

Carer Support Service

Newsletter: Autumn and Winter 2022



As Autumn is now here we can reflect on a summer which was hot, hot, hot! But also on the wonderful get togethers we had with predictable weather.

The Golf Day was a real hit and everyone that took part, regardless of their golfing prowess, enjoyed the day with conversation that flowed and laughter shared but also support and encouragement given by carer to carer. We also had our first boat trip followed in quick succession by a second as it

proved to be very popular with carers enjoying respite from their daily routines. Carers reported a feeling of peace and relaxation, watching people on the riverbank, children playing in the water and watching wildlife that would be otherwise unseen. Two separate visits to St. Neots and Peterborough from the pharmacist based at Fulbourn, a guided walk by one of our carers around Cherry Hinton Hall together with our regular coffee mornings have all contributed to a fabulous Summer. With Winter snapping at our heels, we continue with our carer coffee mornings and as a finale a Christmas Craft Morning in December.

We shall be off duty on Monday 26th, Tuesday 27th December 2022 and Monday 2nd January 2023.

We would like to wish you all a peaceful Christmas and thank you all for your support throughout 2022 and of course, we look forward to seeing you throughout the coming months.



Psychology: how developing a ‘quiet mind’ can help improve your mental health for autumn

Is the pace and stress of autumn affecting your mental health? Psychologists say that developing a ‘quiet mind’ through meditation could help.

When we think about the autumn and winter seasons, we often envisage a peaceful scene. It’s a time where we seek cosiness and wrap ourselves up against the elements, a comforting hot chocolate and weighted blanket never too far away from our reach.

But despite the changing leaves and general feeling of happy hibernation, they are also seasons of great stress, too.

The days are shorter, bringing less light and seasonal affective disorder (SAD) starts to take hold, not to mention the social pressure of party season and Christmas toying with our mental health.

It seems like just as we want to start winding down for the year, life gets very loud and busy on the outside, which leads to emotional clutter, anxiety and a frazzled internal monologue on the inside, too.

However, psychologists studying how to tune out overwhelming internal chatter have found a method that can help us boost our resilience and promote internal calm during winter. Enter: quiet mind neuromeditation.



What is quiet mind meditation?

According to *Psychology Today*, quiet mind neuromeditation is characterised by “a significant reduction of internal self-talk and mental imagery”. The aim of the practice is to promote feelings of spaciousness and quiet, “as if the mind is empty or has momentarily stopped its typical parade of stories and narratives”.

How does quiet mind meditation work?

As Dr Jeff Tarrant, psychologist and author of *Meditation Interventions To Rewire The Brain* explains, quiet mind meditation works by inhibiting the default mode network (DMN) in the brain. The DMN is made up of several brain regions that work together to create our sense of self

or identity and is activated when we engage in mental activity that involves thinking about ourselves – such as remembering, planning or judging. The DMN is active a lot of the time, as it’s difficult to have thoughts that don’t involve ourselves as the central character. However, when we think too much, the DMN becomes overactivated, leading to rumination and brooding. While it’s not as simple as turning those thoughts off, as Dr Tarrant suggests, learning to quiet these regions of the brain can lead to significant relief and a reduction of symptoms associated with anxiety and depression. Scientific jargon aside, what quiet mind meditation aims to achieve is to relieve some of the burden of constantly thinking, overthinking and worrying

about everything that's happening in our lives.

How can you quiet an anxious inner monologue and develop a quiet mind?

Dr Tarrant recognises that, for many of us, finding this quiet mind state is extremely difficult, and sustaining it for any length of time can feel impossible. Our lives are increasingly busy, filled with distractions and following the pandemic, our concentration levels are seriously tested on a daily basis. However, Dr Tarrant does share some advice on how to start developing your quiet mind:

1. Don't try to "get rid" of your thoughts

As *Psychology Today* explains, simply attempting to push thoughts out of your head almost never works and results in over-efforting, which is the opposite of the desired state. Instead, focussing on maintaining a sense of stillness or a calming mental image can be helpful in diverting your attention away from intrusive and stressful thoughts.

2. Relax

"We are a mind/body," Dr Tarrant writes. "You will not be able to relax your mind and mental activity if you cannot relax the body." He suggests starting your practice with stretching, yoga, or a progressive muscle relaxation exercise to help you

approach quiet mind meditation holistically.

