



## CORONAVIRUS WORKOUT

APRIL 2020

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# Welcome

*Zanne Findlay Chair of the Telegraph Hill Centre Steering Group*

To the first, and hopefully only, Coronavirus Workout booklet from the Telegraph Hill Centre Network of practitioners and other professionals involved in the Telegraph Hill Centre. The Centre is a joint venture with St Catherine's Church and throughout the year we host a number of skilled practitioners, therapists and workshop leaders who work with over 1,000 people each week.

The Centre is normally open six days a week for 50 weeks a year and so during this time of enforced closure we thought we would ask those who work at the Centre to offer their expertise and practical advice in this time of lockdown.

Each person has written their contribution so you will find a variety of styles and approaches, but that is what makes the Telegraph Hill Centre so inviting as we welcome diversity and open our doors to community groups who need somewhere safe to meet. The entries here are a small sample of all the activities you can normally find day to day at the Centre so do visit our website and see the full range of services on offer.

When it is safe to do so we will open our doors once more and welcome you in either to participate in an event or to hire rooms to offer your expertise.

## **Our vision for the Centre**

To be a vibrant community hub at the heart of the community

## **Our mission**

To provide a safe, welcoming space for everyone in the local area that facilitates:

- health and well-being;
- life skills and ongoing education;
- support at every stage of life;
- community connection.

... creating opportunities for friendship, development, synergy and creativity

*Our Building Development Goals are: Greener – Safer – Smarter*

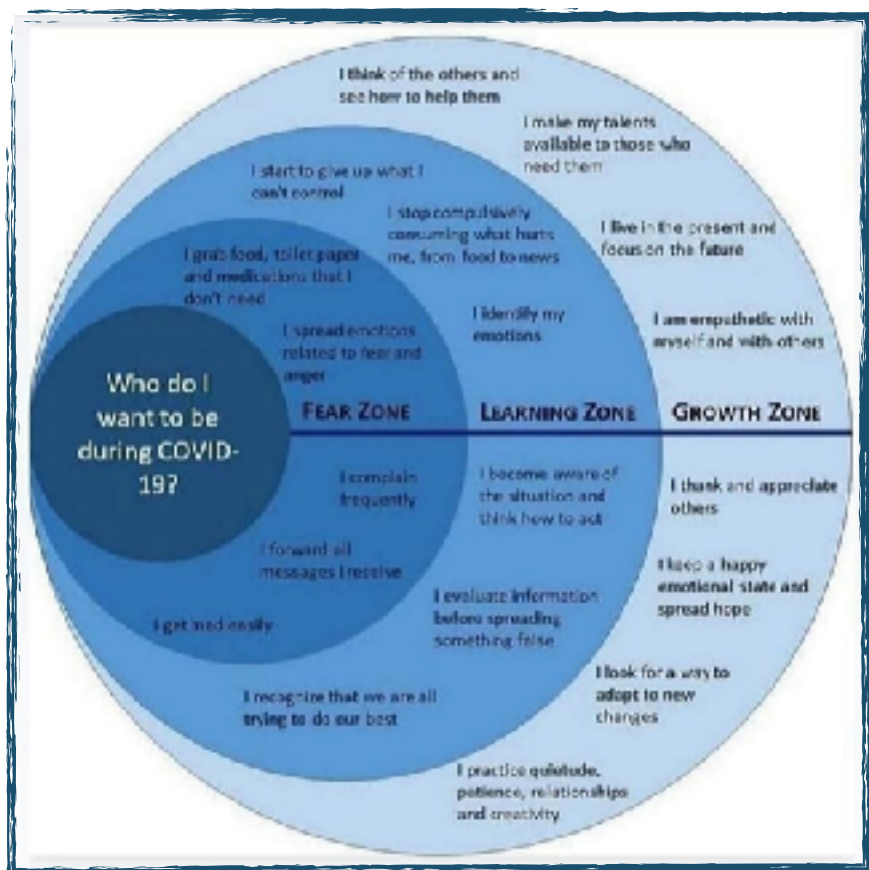
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**Telegraph Hill Centre & St Catherine's church**  
**working together for the good of all.**



Contributed by Sanjit Chudha, source unknown but appreciated

This graphic might help you with thinking through who you want to be during this difficult time for all of us.



Apologies for the print quality only available in this format.

# Tips & tricks on healthy eating

*Jo Travers The London Nutritionist*



I don't need to tell you that these are very strange times, but I can't help myself! They are that strange that I can't quite believe it. Some of the things that I have trained for like helping people who have minimal cooking facilities and limited access to food are suddenly being reframed for the majority of us, by the shortage of usual foods and not being able to go out to shop.

Even I have found this has caused me some anxiety despite knowing how to make sure my family gets what it needs from what is available. And this is magnified by my children who are finding it difficult to adjust to the different meals and snacks on offer. But the good news is that although we might only have access to foods we may not usually choose, I can give you some very practical guidance on how to get what you need to stay healthy.

## Food groups

Here are the main nutrients that our bodies need, and the different foods that you can get them from.

### Protein

Meat (including ham, bacon, tinned, jerky and biltong), fish (including smoked and tinned), eggs, beans, lentils, dairy, tofu, tempeh, dairy (including UHT or powdered milk, cheese and yogurt), peanut butter

### Carbs

Rice, pasta, couscous, bulgur wheat, quinoa, barley, potatoes (including sweet potato), cereals (including cereal bars), oats, bread (including wraps, pitta, naan), pulses

### Fibre

Beans, lentils, vegetables, fruit (including dried, tinned and frozen) some cereal bars, wholegrains (wholemeal bread, brown rice, oats, bulgur wheat, wholemeal pasta)

### Omega 3

Sardines, mackerel, herring, salmon (including tinned and smoked) walnuts, flax seeds

### Iron

Red meat, sardines, dark green leafy veg (not spinach), beans, lentils, dried apricots, dried figs, white bread

### Calcium

Milk and dairy products (including custard and rice pudding), beans, lentils, sardines, soy, almond and oat milks, supplements

### Water soluble vitamins

Fruit & veg (including tinned and frozen), juice

### Portion sizes



You need around 4-5 fist-sized portions of carbohydrates depending on your activity level (to provide energy); 2 palm-sized portions of protein (needed to make cells, enzymes and hormones); 5 cupped hands of fruit/veg (vitamins and minerals are necessary for every process in the body); & ideally, 3 portions of calcium every day (important for bone health).

