

# KEEPING YOU IN MIND

## This issue:

- Why should we create?
- How can you be more creative?
- Yoga for all!



Create



Plus Brainteaser and  
some tasty recipes!

Find out how being  
creative can make  
you happier,  
improve mood and  
increase brain  
function!

Welcome to  
the 10th  
edition of our  
newsletter.

The theme for  
November is:  
CREATE

HELLO  
/  
SHWMAE

**"You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have." - Maya Angelou**

Do you find yourself craving a little creativity in your life? Turns out, tapping in to that creative energy can actually improve your overall health. It might sound too good to be true, but simply engaging in creative behaviours (even just colouring in those trendy adult colouring books) improves brain function, mental health, and physical health.



The theory of cognition postulates that being creative is actually a basis for human life. Basically, being creative is pretty important! So how can playing music or doodling make you healthy?

# Why should we create?

According to a recent report from the National Alliance for Arts, Health and Wellbeing (APPG), being creative can benefit our mental and emotional health in a number of ways.

## 1 Increases happiness

Flow is a state that you get into when you are concentrating and completely absorbed, helping to increase positive emotions and reduce anxiety. Repetitive activities help your brain to produce dopamine, which is the feel good chemical that makes us feel positive and motivated.

## 2 Improves mood and mental health

Creative activities have a calming effect on both your brain and body. This can help us to deal with different kinds of trauma and negative feelings, and express or manage emotions in a positive way, especially when these may be too difficult to put into words. Creative activities impact the body in a way similar to meditation. It's like yoga for your brain. Decreasing stress also protects your overall health and wellness. Numerous chronic diseases are associated with high stress levels.

*Top Tip: You don't even need to be creative yourself in order to bring your stress levels down. Observing creativity can also decrease them! So activities like watching a concert, going to a gallery or reading a book can have meditative benefits.*

## Increases brain function

## 3

Being creative also promotes the production of new neurons in the brain, which are crucial for maintaining a healthy central nervous system.

Those of us who are musical tend to have a better connection between the left and right parts of their brain, which can improve cognitive function, and playing an instrument can also help to boost your memory. Music can be used as a form of therapy, especially for people who suffer from dementia, as it can help to reduce agitation and the need for medication.

# How to be More Creative

You don't need innate talent to be creative. It's a *skill* that can be learned and mastered at any age! There are many simple activities which actively develop your creativity when practiced regularly:

## 1

**DAYDREAM** - Research confirms that daydreaming causes measurable changes in the brain linked to greater creativity and problem-solving abilities.



1. Set aside a time every day to daydream.
  2. Reduce outward distractions and sensations (closing your eyes can help.)
  3. Relax and do nothing or engage in a simple task like pairing socks or pulling weeds. Repetitive tasks can inspire new ideas too.
  4. Don't judge your ideas, just let them flow. Sometimes good ideas arise from bad ones.
- Let your mind wander, but "on a leash." Try not to use this time worrying or ruminating.

## 2

### DOODLE

A doodle is "a rough drawing made absent-mindedly." When we doodle, our brains can subconsciously solve problems or generate original ideas.



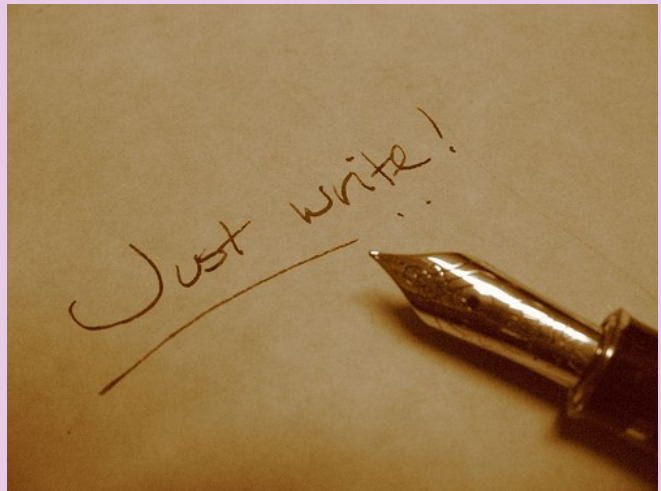
### TOP TIP!

*As soon as you feel the urge to doodle, just put your pen to the paper and get started. Whether you're thinking of an act, an event, a feeling, a person, a place, a song, or even your own name, you should just put your pen to the paper and start drawing to see what you come up with. When the urge to doodle strikes, do it!*



### 3 WRITE

Writing encourages you to think more deeply which generates novel ideas. What you write isn't so important, it will still increase your creativity if you practice regularly. If stories or poems aren't your thing, try keeping a journal or start a blog.



