



Guideposts

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your community

ISSUE 3

SW HERTS NEWSLETTER
July/August/September 2020



Artwork by
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Chaunt

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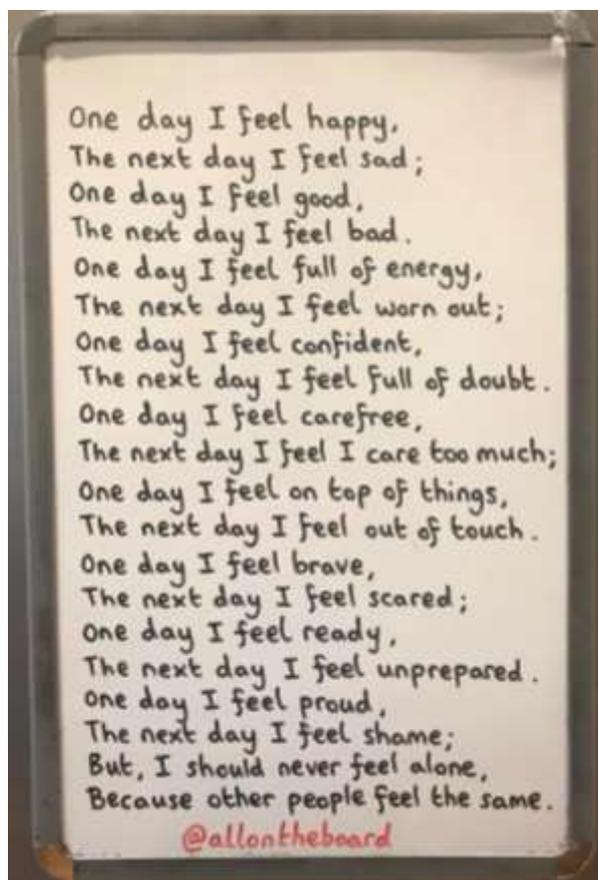
DEAR ALL

It continues to be a very difficult and worrying start to the year for all of us. Obviously we have restrictions on movement, many businesses are still closed and we are still spending most or all of our time at home. For some this can be quite a challenge, for others, it can be an opportunity to catch up on one of our hobbies. Staff offer support by phone and through email/online. We have shared advice, listened, offered help and tried collectively to get everyone through this current situation.

We do not have any centre based/outreach groups at the moment, but have quite a few 'virtual activities' via Zoom now - Relaxation, Current Affairs, Seated Exercise, Lifestyles (healthy eating and being more active), Tea & Biscuits (a fun get together), Yoga, Art & Start, Carers and one for our Keep Calm and Aspirations groups. All our members are welcome to join these sessions though you will need to be able to download 'Zoom' to attend them. Ask us for a Zoom tutorial and we can help you set it up! We can start with a 1 to 1 Zoom to help give you confidence.

There was a virtual Zoom Party for our Volunteers and Carers in June. We had a catch up, a few laughs and did some seated exercise. Maybe we could try a Zoom Party with our members. The problem is, though, you have to provide your own refreshments!

We will all appreciate any social gatherings, seeing friends and family even more, when we can get together again. We also hope to have some events at Henry Smith House, when we are able to, such as a BBQ, Film Night or Open Day.





Coping during Covid19 - A guide of practical and creative things to do by Louisa S

It is completely normal to wake up in the morning thinking, 'It's another day of nothingness.'

This article is about strategies to keep at optimum physical and mental health. It's hard, but take that first step towards positivity, be it a new hobby, or chatting to a dear friend on the phone. We are all in the same boat, and we should be aware that, yes, we need to be social distancing, but not to the extent of withdrawing from our society.

Fancy some mood-lifting, good vibes? Bring on those endorphins! Yes, currently the gyms/swimming pools are shut. But that doesn't mean that it's the end of exercise. There are many, many choices – it doesn't matter if you do only gentle exercise, such as basic yoga/ tai chi sessions via DVD or, if you have the internet, YouTube is an absolute brilliant resource for free routines. From solo salsa, to good old aerobics, and glorious Zumba routines, this will get that heart pumping and breaking into a sweat. Just keep moving! If your disability makes exercise tricky, do look up 'Chair exercises,' there is a wealth of yoga and stretches that are gentle. If you are limited to what you can do physically, it is still brilliant to get resources that allow you to follow positive meditations and optimum breathing exercises. Don't take the power of this for granted. If you do have internet access, there is a popular meditation app that is called 'Headspace.' It is peaceful and beautifully calming.

After these activities, you may be in need of some good, nourishing foods! Most supermarkets sell medium sized tins full of roasting veg. Think colourful peppers, tomatoes, courgette, red onions, and aubergines. I like to purchase this, add cooked plain couscous, and diced feta for a beautiful, nourishing meal. If vegan swap the feta for olives, or whatever floats your boat! If you eat meat, a few slices of breaded ham goes beautifully. And if you fancy a bit of baking, flapjacks are lovely, and the oats that make up the bulk of this sweet treat have been proven to be a real moodbooster, get that chef's hat on. And don't forget, a simple cup of tea is full of antioxidants, and soothes the soul.