### The plate model



Imagine your plate is split into three. Fill half the plate with veg or a mixture of fruit and veg; a quarter of the plate with carbohydrates; and a quarter with protein. You can pick any carb, any protein and any veg/fruit and still get benefits. So although kale and quinoa might be trendy at the moment, cabbage and bread provide the same nutrients.

Also, you will see from the list above, that some foods appear in more than one group. This means that they can do double duty! One of my favourite recipes -dal- that I've included below is an example of this. The lentils provide protein, carbs, iron, fibre, calcium and count as a vegetable.

### Make a meal plan

If it's difficult to think what to cook with the ingredients you have, it might help to make a plan so all you have to do at meal times is make the meal. This can also help with "budgeting" your ingredients.

	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
<b>Breakfast</b>			Porridge / cereal / toast				
<b>Lunch</b>	Egg Sandwich	Tuna and potato salad	Bean salad	Scrambled eggs	Chicken wrap	Couscous and chickpeas	Egg on toast
<b>Snacks</b>			Fruit / popcorn				
<b>Dinner</b>	Jacket potatoes + cheese	Dal & rice	Macaroni Cheese	Risotto	Chicken & potato curry	Chilli & rice	Pasta & sauce

### 5. Try not to worry about food

I know this might sound difficult but there is enough to worry about without adding food to the list. Remember that your body is extremely good at making do with what is available.

## Easy Dal

Serves 4

### Ingredients

1 ½ cups lentils

400 g tin chopped tomatoes

1 onion finely chopped

1 ½ tbsp curry powder

½ tsp salt

Rice or bread to serve

### Method

Wash lentils in cold water and drain.

Place in a pan with 2 cups of water and bring to the boil. Skim off any foam that comes to the surface.

Add remaining ingredients, stir and turn the heat down so it's gently bubbling.

Meanwhile, cook the rice according to the instructions on the pack

Stir the dal from time to time and add more water if it gets a bit dry.

**Jo Travers**, The London Nutritionist and author of The Low-Fad Diet, is a state Registered Dietitian with a First Class BSc (Hons) in Human Nutrition & Dietetics. She has been in private practice for five years, and in her media role has consulted for the BBC; Channel 4; and comments regularly in print and on radio (more often than not as the voice of reason when the latest outlandish food story hits the news).

She is also a spokesperson for the British Dietetic Association.

[www.thelondonnutritionist.co.uk](http://www.thelondonnutritionist.co.uk)

# The new family normal

## Sanity Saving Tips

*Sandra Singer Child and family therapist & family consultant*



Lockdown can be challenging for any family! Here are 6 easy and practical tips on how to stay positive and connected.

### 1. Music & Movement

Take turns and play your favourite songs. Listening to music causes the brain to release feel-good chemicals. Research shows that for many people, simply listening to happy songs actually works to raise your mood. Like music, dance also raises levels of happy hormones like serotonin and dopamine, and it lowers stress, boosts your heart rate and circulation.

So get the family moving - it is a great start to your day!

### 2. Routine

Particularly in times of uncertainty it is even more important to follow a routine – for everyone.

**Did you know that:** When we feel out of control we often try to regain control by interacting with our children in a certain way: becoming more commanding and being more controlling. When kids feel out of control they: can be 'clingy', have more tantrums and arguments with their siblings, do more backtalking, and are less cooperative.

So do everybody a favour and create a routine that will give you and your kids a predictable framework on how to navigate the day. Have a family meeting to agree a routine. Include how everyone helps as well as fun activities. A routine can include:

- Household chores (or better: Family Contributions)
- Home learning time
- Exercise
- Making meals together & cleaning up
- Scheduled time for watching or playing on screens
- Family time
- FUN

### 3. Rituals

Create rituals as part of your routine so everyone has something to look forward to during the week. It is best if you decide this together as a family and include it in your weekly routine. Examples of rituals:

- Friday movie & pizza night
- Scheduled video interaction time with friends or family you can't visit right now.
- You can also play games online with them like a pub quiz
- Have a family cooking club one day a week
- Go for a walk each day
- Organise a game night

Have a daily family review and talk about what went well today / didn't go so well; and what do you want to change for tomorrow?



#### 4. 'Worry Time'

Schedule a daily "worry time" for your children or other family members who experience heightened anxiety during this pandemic:

10 minutes a day at a set time

Just listen and do not interrupt! Empathising "I can see how worrying this is for you...We will get through this together"

Don't disagree or argue with the person speaking. Make it judgement-free!

When the time is up (you can set a timer), move on to the next thing on your routine.

When worries come up at other times, offer the person to take a note of it or make a drawing to make sure they can talk about it during the scheduled worry time.

**Did you know that:** letting your child air all their complaints and concerns helps to stop them showing their worries in other forms of behaviour, such as angry outbursts.

#### 5. 'Special Time'

If you feel that your child's behaviour is either worrying or exhausting you, then believe it or not, it is time to spend some quality one-to-one time together! Spending all day together doesn't mean that your child gets the quality time they need to feel significant. Children can act out a lack of positive attention through challenging behaviour so you will be forced to pay attention to them.

What is Special Parent-Child time:

Special time is between one parent and one child

The child has power to decide what you do together (do not judge their activity of choice!)

You and your child can come up with some ground rules to before your start

Ideally have the Special Time at the same time every day, about 10 minutes is enough

If there are two parents, ensure each child gets special time with each parent every day.

Label it: "Now is our Special Time, I am so looking forward to it!"

Be fully present and emotionally available

It is an opportunity to get into your child's world and foster emotional connection

As a result, you will feel great as a parent!

... and your child will display fewer attention-seeking and power-seeking behaviours

Honour it: "I just love our special time, It's the best part of my day!"

#### 6. Be kind to yourself and others!

This is a difficult time due to many reasons and we often act out our frustration on those close to us. Notice when you feel 'on edge' and take some time out: do some exercise, cook, or read a book by yourself, and ask others not to disturb you for the next 20 minutes.

Do notice and acknowledge what those around you do: "I really appreciate that you cooked today! It was delicious; thank you!" Give your children and partner some slack as they are likely feeling as stressed as you do. When they get grumpy let them know you understand how they are feeling "I know it's hard at the moment, I feel the same. Shall we think about how we can make the best out of this situation?"