**4 CREATE ART** - you don't have to produce a masterpiece! Hobbies like colouring, knitting, quilting, photography, woodworking, gardening, and DIY will allow you to use and expand your imagination. Keep in mind that it's the *process* of creating that's important, not the end result.

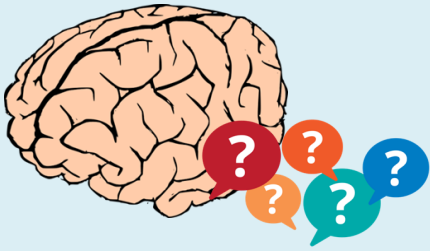
### 5 EXPLORE SURREALISM

Humans usually seek to avoid or eliminate uncertainty, but to be creative, you need to seek it out. Admiring surrealism makes you question reality and look at the world from a different perspective. If you can't get to a museum or gallery, try exploring online.

### 6 BE CURIOUS

When you discover new things, learn interesting facts, and investigate the world, you spark your creativity and increase your imagination. You can encourage your curiosity by never stop asking questions, especially the simple question "why?"





# BRAINTEASER

How many of these can you solve?

1. 84% of people reading this will not find the the mistake in this A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K,L,M,N,O,P,Q,R,S,T,U,V,W,X,Y,Z.
2. How can you throw a ball as hard as you can and have it come back to you, even if it doesn't bounce off anything? There is nothing attached to it, and no one else catches or throws it back to you.
3. What occurs once in every minute, twice in every moment, yet never in a thousand years?
4. What's full of holes but still holds water?
5. What word looks the same upside down and backward?
6. What five letter word becomes shorter when you add two letters to it?
7. What can you keep but cannot share and once you share it, you can't keep it anymore?
8. Sam's mother had 4 children in all. The first one was named May. The second and third were called June and July respectively. What was the fourth child's name?
9. The more it dries, the wetter it gets. What is it?
10. What can travel around the world while staying in a corner?

Answers on page 21

# Activity:

## Bara Brith

*(Just like Mamgu's)*



*No Welsh afternoon tea would ever be complete without this delicious fruity tea bread!*

### Ingredients

300g mixed fruit

200g light muscovado sugar

zest 1 orange

250ml hot black tea

350g self-raising flour

2 tsp mixed spice

1 large egg , beaten

50g soft butter , plus extra for greasing and to serve (optional)

## Have a go...

### THE NIGHT BEFORE

Tip the fruit into a bowl with the sugar and orange zest. Pour over the tea, stir everything together and leave to soak overnight.

### THE NEXT DAY

1. Heat oven to 160C/140C fan/gas
2. Grease and line the base and short sides of a 900g/loaf tin with 1 strip of baking parchment.
3. Tip the flour and spice into a bowl, and beat in the fruit and soaking liquid. Add the egg, followed by the butter. Beat until you have a well-combined, stiff batter, then tip into the prepared loaf tin.
4. Bake for 1¼ hrs, covering with foil or parchment if the top starts to get too dark. Check with a skewer – if it doesn't come out clean, give it another 5-10 mins in the oven.
5. Leave to cool in the tin for 10 mins, then remove and leave to cool completely. Serve sliced and buttered, if you like.

*(Recipe and image taken from BBC Good Food)*

# CHITCHAT FROM THE CAT

#10 No signs of  
Christmas here yet..



Written on behalf of Billybob by his  
mum, Pat Griffiths

Dear lovely readers, look, I'm in double figures! This is number 10 "Now that's what I call...." . Mmm , I think that has been used before by someone. Anyway, what's afoot here in Griffiths Towers? Not much, to be honest. As I write this, everyone is once again at home with me. All the time. Though, I note the walks around the community centre have not resumed. Funny that, I wonder if it has anything to do with the dramatics fall in temperature? And now....the heating gets turned on of course.

However, naturally, I am forced out in the cold and wet every day. To " get some fresh air". Double standards. Once out, I commence a lonely vigil at the

back door; starring at them through the window, willing them to let me back in. Unfortunately the bedroom window is now, invariably, shut, in order to keep the heat in.

When I, at last, manage to gain entry, I have resorted to curling up, pretending to be asleep, away from everyone. In my new home- a cardboard box. Not just any box, it's the perfect size for me, and only me. I can ensconce myself in there for hours, and am often overlooked. Some may call it hiding.... The said box arrived last week and contained various cake and pastry ingredients. Clearly sent in error as everyone here is on healthy eating programmes. Anyway, once emptied, I was left with a warm, snug place to call home.

It was from here that I observed a strange happening in the kitchen. It revolved around carving up 3



pumpkins.