It is highly productive to brighten somebody's day. If someone around you is struggling, get that Art and Craft on! Most supermarkets sell paper/coloured pens etc. Instead of an email, take your time to make a special card, just to say, miss you/thinking of you/hope you're okay. Feel free to go all out with glitter and bright colours. Wait for that good karma, and feel appreciated.

Make sure that you indulge in some 'me-time,' put some planning in. Plan with your family, or yourself to put aside time to hold your very own personal music appreciation afternoon. Set up a playlist in advance and use this time to wallow/rock-out/dance/or practise useful breathing exercises. Not for you? Perhaps treat yourself to a relaxing/detoxing bubble bath; Radox does a great range, without breaking the bank.

But if you are concerned about your or somebody else's wellbeing, there are options and a problem shared is likely a problem halved.

You may need to chat to your GP/a close friend/relative. But, don't forget there are professionals that can ease the emotional burden. The Samaritans Charity offer a helpline – 116 123 that is free, and you can call anytime, day or night.

(continued)



If you are more inclined to write down your thoughts, feel free to send them an email. Response time is 24 hours. Here is the email address – jo@samaritans.org

A second excellent resource is Mind Charity Infoline. Hours are 9am – 6pm, Monday to Friday and the phone number is as follows, 0300 123 3393 . Prefer to email? They can be reached on info@mind.org.uk. Text number is 86463.

If you, or someone you know needs urgent help, do call NHS number 111. Alternatively, in an emergency, 999 is your number to call.

Finally, courtesy of Hello magazine online, here are some fabulous things to do to lift your spirits if you need to feel good again. Here is the list, hopefully one or more ideas will suit you!

Jigsaws, Listen to Podcasts, Watch Disney movies for the ultimate in feel-good.
 Crossword/wordsearch/sudoku puzzles. Get stuck in! Learn how to knit/crochet/macramé. Acquire some plants, excellent for feelings of calm, and useful to nurture and feel good. Buy a magnetic dartboard. Learn a new language. Perhaps set aside an hour a day. Learn calligraphy skills. Sing along to the radio. Dance yourself happy. Treat yourself to a new magazine each month, from Autocars, to Woman, to Vogue – whatever floats your boat!

TYPES OF COPING SKILLS

<p>Self-Soothing (Comforting yourself through your five senses)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Something to touch (ex: stuffed animal, stress ball) 2. Something to hear (ex: music, meditation guides) 3. Something to see (ex: snowglobe, happy pictures) 4. Something to taste (ex: mints, tea, sour candy) 5. Something to smell (ex: lotion, candles, perfume) 	<p>Distraction (Taking your mind off the problem for a while)</p> <p><u>Examples:</u> Puzzles, books, artwork, crafts, knitting, crocheting, sewing, crossword puzzles, sudoku, positive websites, music, movies, etc.</p>	<p>Opposite Action (Doing something the opposite of your impulse that's consistent with a more positive emotion)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Affirmations and Inspiration (ex: looking at or drawing motivational statements or images) 2. Something funny or cheering (ex: funny movies / TV / books)
<p>Emotional Awareness (Tools for identifying and expressing your feelings)</p> <p><u>Examples:</u> A list or chart of emotions, a journal, writing supplies, drawing / art supplies</p>	<p>Mindfulness (Tools for centering and grounding yourself in the present moment)</p> <p><u>Examples:</u> Meditation or relaxation recordings, grounding objects (like a rock or paperweight), yoga mat, breathing exercises.</p>	<p>Crisis Plan (Contact info of supports and resources, for when coping skills aren't enough.)</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>Family / Friends Therapist Psychiatrist Hotline Crisis Team / ER 911</p> </div>

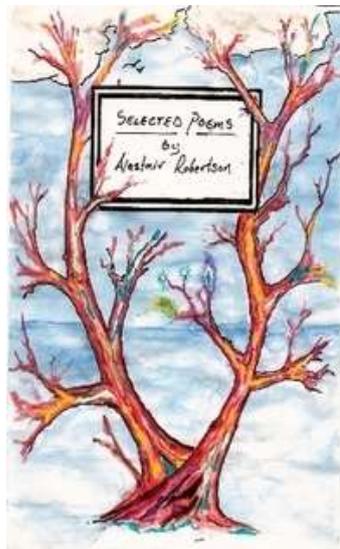


The Butterfly

Of all God's creatures
 Great and small,
 The most amazing
 Of them all -
 The butterfly
 That flies so free
 From flower to flower
 And tree to tree!
 He is transformed
 From insect form
 Into a creature
 Strangely born!
 His colours now
 Just can't be matched
 And he's no fear
 Of being snatched
 By predators that
 Lurk nearby
 So far he soars
 Into the sky!
 While lovers kiss
 And gently sigh,
 They're spellbound by
 The butterfly!