# Mindfulness

Sarah Hews-Mindfulness teacher



## **Mindfulness:**

***‘Knowing what is happening, while it is happening, without preference.’***

Rob Nairn, Mindfulness Association

**OR**

***‘Mindfulness means telling your attention where it should go.’***

Carlos, age 8, Lewisham Primary School

As humans, we spend a lot of time in the past and in the future. We constantly go over things that have happened before, five minutes before or maybe five years before. We re-examine things from our past again and again, re-living the emotions we felt at the time: an angry conversation comes to mind and we feel angry at that person again, working out what we could have said or done. We think a lot about the future, often worrying or imagining things that may or may not happen.

Mindfulness is about bringing our mind back to the present moment, to what is happening right now, and training our mind to do this. It is often described as a sense of ‘waking up’ to the present moment, rather than living our lives on auto pilot while our mind is constantly distracted.

## **The benefits**

The benefits of doing this can be a sense of calm as we deal with life moment by moment rather than feeling stress and anxiety about the future. We find we can be in control of our attention rather than our mind being constantly distracted and pulled this way and that by various thoughts and feelings.

Practising meditation and training the mind is a bit like doing a workout to train the body. At first it feels as if nothing is happening, but as we do it again and again, we see changes in ourselves. The muscle of attention gets stronger and we begin to notice what is going on in our mind and to feel more in control of it. And perhaps calmer.

## **Formal and informal practice**

Mindfulness can be divided into two categories: formal practice and informal practice.

Formal practice is when we sit down and do a meditation exercise to practise bringing our attention to the present moment.

Informal practice is bringing mindfulness into our daily lives and finding moments when we can focus on what we are doing right now. For example, when we do the washing-up we might think about what we are going to do afterwards, or we may think about something that happened a week ago and go over it. With mindfulness we bring our attention to the act of washing-up: we think about what we are doing, the crockery, the soapy water, the feeling of the water on our hands. We notice all the physical sensations we feel while washing up.

## Meditation

Meditation is a practice where we bring our attention to the present moment and try to hold it there. To help us do this, we focus our attention on something such as the breath, the body or we can use a physical object such as a candle. Meditation is not about stopping thinking or making the mind go blank. This is impossible. If you stop for a minute, close your eyes and think about your toes and try and keep your attention on your toes, you will find that really quickly you start thinking about something! Thoughts pop up! This is normal. It's what the mind does. In meditation we just notice the thoughts popping up and bring the mind back to what we are focusing on-the breath, toes etc.

## Online resources available

Mindfulness and meditation have brought calm and support into my life. I am lucky enough to teach meditation to children in a Lewisham primary school where children do a mindfulness practice every day and have even learned to lead a meditation themselves. Now that the schools are closed to most children, I have uploaded guided meditations to the school website so that parents and children can do these exercises together at home.

Right now we are living in uncertain times. People's experiences of Covid-19 and the lockdown may be very different but for all of us the future is uncertain. We don't know what will happen. We may feel vulnerable. The experience of illness or the anticipation of illness may be causing anxiety and fear in many of us. This is a time when our minds may be spinning off into the future, imagining 'what if...?' The ability to ease this mental activity and bring ourselves back to a place of calm can support our resilience and help us cope through difficulty.

When we first start learning to meditate, it is helpful to listen to a guided practice. There are many apps available that offer this. The ones I would recommend are Mindfulness Association (free), Buddhify (£4.99)-has meditations for children, Headspace (free). I run an adult mindfulness group at the Telegraph Hill Centre. I am recording guided meditations and sending them out to the group by email and WhatsApp. I would be happy to share these more widely for people to use at home. If you would like to receive guided meditations email me at [sarah@hews.org.uk](mailto:sarah@hews.org.uk) and I will include you.

On a personal note, I am on my third week since developing Covid-19. I know that mindfulness practice has supported me in difficult times and helped me remain stable when panic seemed to be looming. It enabled me to breathe calmly when I felt that breathing was difficult and this was a great support.

I wish you all health and happiness.

[sarah@hews.org.uk](mailto:sarah@hews.org.uk)

# Coping with stress during critical times

*Tips from the British Psychological Society*

*By Dr Paula Gomes Alves and Dr Gisele Dias (Lecturers in Psychology, University of Greenwich)*



## How to care for ourselves

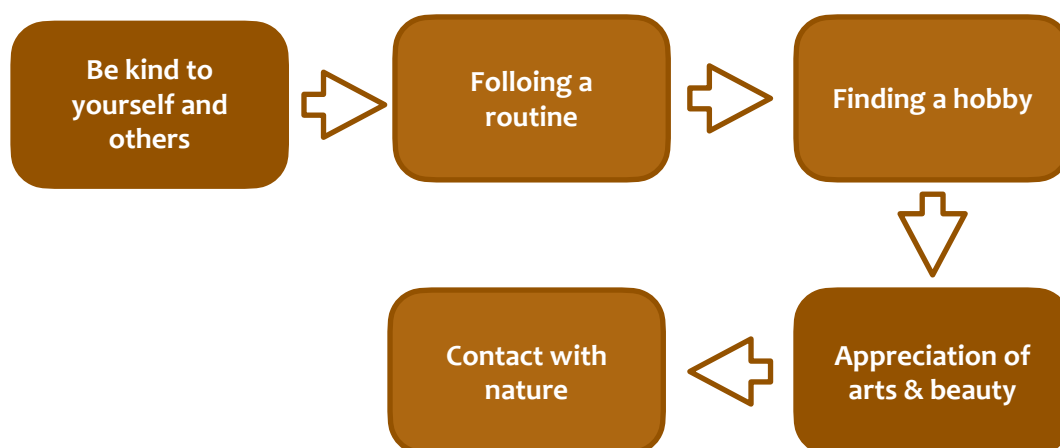
When we are experiencing difficult, new and unexpected situations, our stress levels are likely to increase. Higher stress levels than usual may interfere with how we care for ourselves and others, as well as hinder our capacity to react timely and efficiently to those challenging situations.