3. Start slow

The research is clear that the benefits of meditation occur only through consistent practice. It's advised to begin with brief meditations gradually increasing to 20 minutes per day.

4. Recognise that you already know what this state feels like

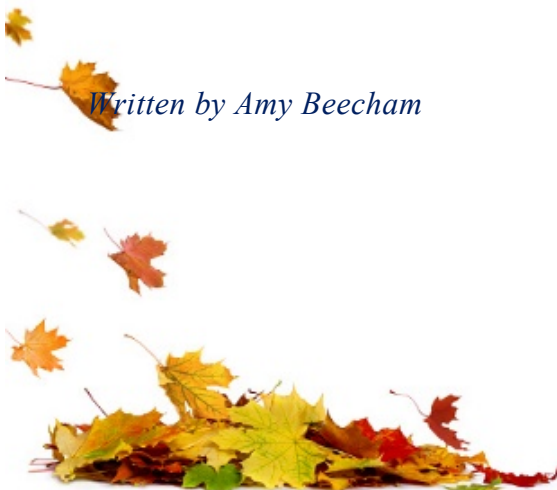
Perhaps most interestingly, whether you realise it or not, you have had moments when your internal world has been quiet. "These moments may be fleeting or imperfect, but they exist. If you can recognise the moments you already experience a quiet mind state, you can learn to lean into those experiences, allowing them to naturally develop," writes Dr Tarrant.

If you, or someone you know, is struggling with their mental health or emotional wellbeing, you can find support and resources on the mental health charity Mind's website and NHS Every Mind Matters or access the NHS' guide to local mental health helplines and organisations here.

If you are struggling, you can also ask your GP for a referral to NHS Talking Therapies, or you can self-refer.

You can also call the Samaritans in the UK on 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org for confidential support.

Written by Amy Beecham





A GUIDED WALK AROUND CHERRY HINTON HALL

Wednesday 13th July 2022

On what turned out to be a warm morning, eight carers joined us for our walk around Cherry Hinton Hall. Our guide was Michelle Bullivant, local historian, archaeologist and carer. Michelle explained that the Hall was built by John Oakes in the 1830s when he bought up several parcels of land after the Enclosures Act in 1806. The hall was described as a small 'Family Mansion in the Elizabethan Style'. John Oakes was in the army in India but returned to live in Cambridge and worked as a surgeon at the original Addenbrookes Hospital.

Although a lot of the original garden features have been lost, it's still possible to see the undulations in the ground that mark out where the original boundaries were. The estate was planted with a large number of trees that were new introductions such as the Douglas fir. The original driveway, Victorian Lodge and entrance columns still remain.

As we wandered around the grounds, we were able to see the chalk streams, lake and the possible watermill site.



It was a really enjoyable morning. A huge thank you goes to Michelle for giving up her time and sharing her knowledge with us.

Coffee morning for Carers and Professionals held at The Italian Community Centre Association, Fleet Way, Peterborough PE2 8DL.

Held on: Tuesday 26th July 2022 - 11:00 – 13:00.

This was our second Coffee morning at this venue and we were warmly greeted by Isabella, the Manageress at the Centre who had arranged for us to be in the same room as before and to have use of all the services as well as full access to the grounds and decked area around the building on this very hot summers day. Angela had kindly organised the event but due to Covid and having to isolate for a few days sadly could not attend.

David and Chris managed the event and although Carer numbers were low compared to last time (we had some late apologies of absence) it was still a very positive group gathering. We welcomed everyone with cups of tea and coffee and the usual array of nice biscuits and lovely cake of course!

Conversations soon started to flow and Carers were asked if there was anything specific they wanted to know and assured that they could speak to us individually or as a group. Generally there wasn't any one topic and it soon became apparent that the majority were very welcome of the brief respite away from their caring role and to again have face to face conversations with others carers and support workers. There was lots of interaction and information shared between all.

Everyone stayed until the end Chris thanked everyone for attending and informed them of other events we have planned including ongoing Coffee mornings for Carers in Peterborough with possible attendance by professionals / guest speakers all to be confirmed.

Many thanks to those Carers who attended, Angela for organising and Chris for attending at such late notice. We look forward to seeing you all at the next one....

Best wishes, David.



