*what's wrong with you; get a grip; get out of bed; you've got laundry to do; and so on,*) or would we speak kindly, gently offering advice and reassurance?

Taking time out to relax and practice healing/wellbeing

exercises is another way to be kind to ourselves. Meditation and mindfulness are fantastic ways to look after our mental health, and it just so happens that Calm and Headspace have made some of their mindfulness content free to help those struggling with anxiety.

**Calm** is offering 'soothing meditations', a 'calm masterclass', 'calm kids' and mindfulness resources. They're available via their website ([www.calm.com](http://www.calm.com)).

**Headspace** has a collection called Weathering the Storm, which

Includes meditations, sleep and movement exercises. It's available on the app (for iPhone or Android), or you can access some of the content via the Headspace website ([www.headspace.com](http://www.headspace.com)).

Physical exercise, a walk outdoors, yoga, deep breathing, reading and watching television are also examples of ways to be kind to ourselves. Creative writing can be a brilliant tool for looking after our wellbeing, particularly when there's a lot on our minds. Try one of the writing exercises below:

### *Writing exercise 1:*

*Write a letter to yourself from an unconditionally loving imaginary friend*

Picture an imaginary friend who is unconditionally loving, accepting, kind and compassionate.

Imagine that this friend can see all your strengths and weaknesses, including any aspects of yourself that might make you uncomfortable. Reflect upon what this friend feels towards you, and how they love and accept you exactly as you are, with all your very human imperfections. This friend recognises the limits of human nature, and is kind and forgiving towards you. This friend understands your history and the millions of things that have happened in your life to create you as you are in this moment, such as your genes, your family history, life circumstances and experiences – things that were and are outside of your control.

Now, write a letter to yourself from the perspective of this imaginary friend. What might this friend say to you about your flaws? How would this friend convey the deep compassion he/she feels for you, especially for the pain you feel when you judge yourself so harshly? What would this friend write in order to remind you that you are only human, that all people have both strengths and weaknesses? That all people have good days and bad? And if you think this friend would suggest possible changes you should make, how would these suggestions embody feelings of unconditional understanding and compassion? As you write to yourself from the perspective of this imaginary friend, try to infuse your letter with a strong sense of his/her acceptance, kindness, caring, and desire for your health and happiness.

### *Writing exercise 2:*

*Write a poem or short story focussing on an act of kindness*

This could be a small act of kindness, like feeding a tired bumble bee some sugared water to help it fly, or someone giving up a seat on a train for an elderly person, or a bigger act, like inviting a stranger to dinner - let your imagination run wild!

A writing template consisting of 25 horizontal blue lines for text. A vertical red line is positioned on the left side, creating a margin. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page.

# What's new at Mind Aberystwyth?



## 1 to 1 wellbeing service (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm)

We understand that with the current social distancing restrictions this is a difficult time for everyone. If you would like someone to talk to, we can offer you regular contact from one of our support workers. This can be via phone call, video chat, text etc.

## Virtual yoga (Thursdays, 12-1pm)

Now more than ever, it's important to stay active. So why not join one of our newest groups? You don't need a mat and can wear what you like! Sessions are hosted via Zoom (we can help you to set this up). You don't need your camera or mic on, and can join for as long as you'd like.



## Online drop-in (Wednesday afternoons, 2-4pm)



This is open to all, a place to connect with others, build friendships, gain access to signposting and receive advice on engagement with mental health services. We'll be posting daily and you can chat on the group whenever, and a support worker will be available to chat at the above times. You can access via our Facebook page, under groups.

## Mums in Mind (Mondays, 1-3pm)

Meet other mums, share tips and advice on wellbeing and mental health, chat and have fun! Find us on Facebook, under groups.



If you would like any more information or are interested in accessing any of the above, please call us on 01970 626 225 or send your enquiries to [info@mindaberystwyth.org](mailto:info@mindaberystwyth.org).



# MEET THE TEAM

In each edition of 'Keeping you in Mind' we will feature a short profile of a member of our staff so that you can get to know us better. This edition we'll be hearing from Emma, our Office Manager.



Emma

## Tell us a little about yourself and what you do at Mind Aberystwyth?

I grew up in Ceredigion and moved back here permanently 8 years ago from Brighton, because I was craving some peace and quiet! Now I live in a small village just outside Aber with my husband and son, and absolutely love it. My job is quite varied, I am the first point of contact for Mind Aberystwyth so answer all of the calls and emails, do a bit of personnel stuff, keep our policies and procedures up to date etc. I also co-manage the Side by Side Project with Tarek, and chair the service user forum. For the past year, I have been running the Terracycle project, so you can often see me scouring the streets of Aber for suitably sized boxes to send off shipments of crisp packets!

## What are some of your interests and hobbies?

Photography is my one true love, I went semi professional in 2018 after many years of messing about with it, and haven't looked back. I also love to read, force myself to run a couple of times a week and couldn't survive without daily yoga practice (although must admit my favourite bit is the end when you lie down on the floor and do absolutely nothing). I am also really passionate about nature and protecting the environment.

## How are you staying resilient during the lockdown?

I try and avoid the news as much as possible! It's important to know what's going on, but constant updates make me stressed and anxious so I ask my husband to tell me if there is anything that I really need to know. I try to set myself a couple of tasks every day (outside of work) so that I can stay focused and have some structure. I am enjoying the extra time to notice and appreciate the simple things, and find a daily dose of gratitude helps get things in perspective. And I am a slave to the Yoga with Adriene channel on Youtube.



# THAT'S ALL FOLKS!

We hope you've enjoyed the second edition of Keeping You In Mind. We would love to feature more contributions from readers – stories, poems, art, quizzes, recipes or anything else you want to put together. The theme of our next edition is 'SLEEP'. Please submit your work to [emma@mindaberystwyth.org](mailto:emma@mindaberystwyth.org) by Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> May or post to Mind Aberystwyth, The Cambria, Marine Terrace, Aberystwyth, SY23 2AZ

**Brainteaser Answers:** 1. Johnny 2. Meat 3. Mt. Everest – it just wasn't discovered yet! 4. There is no dirt in a hole 5. Incorrectly (except when it is spelled incorrectly) 6. Billie lives in the southern hemisphere 7. You can't take a picture with a wooden leg. You need a camera (or iPad or mobile phone) to take a picture 8. You would be in second place. You passed the person in second place, not first 9. Neither. Egg yolks are yellow 10. One. If he combines all his haystacks, they all become one big stack.