## Advice from the British Psychological Society

To help us in these unprecedented times that we are facing due the COVID-19 pandemic, the British Psychological Society published tips on how to improve our self-care:

- Be informed and prepare
- Communicate and keep connected
- Maintain social networks
- Give care and take care
- Healthy eating, exercise and meditation
- Seek help and talk to others

## Other strategies that may help you are:



Keeping safe and caring for yourself will not only make you feel better, but also allow you to be in a better mental and physical state to help others!

**Further information can be found at:**

<https://www.bps.org.uk>

<https://www.viacharacter.org/resources/social-downloads/three-good-things>

<https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2020/mar/23/10-of-the-worlds-best-virtual-museum-and-art-gallery-tours>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19?utm\\_content=&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_name=&utm\\_source=govdelivery&utm\\_term=](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=)

# Grieving healthily

Zanne Findlay, Grief Recovery Specialist  
Chair of the Telegraph Hill Centre Steering Group



***‘People are like stained glass windows. They sparkle and shine  
when the sun is out,  
but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed  
only if there is a light from within.’***

**Elizabeth Kubler-Ross**

Nothing could really have prepared us for the times we are living through right now. Everyone is dealing with uncertainty and we are all dealing with loss one way or another. Some losses like bereavement, redundancy or ill health are obvious, but there are the losses which are harder to define, such as the loss of personal freedoms or hopes for the future.

## Grief & guilt

With all loss comes grief, even though you may not recognise it as such. You may feel numb or be sleeping badly. You may be feeling lonely or angry at other people who become symbolic of your situation.

Grief is not depression, but it can make you feel depressed, especially if you increasingly feel powerless or guilty. At the moment many people are grieving because of the loss of physical contact with their friends and families. Events are ‘virtual’ if they happen at all, and worst of all people who are sick, or dying, are separated from their loved ones.

The fact that so many personal tragedies are happening on such a grand scale creates a universal undercurrent of fear and grief which has unprecedented media coverage. Everyone finds themselves in impossible situations: fearful of being infectious, fearful of being infected and yet concerned for others too.

Many feel guilty about not doing more, doing the wrong thing or acting in a way that evokes the outrage of others. The dictionary defines guilt as ‘a feeling of responsibility or remorse for some offence whether real or imagined’.

Guilt can become toxic if you take responsibility for things outside of your control or fail to recognise that you did the best you could in the circumstances.

## Could I be grieving?

... even though I have not suffered an obvious loss recently?

Are your behaviours more extreme than normal? Are you eating more, hoarding more, drinking more or withdrawing from life?

Are you feeling victimised by the situation?

Are you experiencing a roller coaster of emotions?

### Am I alone?

Most of us are grieving – or avoiding – some form of loss most of the time. It is not until you allow yourself to grieve healthily that you can move on. Avoidance or denial can lead to behaviours that are harmful to yourself or others. Strangely this current situation provides us all with an opportunity to allow grief and sadness to be accepted as normal, natural and not shameful.

Recent movements such as #MeToo and #Time to Change show that grief has no time limit, it is always felt 100%, always unique and can lead to mental health issues if not recognised.

### How can I grieve healthily?

Do not judge yourself or compare yourself with others.

Give yourself time to feel the difficult feelings.

Avoid being overly busy or constantly distracted..

Do not isolate yourself for fear of being ‘boring’ or ‘demanding’.

Reach out to those you can trust for support. Do not project too far into the future.

Evaluate whether you are being served by believing some of the commonly held myths.

Take steps to release yourself from actions, inactions or beliefs that prevent you from self healing.

**Myth busting** – familiar sayings that are unhelpful or shaming:

**‘Time heals’** ... not on its own. You need to take action too.

**‘Grievors are best left alone’** ... if sadness was more commonly shared then everyone would benefit both as giver and receiver.

**‘Be strong’** ... if vulnerability was more accepted as part of our humanity we would judge ourselves, and others, less harshly.

**‘Don’t feel sad’** ... we all have reasons to be sad sometimes and should not feel ashamed at expressing that.

**Grief has stages** ... is a misconception, there is no set pattern, we all experience various emotions at different times and re-visit them as they are triggered by life events.

You could see this as a ‘pool of memories’ in which the essence of the person or situation remains, because ‘moving on’ with your life does not mean forgetting your history nor what has shaped you, it means accepting it as part of you.

### How can I help others?

**Listen to their story** ... accepting you cannot stand in their shoes as they cannot stand in yours.

**Listen with your heart** ... without feeling a need to ‘Aix’ them. Emotions can be difficult to hear, but you don’t have to remain impassive.

**Ask what happened** ... most people long to talk.

Stay in the moment ... they will know if your attention wavers.

**Share your experiences of feeling vulnerable** ... when the time is right. It is as important to receive as it is to give.



# Fitness tips

## from a chubby desk jockey

*Angelo Tiago Barros Level 3 trainee in Fitness Instruction and Personal Training.*

*Try this exercise at your own discretion.*



### Time

Is the one thing we never have enough and suddenly we have so much we don't know what to do with it. I'm sure by now we all have written that novel we know we have in us, we are fluent in another language and have analysed the complete works of Shakespeare (is "to be or not to be" really THE question?). I'm absolutely positive that you also made two separate orders to your local grocery store, one ordering a chicken and another an egg, just to see which one would arrive first. But there is one thing missing. The one we commit to every January 1st and quit by January 4th: "I want to be healthier!". Luckily for you, I also have lots of time in my hands and want to take you on a fitness journey with me.

### Who am I?

For those who don't know me, my name is Angelo and I'm the office administrator at Telegraph Hill Centre and St. Catherine's Church. You might also know me by a cornucopia of different latin-sounding names starting with an "A" or ending with an "O". I am also a wee-bit overweight. And if I can do this, I'm sure you can as well.

### The workout

The proposed workout consists of 6 different bodyweight movements that you can do without any equipment. They are:

#### 1) Squats – 8 repetitions

Stand with feet shoulder width apart, weight on the heels. Bend the knees and lower the upper body until thighs are parallel to the floor, or further for full range of motion. Do not let the knees move forward past the toes. Reverse by driving down on the heels until you return to a standing position.

#### 2) Push-Up (or Press-Up) – 5 repetitions

Place your hands on the floor (or a bench/stool/wall) shoulder-width apart. Get on the floor, hands shoulder-width and straight legs. With your body tensed lower yourself down with elbows hugging your side then press yourself up again.