Most of the insides seem to end up on the floor, but 3 Pumpkins-with -faces emerged at the end. They are now resting on the windowsill. Now then, when I have removed insides, and represented the outers of living things in a new and interesting way, I have had a row. Obviously pumpkins don't have "a mummy or a daddy who misses them ". Yet another example of double standards.

Anyway, this chat was meant to be about preparations for Christmas. So, what have you done? Not much sign of anything here. I have started writing my list for Santa, as I did well last year. I had my own stocking, full of tasty treats. And I had various of bits and pieces left under the tree. But our tree has now been planted outside , and is also not allowed in. Well, until " at least December ".

I think it will need some help, mind. Maybe it, too, will have to stay outside a while longer with me. Getting fresh air. But next time I write it will nearly be December. Can you believe it?

" It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas, everywhere you go....."

Except here. Just me, in the box, chilling.

Next time - Happy Holiday 🎄📺

- *Billybob*

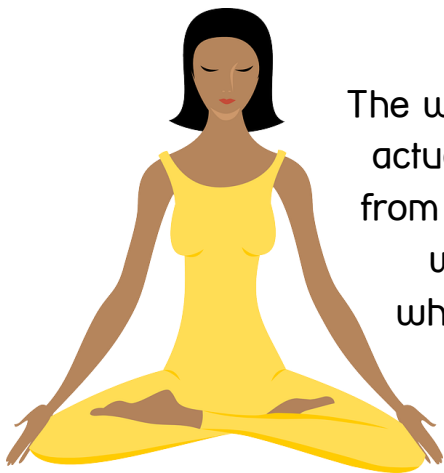


# Yoga Happens Beyond the Mat

## Yoga for all



I can't do yoga: I'm not flexible enough. Sound familiar? Lots of us think that yoga is about being super-bendy and shaping our bodies into a pretzel - yes, those complicated contortions are unbelievably impressive, and for lots of yogis are a big part of their yoga practice - but that doesn't mean they have to be!



The word 'yoga' actually comes from a Sanskrit word (yuji), which means union.

Yes, yoga is about uniting mind and body; self-exploration, purification, healing and transformation.

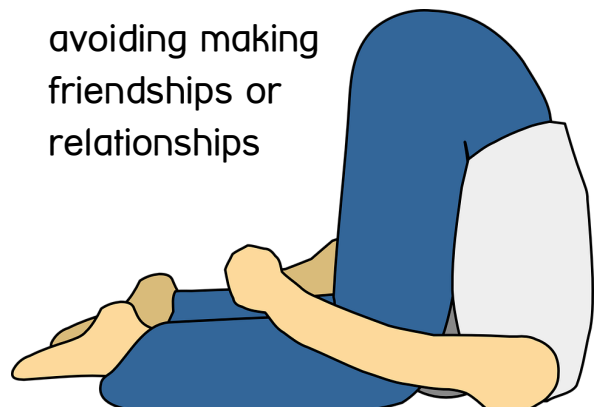
Yoga has a wealth of wellbeing benefits—and the best part is every single one of us can get involved, regardless of our shape, size, age, colour or gender.

Yoga is for everyone, but it is worth remembering that it can be particularly helpful for people facing

challenges. Your body is often where you feel the challenge of surviving life. It can continue to feel the effects of traumatic experiences even if it happened a long time ago, or if the challenges are repeated so often that they have started to feel normal.

Trauma-informed yoga can be extremely helpful for those living with:

- anxiety or panic attacks
- difficulty controlling emotions
- an eating disorder
- dissociative experiences
- feeling empty or hopeless
- experiencing suicidal feelings
- feeling different from others
- feeling permanently damaged or worthless
- feeling hostile or distrustful
- avoiding making friendships or relationships



# Yoga at Mind Aberystwyth



**Inclusive Yoga is a chance to relax, connect and/or energise in a group.**

Join us for Inclusive Yoga on Thursdays 12-1pm using Zoom on your phone, tablet or computer.

**Inclusive Yoga offers you choices.**

- ◇ You might choose to learn ways to relax, manage stress, get moving gently, energise, explore movement and how you are feeling all with a trauma-informed Yoga facilitator.
- ◇ You're welcome to attend Yoga however you're feeling or whatever your experience or movement ability is. Invitations are offered to help you modify Yoga to suit your needs.
- ◇ You are free to have your cameras on or off and to stop whenever you choose to. You can drop in any week or attend weekly.
- ◇ You are welcome to let the facilitator know about any health issues you'd like them to be aware of or questions you may have?