LADYBIRD BOAT TRUST

Tuesday 9th August from 10.30am – 1.30pm

On what turned out to be a lovely sunny day, we welcomed fourteen carers for our outing on the Ladybird boat. Travelling at a leisurely pace up the Great Ouse, we were able to admire the lovely countryside. The river was so

low because of the recent dry spell that we were to see the river bottom and watch the fish swimming about. There was an abundance of wildlife, swans, herons and ducks that we could observe.



As it's the school holidays, there were also a number of children swimming and splashing about in the river. The

boat had to make way for other river users and it must have been lovely paddling in a canoe or on a paddle board on such a lovely day.



It was a lovely way to spend the morning. Special thanks must go to the volunteers who manager the Ladybird Boat Trust. A donation of £85 was given to the Ladybird Boat Trust.

Some of the comments we received from our carers about Ladybird day:

What happened on 9th August 2022? A group of carers joined the Charity trip boat 'Ladybird' for a morning trip on the river, we had a brilliant time and thanks to Making space for organising the day. Although most of us didn't know each other before the day it was soon a group of friends enjoying the trip in glorious weather. We left the marina and turned left heading down river with most of use on the front deck enjoying the sun, the boat crew were fantastic not only in handling the boat but also pointing out interesting landmarks as we passed them by.

I don't know what it is about being afloat but people always seem to have time to be cheerful and pleasant to each other, not just us on Ladybird but everybody else using the river had a cheerful word as we passed them by or worked through the lock together.

After we had turned and headed back upstream we had time to pass the marina and see some more of the sights towards Huntingdon, not forgetting to feed the swans!

The three hours just seemed to fly by in a blur of tea and cakes, thanks guys, and I for one will be looking forward to another trip in the future. John White.



Photos by John White.



Thank you 'Making Space' for arranging the trip out on the Great Ouse with The Ladybird Boat Trust yesterday (9th September). What an amazing day. The company, coffee and cake were all fabulous, but being on the river was just stunning. I can honestly say that, although I know this is the kind of thing would I love, I never manage to carve out the time for myself. I guess it takes for someone else to invite me and make it affordable. Thank you so much Chris for being that 'someone'. Yesterday I returned home feeling really relaxed and refreshed. That's very rare!

Honestly, the highlight of my year so far! Thank you again. Georgina

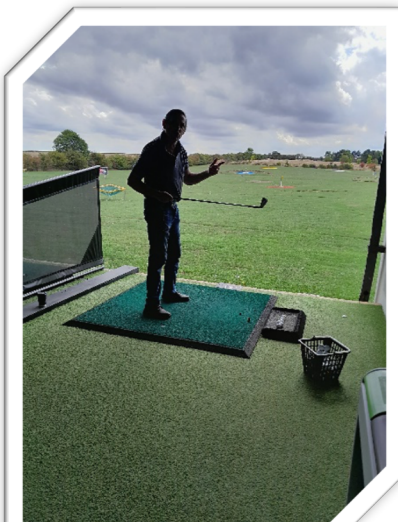
Carer's Golfing Group 15th September 2022

The first Carer's Golfing session took place on the 15th September 2022. We welcomed 9 carers to the Hemingford Golf Complex, Huntingdon



Whilst some carers had clearly played before, others, like me, struggled to hit the ball. I was quite proud of myself that I did managed to hit a couple of balls and they actually went in an almost straight line. It cost £6 for 100 balls and the balls range and trajectory was displayed on your own individual computer. That gave you the opportunity to plot how your game was improving or not.

It was a hugely enjoyable experience and everyone attending said they would like to do it further dates to again. (Details on follow).



Carers Coffee and Information Morning

21st September with guest speaker

Clare Mundell Head Pharmacist based at Fulbourn Hospital

Today we welcomed Clare Mundell to our meeting who kindly gave her time to talk to our carers about which medications are prescribed, their role in mental health conditions and their side effects.

We had 17 carers together with Jonathon Wells from Rethink, who gave everyone a short outline of the work that Rethink do together with information regarding a meeting being held in October for everyone including carers and professionals on Schizophrenia.



We also had Peter who is a carer but also runs a group called Walk and Talk 4 Men which is based in St. Neots. The information he gave to the group prompted questions and interest and an appreciation of another community group where men can talk freely about their lives.

Clare was very informative and extremely helpful, answering everyone's questions with regards to specific and generic medications, some of their uses and tiers of prescribing in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for both carers and the people they care for with mental health conditions.

The meeting, as always, resulted in carers sharing experiences with each other in an informal setting. For the time that people were together, the isolation often felt in a caring role was replaced with friendship and inclusion.