#### 3) Plank – 15 seconds

Lie on the floor face down, with your back and legs straight, feet together and your elbows under your shoulders, resting on your elbows. Your body should be straight. Hold this position for the full length.

#### 4) Jumping Jacks – 15 repetitions

Place your hands to your side and your feet together. While jumping in the air, simultaneously clap your hands and spread your feet slightly wider than shoulder width apart. Jump again, this time returning your arms to your side and clicking your heels together like Dorothy.



**5) Lunges – 6 repetitions (each leg)**

Stand with hands on hips or clasped behind neck. Lunge forward with first leg. Land on heel then forefoot. Lower body by flexing knee and hip of front leg until knee of rear leg is almost in contact with floor. Return to original standing position by forcibly extending hip and knee of forward leg. Repeat by alternating lunge with opposite leg.

**6) Lying Single Leg Hip-Raise – 10 repetitions**

Lie on your back with your arms by your side. With one leg bent, raise the other leg while lifting your hip from the floor and maintaining the leg straight (it should be a quick hop and not a steady position). Do 10 in a row and repeat with the other leg.

**Circuits for different fitness levels:**

Depending on your fitness levels, you can follow one of these patterns:

**Beginner** – 4 circuits. Rest 30 seconds between exercises and 90 seconds between each circuit.

Intermediate – 5 circuits. Rest 20 seconds between exercises and 75-90 seconds between circuits.

Add 10 seconds to the plank.

**Advanced** – 6 circuits. Rest 20 seconds between exercises, 75 seconds between circuits. Add 20 seconds to the plank.

**More Than Advanced!** (Advancier? Advanciest?) – 6 circuits. Rest 10 seconds between exercises, 45 seconds between circuits. Add 30 seconds to the plank and 5 more reps to every exercise.

**Frequency**

Try to do this 3 times per week and you'll have so much more energy to drive everyone else in your house insane than ever before.

**Bonus workout for all levels**

And as a bonus workout for your fingers, you can show us your sweaty, rose coloured face with the hashtag #angelomademedoit when you complete this workout.

Source: "Your Body is All You Need".

# Feldenkrais

## Awareness Through Movement

*with Maggy Burrowes in the comfort of your own living room...*



For some of us a change in routine feels like an opportunity; you may feel you are going stir crazy right now, or you may be feeling a little excited to have more time available to do something that you have been thinking about doing for a long time; getting a jump start on a brand new skill; digging your old clarinet or violin out of the attic; giving up some well-established bad old habit and replacing it with a fresh, shiny new one – or maybe just finally trying out that weird-sounding local class, now you can do it in the comfort of your own home, thanks to the wonder that is Zoom.

### The Feldenkrais Method

I teach an obscure technique known as the Feldenkrais Method. At first glance it can seem to be entirely about moving better, with more ease and grace, but in fact it is intended to be a tool for facilitating changes in your life; for shifting out of well-established habitual behaviours into a ready-for-anything, more adaptable, more spontaneous way of being.

Moshe Feldenkrais designed his Method to offer a range of strategies for making "the impossible possible, the difficult easy, and the easy elegant". He spent his adult life studying judo; he knew how a master of judo moved, and behaved; he recognised that a person with mastery makes what they do look effortless, and beautiful—he was using the word "elegant" in all its many shades of meaning.

These ancient arts have skills for living embedded into their design; even our diluted westernised versions of Ju Jitsu, Tai Chi and Aikido still contain remnants of the philosophies that inspired them. I suspect Dr Feldenkrais could see that humanity needed new tools for self-development; he recognised that learning how to learn was vital for our continuing survival in the complex artificial world we are constantly erecting around ourselves. He saw that living longer and longer with less and less flexible thinking was a recipe for stagnation and decline, both for individuals, and for our species as a whole. He read everything he could find about our human nervous system – he had an old knee injury to heal – and recognised that there was a version of his beloved physics that was central to how we humans function.

### Neuroplasticity

Biophysics takes the strategies of traditional physics and uses them to analyse all aspects of biological phenomena. Feldenkrais could see how the concept of our "neuroplasticity" – the ability of our brain and nervous system to continue to develop and make new connections throughout our lives – could be organised into a set of strategies for self-development and self-healing. There are thousands of Awareness Through Movement "lessons", and their essence is distilled into this deceptively simple set of instructions:

[http://thefieldcenter.org/o6resources/downloads/learning\\_to\\_learn.pdf](http://thefieldcenter.org/o6resources/downloads/learning_to_learn.pdf)

No matter what movements we are exploring in class, I am always teaching these ten learning skills.

### Do Everything Very Slowly

This is not as easy as it sounds, and one reason I chose it is because many people will recognise this strategy as fundamental to Tai Chi as well. Any simple, familiar movement can be slowed down and explored; changing your pace is a simple way to make a movement you do habitually instantly less habitual and thus less automatic.

In class we always quiet ourselves first, usually by lying on the floor, but for ease let's experiment in sitting. Spend a few moments getting in touch with the sensation of your sitting bones on the seat (a firm chair will be more effective for this, a kitchen chair is ideal). Can you tell if your weight is central, or shifted a little over to one side?

When you are ready, begin to move your weight over to sit more heavily on one of your sitting bones – which one did you choose? Come back to the centre and then shift your weight in the same direction again, and play with doing this as slowly as you can manage; can you stretch the movement out until it takes you five seconds to arrive on that sitting bone?

If you repeat the movement a few times, allowing some of your attention to rest on your pace, and some on the freedom of your breathing, and some on the movement of your head in space, you are already doing Feldenkrais.

In class we practise observing the changes that simple movements like these can make to our perception of ourselves. If you are new to Awareness Through Movement you may not feel much difference at first, but that is fine, just focussing your attention and freeing your breathing as you move is already a useful practice.

After a restful pause, explore this movement to other side; you may already be able to recognise that you do this somewhat differently, possibly even begin to understand why you "chose" the other sitting bone first. As before we repeat a few times, and then rest.

Now, to gently shift all the way from one sitting bone to the other, breathing freely and discovering how to allow your head to remain in a more central position is already a nice lesson for your spine and neck. For myself this movement enabled me to manage attacks of sciatica.