*For more information feel free to call us on 01970626225, email us at [info@mindaberystwyth.org](mailto:info@mindaberystwyth.org) or speak to a member of staff.*



# Activity:

## Still Life at Home



Still lifes have been created for generations, across many cultures and artistic movements. At its most basic, a still life is an image of (usually commonplace) objects that don't move and are arranged in a particular way. They can include both manmade objects (such as vases, items of clothing, and consumer products) and natural objects (like plants, food, rocks, and shells). The focus is on composition and arrangement, making it a very accessible form of creativity.

## Have a go...

Have a go at creating your own still life! Find objects in or around your home that are important to you, or that relate to a particular theme. Do you have a favourite book or favourite food you want to include? What about a special memento or a colour you love?

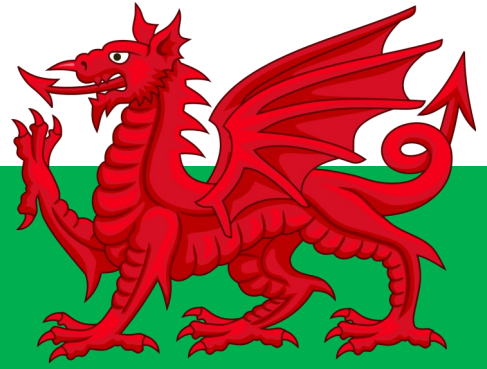
Take your time to arrange your objects on a table or other surface. Notice the shapes of your objects — are they more square or rectangular, more oval or circular? Pay attention to how some objects overlap others.



You can then either draw, paint or photograph your arrangement. We would love to see what you produce—you can send in your pictures to [emma@mindaberystwyth.org](mailto:emma@mindaberystwyth.org)



# Cornel



## Cymraeg

Gair i gofio/Words to remember

creu

kray

creating

creadigol

kray-ah-dig-oll

creative

celf

keh-iv

art

dyluniad

duh-lean-yad

design

arlunio

are-lean-yoh

draw

ysgrifennu

uh-s-griv-en-ee

write

### Ffaith Difur

Y Gymraeg yw'r iaith hynaf ym Mhrydain, gallai fod hyd at 4,000 mlwydd oed.

### Interesting Fact

The Welsh language (Cymraeg) is the oldest language in Britain, it could be up to 4,000 years old.

Pwy ydw i? Who am I?

**EDAM RELISHY SEBSAY**

Awgrym: Canwr enwog yn enedig o Gaerdydd. Yn enwog am ganu 'Diamonds are Forever'.

Hint: Famous Cardiff born singer. Famously sang 'Diamonds are Forever'.

Atebion ar tudalen 21/Answers on page 21



# We're Listening



We want to hear from you, our readers, what you think about our services.

If you have anything you'd like us to know about your experience of using our service, or have any suggestions about what you'd like to see us offer we would love to know!

So what do we want to know?

We welcome any feedback you have to offer, but to help we've provided three questions below to get you started:

1.

What do we  
do well?

2.

What could we  
do better?

3.

Is there  
anything else?

Please send your feedback to:

Email: [info@mindaberystwyth.org](mailto:info@mindaberystwyth.org), with the subject 'LISTEN'

Write to us at: **LISTEN** @ Mind Aberystwyth, The Cambria, Marine Terrace, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 2AZ

# Activity:

## Leek & Potato Soup



*The leek—another Welsh classic and currently in season. This soup is hearty and warm and everything you could need as the chilly winter nights draw closer!*

### Ingredients

1 tbsp vegetable oil  
1 onion, sliced  
  
225g/8oz potatoes, cubed  
  
2 medium leeks, sliced  
  
1.2 litres/2 pints vegetable stock  
  
150ml/5fl oz double cream  
or crème fraîche  
  
salt and freshly ground black  
pepper

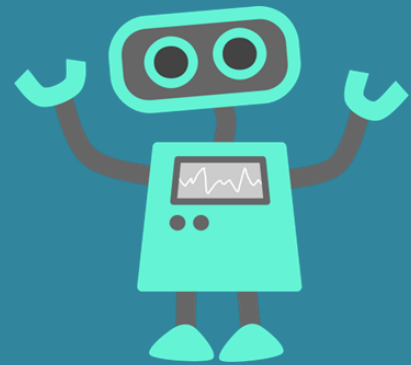
## Have a go...

1. Heat the oil in a large pan and add the onions, potatoes and leeks. Cook for 3-4 minutes until starting to soften.
2. Add the vegetable stock and bring to the boil. Season well and simmer until the vegetables are tender.
3. Whizz with a hand blender or in a blender until smooth. Reheat in a clean pan, stir in the cream or crème fraîche, heat through and serve.