We would like to thank Clare, Jonathon, Peter and all our carers for making the meeting such a success and look forward to seeing everyone again soon at one of our next get-togethers



Centre 33 opening first permanent centre in Peterborough



On the 22nd of September Center 33, which has been providing a free and confidential support service for young people across Cambridgeshire for over 40 years, officially opened its new hub at 4 Cumbergate in Peterborough in the city centre and at Making Space we were there to see the opening as part of the All Age Carers Service.



The service is for young people and will offer them a safe space to access support for their mental health, as well as anything else they require help with.

Drop-in will be offered for young people aged between 13 and 25 who can call in for anything they need, without having to make an appointment or need parental consent.

We are sure that the new Centre 33 hub will be very successful, providing a much needed open door service for younger people.



SECOND LAYDBIRD BOAT TRIP

Thursday 6th October 2022

On what turned out to be a lovely Autumnal day, seventeen carers joined us for our second



trip on the Ladybird boat. This time we went downstream towards Godmanchester. Once again we observed some wonderful wildlife, with the added bonus of seeing the leaves on the trees turning from green to brown. You get a totally different perspective of Huntingdon when you view it from the river. It was a lovely way to spend the morning.

For 2023 We are hoping to arrange a five hour Boat trip with the added bonus of stopping for lunch. More details in the new year.

Positive feedback received from our Carer Lindsay about the Second Ladybird day.

"I just wanted to send you a heartfelt thank you from myself and Julie. We had the most wonderful day last Thursday when we were able to join you for the boat trip with the Ladybird Trust at Huntingdon Marina.

It was absolutely fantastic and it did my heart and soul so much good. The weather was perfect, blue sky and sunshine (I think you may have ordered this especially).

We met and chatted to some lovely people and I feel that we may have helped them in turn to enjoy their day too.

I would like you to pass on special thanks to David (such a lovely man and so easy to talk to)

Also thanks to the lovely Chris who helped us feel at ease with everyone also for the yummy biscuits (I did have a couple with the cup of tea)

I look forward to more trips like this, they are so important to me. As you know I'm not one for big groups of people, but this day I felt comfortable and relaxed and at one with nature.

It really was amazing, and can't thank you enough for giving us as carers this chance to have a very special bit of me time.

Please could you also pass on a very special thank you to Captain John and all his wonderful crew who gave their time to make this day possible for us?

Many thanks, Lindsay"



Carers Coffee and Information Morning in Peterborough with guest speaker

*Clare Mundell Head Pharmacist based at Fulbourn
Hospital*

2nd November 2022



Once again we had Clare Mundell with us on our Coffee Morning this time in Peterborough, who kindly chatted and cleared carers' doubts about brand-named and generic medication and

its effects on mental health.

In addition to myself and Chris as Carers support workers there were also 12 carers, Toni Pike our Volunteer Coordinator, and Susan Davidson from the Peterborough City Council.



These informative meetings are always welcome by our cares who were open to suggesting which mental health professional they would like to have in the next group meetings and we will make an effort to bring them.

We would like to thank again Clare Mundell for giving up some of her precious time by passing on some of her vast knowledge to our carers.

Best wishes,

Angela



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

On the following page you will see
our forthcoming event and you
are very welcome join us.



For more information on any of these events, please speak to your carer support worker.



Christmas Craft Session for Carers

Wednesday 14th December 11am-2pm

**at C3 Church, Coldhams Lane, Cambridge,
CB1 3HR**

- The session is free and will run from 11am to 2pm. It will include all craft materials, tea/coffee.
- Wheelchair accessible and there is car park opposite the church in Sainsbury's supermarket on Brook's Road, CB1 3HP.

**Please let your support worker know if you would like to attend
or for further information contact 01480 211006**

A Poem called Doll

Doll

A doll has no emotion,
A doll has perfect skin,
A doll does what you want,
A doll has a perfect face,

A doll, a doll, a doll,
What i have in common with a doll,
I feel emotionless,
I do what you want,
A doll, a doll, a doll,



An Action Man has no emotion,
An Action Man has a perfect body,
An Action Man does what you want,
An Action Man has a moulded body,

An Action Man, an Action Man, an Action Man,
What I have in common with an Action Man,
I feel emotionless,
I do what you want,
An Action Man, an Action Man, an Action Man,

But I am not a doll,
I do have emotions,
I don't have perfect skin,
I can do what i want,