### Online classes now available

I have been planning to teach more online classes for many months now, so I am a little embarrassed that it has taken an international crisis to finally get me started. I will be offering several classes and workshops online. The first will be a weekly Zoom class exploring classic Feldenkrais lessons, on Tuesdays at 12 noon, from April 14th onwards. Full details are available here.

<https://maggyburrowes.com/working-with-maggy/online-training/>

I will also be teaching workshops on specific themes, including Embodying The Voice and Sitting With Ease. Do not hesitate to call or email if you want to know more about any aspect of my teaching. I will also be uploading introductory videos clarifying the different learning strategies of The Feldenkrais Method onto my YouTube channel very shortly. All of this information will be available on my website.

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# Massage

*Louisa Sisson Professional Massage Therapist*



## **Nourishment for the body & soul**

Being in lockdown, being ill or anxious about the future can have an effect on our natural balance. We want a body and mind we can rely on and use to good effect to help ourselves and others we love. Here are some simple techniques that can help you gain back this balance through self-massage, massage for those in your household and a few ways to relax using easy breathing and grounding

## **Breathing & grounding**

Take a seat in a comfy place where your feet are able to touch the ground and your back is relatively straight. You can also do this standing or seated on the floor with your legs crossed and spine straight. Make no judgment of yourself here, just be comfy in a position that is right for you.

Begin by closing your eyes (if comfortable) and listen to your breath. Again, make no judgement. Use this time to allow yourself to just exist without the internal criticism of the mind.

Feel your feet flat on the ground or if seated, feel your sit bones grounding into the floor. Imagine your feet or sit bones rooting into the ground providing support and stability to your body.

Spend three or four breath cycles here noticing your pattern of breathing. If you feel that you are breathing through your mouth, pause and see if you are able to comfortably breathe through your nose instead. This may take time so don't rush, remain comfortable and relaxed.

Notice if you are breathing from high up in your chest or down from your belly. Take a moment, place your hands gently on your belly and begin breathing as comfortably as possible from here allowing your hand to move as the belly expands and contracts with the breath.

Our aim is to take 5 deep, comfortable, relaxing breaths, the 'in breath' from the belly, in through the nose, for a count of 5, a hold for 3 seconds, and an 'outbreath' also through the nose for a count of 7.

If you are unable to do this for the recommended counts then just begin with less counts, say 3 for the in breath and 5 for the outbreath allowing yourself time to develop to longer breaths.

Once we feel comfortable we can extend the time taken for the in and out breaths and for the hold.

After our 5 breath cycles, open the eyes if they were closed and allow the breath to come back to a normal rhythm.

Gain confidence by practicing this throughout your day and call upon it when you feel the need to gain strength and stability for yourself and others.

## **A guide to massage**

Our main goal is to aid relaxation allowing the body to revert to its natural homeostasis, we must ensure we use our touch with respect and consent.

Do not massage in the following situations: flu or severe cold, fever, vomiting, recent heart attack or stroke without prior advice from the doctor, under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Both yourself and the person you are massaging should be sitting or lying comfortably.

Begin by grounding, find a moment of relaxation. Guide the person being massaged through some relaxing breaths.

Our initial contact should be gentle, with confidence, but also with love.

Place your hands on the area you plan to massage. Wait a few moments, allow the person you are massaging to relax to your touch. Use a massage oil of choice taking into consideration any allergies.

Take your time, feel confident and follow your inner guide, listen to the person you are massaging.

Remember, touch, and specifically touch through massage, is a tool that we all hold. Our natural reaction when someone is sad, upset, in pain or even experiencing celebration is to reach out, to hug, hold or just touch an arm or hand.

This touch is innate, and through this touch we can communicate where words may not be able.

### **Hand massage – a basic guide**

Working towards the heart, begin with long strokes from the hand up the arm working the palm and the top of the hand. Feel a flow here, go with your instincts.

Link the fingers and guide the wrist into slow circular motions. You can allow the wrist a nice stretch back and front here which can help any tension in the arm.

Using the thumbs or fingertips, work into the padding around the thumb and palm in small circular movements, pressure can be increased here. The thumb padding can be a bit of a sweet spot where you could find a build-up of tension. Spend a bit of time here using your fingers and thumbs to guide you around the palm.

Starting at the tip of the little finger, gently squeeze the finger making your way towards the base of the finger.

Repeat this for the rest of the fingers and thumb giving a gentle pull to each finger when finished.

Finish with long strokes up the arm towards the heart. Repeat on the other side.

### **Head massage – a basic guide**

Using the finger tips, begin by making slow, gentle circular movements on the scalp. The pressure can be increased here gradually. Let your fingertips wander around the scalp finding little crevices where tension may be being held. The lower part of the skull where it joins the neck is a good place to spend some time. Take your time as the head is extra sensitive and any sharp movements will feel 100 times bigger.

Work forward onto the forehead and continue with the circular movements working down to the eyebrows and out to the temples, ears and jaw. Again, allow your instinct to guide you but always check in with the person receiving the massage.

Using the thumbs, making a stripping movement from the centre of the forehead to the side of the forehead, starting at the eyebrows and working the way up to the hair line.

Using the finger tips make a gentle light tapping movement over the whole of the forehead and scalp eventually slowing to the circle movements we made in the first step.

Finish by gently stroking the forehead.

## Pilates @ home

*Kat Allen Pilates instructor and personal trainer.*



I train friends, couples and families wanting to get fit together and I teach general pilates, classes for mums and babies and the over 60s.

I am staying home as much as possible during this time and have been trying to figure out manageable ways in a small space to stay fit and healthy, both physically and mentally. I suffer with anxiety and panic attacks and find that keeping active really helps my mental health.

### Online classes

I feel really lucky that I am still able to continue teaching all my classes online via zoom and have been trying to open up my classes to everyone, so that people can participate and only pay what they can afford at the current time. There are also a lot of free exercise videos online or reach out to your local instructor who may well have moved their classes online.

### My own 'home' workout

What I've found works best for me, so far, is doing small things but often.

When I brush my teeth in the morning I balance on 1 leg and in the evening I do some side leg raises.

When cooking my lunch and dinner I do squats and lunges or grab some tins of beans and do arm circles and bicep curls.

I put on my favourite songs and dance like no one is watching (my boyfriend thinks I'm crazy), even for just 5 minutes a day, or whilst cleaning.

I have set a reminder on my phone to make sure that every 40 minutes I get up from my laptop and have a wander around the house and garden.