*(Recipe and image taken from BBC Good Food)*

*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 our top tech picks for this month!

**Tyler:** This month, for the theme of 'Create' we thought we would move away from the computer angle on technology and look at something we are sure you've all heard of!



**Lego!** Lego began as a line of brightly coloured basic construction blocks, aimed primarily at children. Since its original conception, Lego has expanded into a whole universe of creativity with endless possibility for building anything from models of people to moving working engines, and even as its own theme park!

Whilst Lego is still primarily aimed at children, the creative outlet has been recognised by a growing older audience.

Lego produce specific kits for building beautifully intricate designs, but the really amazing thing about Lego is that the only limit is your imagination – and some people have created some really wonderful sculptures with the tiny bricks!





Lego therapy is being used in some schools now for neurodivergent children, to assist in their communication and development. You can read more about this practice online! And it's not just children who benefit from the soothing hobby; The Washington Post recently published



an article on the benefits of Lego construction for stressed adults. They talked about the advantages of being able to disconnect from the mania of their regular lives to sit and methodically work through some clear instructions and create something amazing. The creativity of building something without instructions also provides a repetitive and meditative process to help adults unwind and relax.

Not only is the activity of playing with Lego therapeutic in its own way, but there are so many people playing with Lego and using it as a positive creative outlet, that peer support groups have emerged online through social media platforms such as Facebook, where adults can share their creations and builds with each other, and find connection in their Lego building!

*If you fancy giving it a go, you can buy Lego online, and you can even play Lego games on the internet without needing to own the little blocks yourself!*



This man used 75,000 Lego pieces to recreate the Deep Space Nine Space Station from the Star Trek show!

Lego has always harnessed the power of new technologies to enable new ways to be creative. The first electric Lego train sets date back as far as 1969 and over the years the unassuming little bricks have been combined with a wide range of technologies. Chief amongst the most complex and impressive uses of technology comes when Lego meets the power of computers, in the form of the Lego Mindstorms system.



This advanced construction system is designed for the more technically-minded person, enabling kids and adults to build robots and gadgets that can be controlled and programmed through the system's



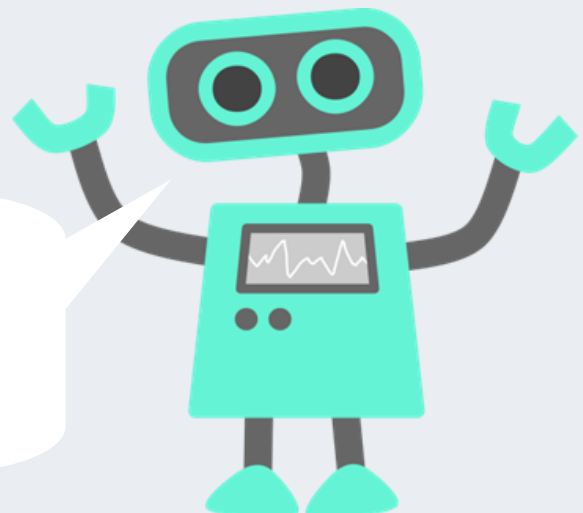
software. It also serves as an educational tool for budding roboticists and programmers!



While Mindstorms is quite expensive, it's fascinating to see how people use the system creatively. The system really allows people to express their ingenuity and there are countless videos on YouTube of the brilliant creations people have designed and built. Some people have even built devices that can solve a Rubik's cube just from Mindstorms pieces! Not bad for some little plastic bricks!

*Who knew Lego was so remarkable!?  
Not me—but then I am just a robot.*

*See you next month for some more  
techie goodness.*





# What's new at Mind Aberystwyth?

## 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.



## Active Monitoring



A 6-week guided self-help programme. We'll give you materials to help you better understand and manage your feelings, and will call you regularly to support you through the process.

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).

## 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.





# THAT'S ALL FOLKS!

We hope you've enjoyed this 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. Our next newsletter will be a FESTIVE EDITION. We'd love to hear your Christmas stories, perhaps you have some fond memories that will always stick with you, or perhaps you don't like Christmas, but have found some useful coping mechanisms that you'd like to share with us. Please submit your work to [emma@mindaberystwyth.org](mailto:emma@mindaberystwyth.org) by Monday 7th December or post to Mind Aberystwyth, The Cambria, Marine Terrace, Aberystwyth, SY23 2AZ

**Brainteaser Answers:** 1. "The" is repeated ,2. Throw the ball up in the air 3. The letter M 4. A sponge 5. SWIMS 6. SHORT 7. A secret 8. SAM! 9. A towel 10. A stamp

**Cornel Cymraeg:** DAME SHIRLEY BASSEY