I am beautifully not perfect,
I am not a doll,

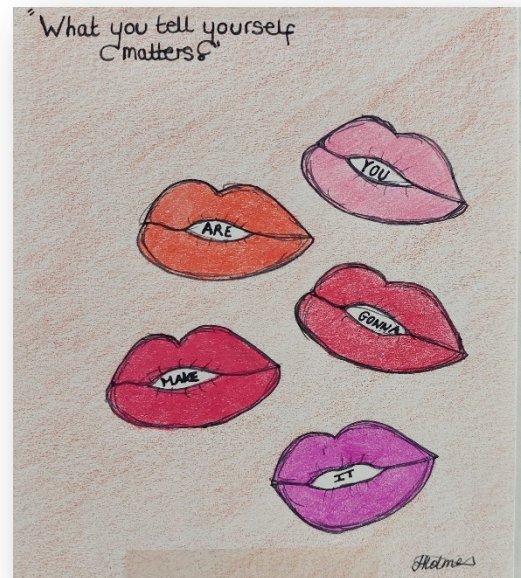
But I am not an Action Man,
I do have emotions,
I am the way I am,
I can do what I want,
My body is the way it's meant to be,
I am not an Action Man,

Dolls now come in different shapes and sizes,
But that does not mean I am a doll,
No one decides my choices,
I am me, you are you, a doll is a doll,
I have emotions, I have feelings, I make my own choices.

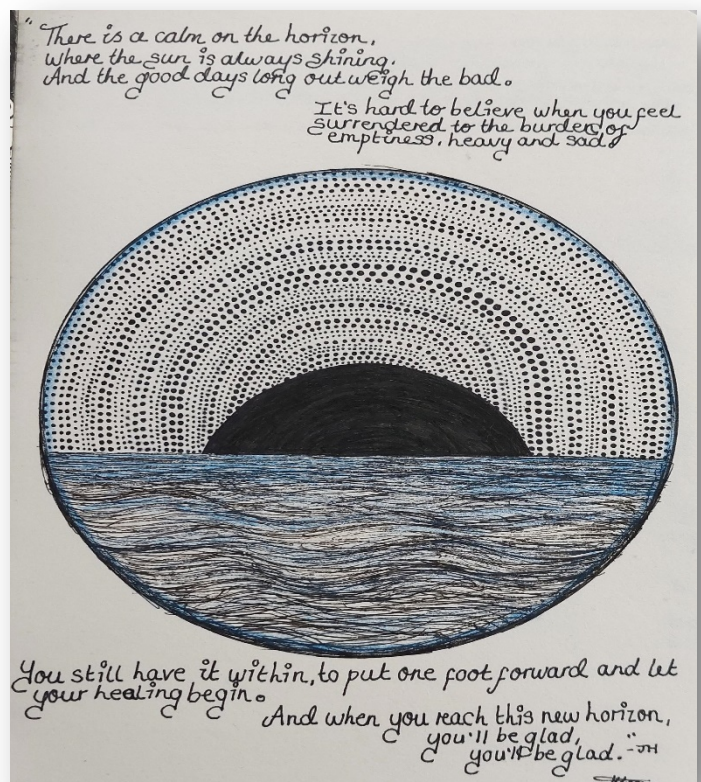
This was kindly submitted by a person cared for by a member of their family



Jordan Holmes is a mental health Carer who has found peace through Art.



As always any articles for the newsletter written by you, the carers, are always most welcome! If you have something you would like to write about or information you would like to share, please send it to your support worker to be added into the Next Newsletter.





Who to contact in crisis or if you are feeling unwell

- **First Response Service:** For a mental health crisis, call 111 and select option 2. Calls will be answered 24/7 by trained mental health practitioners.
- If you want support via text, contact **SHOUT** by texting 85258, <https://giveusashout.org/>
- **Saneline:** 0300 304 7000 between 4.30pm and 10.30pm each evening
- **Samaritans:** Call free any time, from any phone, on **116 123** for confidential, non-judgmental emotional support.
- **Lifeline:** 0808 808 2121 Between 7pm-11pm 365 days a year
- **MIND** Infoline provides an information and signposting service. Open 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday (except for bank holidays). Infoline: 0300 123 3393, Email: info@mind.org.uk
- **A&E:** If you are not able to obtain the support you need through the methods above, you can call 999 or go to your nearest A&E department.