### 5 minute challenges

Another thing we have found fun and has made us laugh a lot, has been setting 5 minute challenges. We've done this together at home and also online with family and friends. So far we have attempted: hula hooping, skipping, planks, handstands, balancing with eyes closed, forwards and backwards rolls across the bed and trying to lie down and stand up with a half filled bottle of water balanced on your head.

### Last thing at night

Before bed we have started to do 5-10 minutes of stretching, with dimmed lights and relaxing music to try to wind down and switch off the anxiety.

### Making a difference

Personally, I have found that doing these varied activities little and often has made a pretty big difference and the laughter of trying new things has really helped. If you can try to get up every 40 minutes and move your body a bit, have a go at some new challenges, be as silly as you want and laugh as often as possible, it really will make a difference both physically and mentally.

Sending everyone my best wishes and I hope you all stay safe.





# Breathing

## through uncertain times

*Allison Lindsay, Business Psychologist, Coach and Breathworker, School for Wellbeing*

When we are struggling to cope in a world that seems impossibly changed, it can be helpful to look at what we can take control of, rather than fixating on things that we can't.

One thing we can take control of is how we are in our bodies. Our posture, how we move, our breathing all have a significant influence on what we think, how we feel and what we achieve. By making a shift in any of these areas we can make a shift in our experience of the world.

### **The power of breathwork**

An easy way to create a shift is through our breathing. Particular breath patterns are associated with different emotions such as anger, sadness and joy, and also influence how calm or agitated we feel.

### **Breathing basics**

Our bodies were designed to breathe with a diaphragmatic (belly) breath. The diaphragm is a sheet of muscle at the bottom of our ribcage, dome-shaped like an umbrella. When we breathe in the diaphragm flattens, pulling the lungs down and allowing air into our bodies. When we breathe out, the diaphragm goes back to being dome shaped, pushing the lungs up and air out of our bodies. As the diaphragm flattens, it goes down into our belly, leaving less room for our internal organs. This is why our belly rises as we breathe in and falls as we breathe out.

In moments of anxiety everything comes up. We come up into our heads (all those thoughts buzzing around making it hard for us to concentrate) and our breathing comes up more into our chest. This means we're actually working harder to breathe than we need to, as we start to use more of our shoulders, ribs and chest muscles, and less of our diaphragm.

### **The way we breathe is the way we live our life**

The benefit of breathing more in our chest is that it connects us to our feelings, helping us empathise and connect with others.

The benefit of breathing more in our bellies is that it connects us to our sense of control and willpower, helping us feel more grounded, clearer and more objective when making decisions.

Ideally we want to access all these benefits, creating balance and calm in our lives. To help with this, we want our breath to start in our bellies using the diaphragm, and then for the breath to move up into our chest so that we have a gentle open breath using our whole breathing system.

### **Noticing your own breath pattern**

A simple way to explore your own breath pattern is to sit or lie comfortably, closing your eyes and placing one hand on your belly and one on your chest. Breathe normally and notice which part of your torso is rising and falling as you do so.

If you are breathing primarily in your chest, you can start to bring your breathing down by placing your hands on your belly with the very tips of your fingers just touching. As you breathe in, imagine you are

pushing the energy gently down into your belly. If your fingertips start to move apart, even slightly, then it means you are getting down into your belly and using the diaphragm more effectively.

With practice, you can deepen your breath and create that gentle open breath utilising both your belly and your chest.

### **Breathing for self-care**

Try experimenting with these different breathing patterns. They are designed to help you take care of yourself in different ways – whether you want to feel calmer and less stressed; get to sleep more easily; or take the time to explore and release stuck emotions.

#### **Feel calmer and less stressed**

Try slow breathing at a rate of five breaths per minute (breathing in for a count of six and out for a count of six). By consciously controlling our breathing in this way, we can slow our heart rate, digestion and gain a general feeling of calm.

#### **Get to sleep more easily**

First do a simple body scan. Starting at the top of your head, slowly move your attention down through your body, simply noticing how you are in that moment. If you find areas of tension, for example your shoulders feel tight, try tensing them up even more and then slowly releasing them. You should get a deeper relaxation than if you just tried to relax them from where you started.

Then practice a Counting Breath, using a longer exhale than inhale. Take a normal breath in, counting how long the breath is, then make the out-breath twice as long as the in-breath. So, if you breathed in for a count of two, breathe out for a count of four; if you breathed in for a count of three, breathe out for a count of six. This breath helps to calm the mind as the counting gives the brain something to do, rather than focusing on unhelpful thoughts.

#### **Explore and release stuck emotions**

If you feel calm and ready to explore deeper feelings, try open-mouth breathing. When we feel stressed we often hold our breath, which can be about not wanting to feel. However, those feelings don't simply go away, instead they get stuck in our bodies, building up over time. This can cause us to feel more stress and anxiety, sometimes without even knowing why, as these feelings start to seep out into our everyday lives.

Breathing gently through your mouth for 5-10 minutes, keeping the breath connected (imagine a 'circular' breath with no pauses between the inhale and exhale, or the exhale and inhale) can allow those emotions to come to the surface.

Different feelings may come up, for example anger (try kicking with your legs and punching the air with your hands to express this), tears (having a few tissues handy can be helpful), or even laughter.

Take some time to rest after you have tried breathing in this way, so that you can integrate these feelings. Often you will feel lighter after having done this exercise.

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# Seven S's to survive the pandemic



## Rev. Sheridan James

This short talk was given on 23/3 by Revd Sheridan James during her live-stream service on Instagram

Jesus said: *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.*

I want to talk very briefly about 7 Ss to survive this pandemic.

### 1. Sorrow 2. Silence 3. Sing 4. Study 5. Solidarity 6. Serve 7. Selebrate

I know that celebrate starts with a c not an S – but it sounds like an 's' so I'm going to leave it in there.

#### Sorrow

These are really hard times and we've got to make space for sorrow. We can't pretend that everything is ok and bottle it all up. If you want to cry, write a sad poem, feel a bit frustrated, punch a punch bag – that's OK. This is the hardest thing the UK has faced since the second world war. It's ok to find it hard sometimes and we all have different ways of showing that. We don't have to hide the fact we feel sad. Let's make space to tell each other and tell God how we're feeling and let's listen really well. Let's learn to say "Wow, that's tough. I'm so sorry to hear that."

#### Silence

We're all feeling more anxious and more stressed than normal – whether we're young or old this is really, really strange and different and our normal routines have changed and things we love to do, we can't do at the moment. And a lot of us are in our homes together more than normal. And there's a temptation to pack our time with distraction – TV, social media, ipad, games on the computer... and I'm as guilty as anyone. But it's really, really, really important that we learn in this time of heightened anxiety to take some deep breaths... DO SOME and be really still and really silent.

What I do, is take 5 deep breaths in and out and on the in I say Love within.... And on the out I say Fear Without... then I sit really still with my eyes closed for 5 minutes and I say in my head "The Lord is here." You might want to try that.

#### Sing

Singing is also a real boost – could you try to sing a worship song everyday in your house – alone or with your family or housemates? You could make a list of the hymns or songs you like best and sing one a day as part of your daily routine. Worshipping God lifts our hearts... you could sing happy songs or sad songs of worship – God is always listening out to our prayer and praise

After you've sung a song, you might want to spend some time in prayer, or after the time of silence.

Bringing your concerns and worries to God.

#### Study

You might have a bit more time on your hands than normal. You could do something fun like learn a new instrument or a new language – I'm going to take up Spanish. But you could also take a bit of time

to study the Bible. You might not have done that a lot at home – or you might be really good at it. I think a great place to start is the Book of Psalms in the OT. This was Jesus' hymn book and the psalms – all 150 of them cover the full range of human emotions from "I love you Lord, you are brilliant and wonderful and amazing..." to "Oh goodness me, what on earth is going on the world is going crazy, where are you." Reading the psalms can bring us comfort and consolation, but also give us a good tool to express our worry and frustrations and fear. How about trying to read a psalm a day.... You could get creative – do art works or poems, or write tunes to the psalms...

### **Solidarity**

We are in this together. Let's do all we can to love and serve our communities.

Let's not panic by. Let's not spread fear. Let's be a blessing. At home, on the street, and in shops.

But also let's show this solidarity visually. Every night I'm going to light a candle at 7pm like we did tonight and say the Lord's prayer. Will you join me? Not live on instagram... but join me in your heart?

Also would you like to join: Clap for our Carers. We are asking everyone that can to clap at 8pm on March 26 - whether it's in your garden or local park or out in the street (at a safe distance from others, of course). Will you join in that?

Also there's an initiative to get children/adults painting rainbows and putting them up in your windows as a sign of hope. Please do that... it could be therapeutic, fun and a lovely visual sign. Make them as colourful, creative and as big as you can.

### **Serve**

Look out for local initiatives that are caring for the vulnerable.

Let's really do all we can to love our neighbour.

Post a card through your neighbours door, check they're ok... if you are well and healthy see if there's anything that needs doing at a local level.

### **Celebrate**

Everyday, despite the enormous difficulties there will be things that bring us joy.

Celebrate them, give thanks to God for them. Be intentional about noticing them.

Say thank you more – to God and to everyone you're connecting with.

Perhaps you don't usually say grace at home.. but maybe now is a good time to start – when we're more conscious of food supplies.

Press that gratitude button (as Darren would say) – be thankful to God, be thankful for the beauty of spring and the love that you will see around you daily.

And find ways to connect and celebrate – in prayer, in worship, but also in fun ways – use facetime, a letter, a phone call to make connections and love each other.

**Sheridan livestreams a service on Sundays called "Sundays at 7" please feel free to follow her at [stcatherinehatcham](#)**

# Four P's

## to survive the pandemic



**Rev. Sheridan James**

Gospel of Matthew *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God".*

Last week, I talked about 7s to survive the pandemic this week, I've got a lot less energy because of the chemo and also we've had a full on week and I want to talk about 4 Ps...

### **Permission, presence, practise and perseverance**

We're in this for the long haul. We've just done week one and I'm sure that for all of you it had it's strains as well as possibly some joys. We're all at home (or many of us are) and this is causing us to focus on the present, we're grateful for what we've got, we understand things could be much worse, but we're also stuck, self-isolating, limited in what we can do, fearful, coping with a very freaky situation. Some of us are ill from Covid 19, some of us are very vulnerable – perhaps for the first time in our lives.

#### **So the first P is permission.**

You have to have permission to feel what you feel. To experience what you experience. To cope how you are coping. This is tough stuff and it's OK if you can't sort it out and it's ok if you're a bit of a mess. It's ok if it's taking you time to process, or your up and down or feeling out of sorts. It's ok. We're all like that. Reach out to each other, reach out to God in prayer... tell him the truth. That's why we're encouraging folks to read psalms – they are full of woe and joy – the full gambit of human emotion.

#### **Second P is presence**

We're all missing human contact, make sure that every day you are reaching out beyond the walls of your house – via a phone call or social media. But I'm really desirous of God's presence - because I really need him. I absolutely cannot cope with his in my own strength. I've moved icons, crosses, bible verses out of my study... into the Lounge, into the hallway... I need to be reminded of God's presence constantly because I'm feeling weak and afraid and freaked out quite a considerable part of the time. Perhaps you could do the same – could you make some art, could you frame some words... could you make your home more of a spiritual sanctuary... creating space for God in your heart... as well as physically around you. I've found it really helpful.

#### **Practise**

I don't think this is going to be over any time soon and we need to practise this new way of being for quite a time... we're all going to have to develop inner resilience and deepen our own spiritual lives to get through this. This is a tough thing to do... especially if often we've relied on Sunday Worship to 'get us through' the week. But I encourage you, to find a practise that suits you, that will boost your spiritual life and draw you closer to God. We're putting more resources all the time on the web site to help you do that. It could be really simple – 5 minutes daily silence, read a psalm, sing a hymn/chorus to yourself... or something more structured... but please set a rhythm... and find ways to create that inner sanctuary at home. Next week I'll be asking people to share ideas, so we can inspire each other.

**Persevere**

This is a marathon, not a sprint... we're going to have down days, hard days, lost days, good days... but keep going my dear dear friends. The Lord is with us and close to us and is protecting and guiding us. Draw near to him as he draws near to us.



## Working Together for the Whole Community

For details on our regular weekly activities, spaces to hire and the above events please contact the Centre office.

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