Poetry by Alastair R

A Novel and two
 Poetry Books by
 Alastair are
 available through:-
www.lulu.com



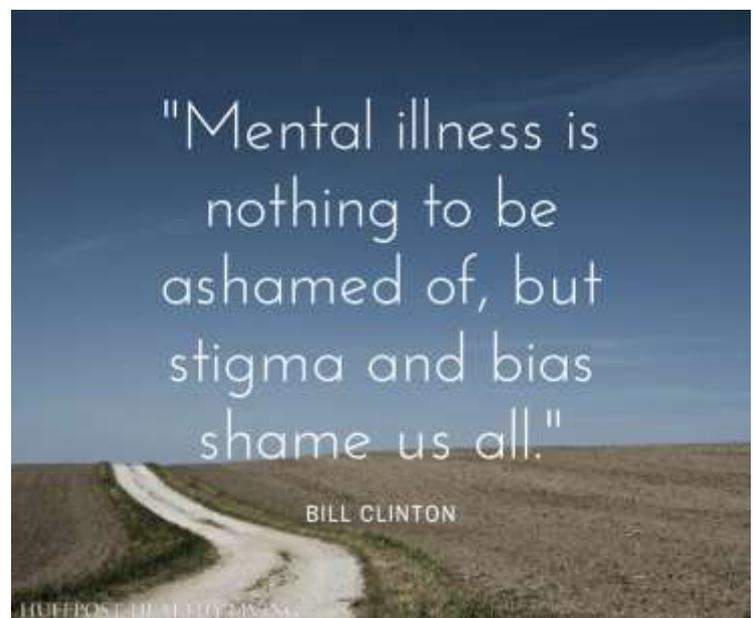
It's Not Hard To Say I Love You

It's not hard to say I love you
 If it's in a certain way,
 'Cause you know the skies above you
 Will bring a sunny day!

You may try to say I love you
 Though it hurts you deep inside,
 And for sure the Lord above you
 Will see the way I cried!

It's not hard to say I love you,
 It's just courage that I lack,
 And as people push and shove me
 All you do is answer back!

You may try to say I love you
 though your heart is feeling blue
 And even though you'd love to
 Your lips are stuck like glue!





GUILTY OF SCHIZOPHRENIA by Carole Buckingham

I am an ordinary woman from an ordinary background. Schizophrenia struck me in 1984 like a bolt from the blue and was a deeply harrowing experience. For many years I kept quiet about my diagnosis of schizophrenia. Friends just thought I was experiencing breakdowns, which seemed more socially acceptable than saying I was psychotic. I felt shame and guilt about my illness. But after the death of my parents and brother, I felt a need to share my story, so I wrote an article about my journey with schizophrenia which when published led to me being contacted by the media and one issue that consistently popped up was schizophrenia and violence. One would think that in the mind of the media and the public, schizophrenia was a form of criminality. In the report of the National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Safety in Mental Health 2018, it states that persons with a diagnosis of schizophrenia committed 6% of convicted homicides in England and Wales during 2006-2016; and around 11% of all perpetrators of homicide had a history of mental disorder. That still leaves a lot of murder and manslaughters committed by 'normal' people. People who have a diagnosis of schizophrenia are more likely to commit suicide than murder.

Madness and murder make riveting press, but also a damaging and inaccurate picture of the mentally ill. One TV interviewer asked me: "What do you say to people who think people like you should be locked up?" What should I say? Why stop at segregation and detention – why not have a programme of euthanasia as well, that should certainly free up more hospital beds. Do we want to go back to the days of Hitler's Germany when 80-100,000 mentally ill and physically disabled children and adults were victims of the Nazi death machine? Let us also not forget that before the Second World War the need for eugenic hygiene and genetic purity enjoyed popular support amongst the medical scientists of western democracies. Better that mental defectives had never been born. Such is the ugly face of social intolerance. Society may feel it needs protection from the mentally ill, but equally and if not more so, the mentally ill need protection from society. In fact, mentally ill people living in the community are more than twice as likely to be victims of violence. People with a mental health condition tend to be at the bottom of the social scale. Poor housing, low income, poor job prospects all contribute to the mentally ill living in dangerous environments. Also, the illness itself, such as the experience of a psychotic episode, can lead to the usual safeguards being down.

In the fight for human rights, discrimination of the mentally ill has been scandalously neglected. Schizophrenia and other mental health conditions are treatable illnesses. Given appropriate care and support, we can live stable and meaningful lives in the community. Yet the negative stereotype persists in the public mind.

The Equality Act 2010, was a landmark piece of legislation for disability, yet it does not prevent discrimination of those with a mental health condition. The Mental Health Act is more about the risk of the mentally ill to society than about the right to fair and proper treatment.

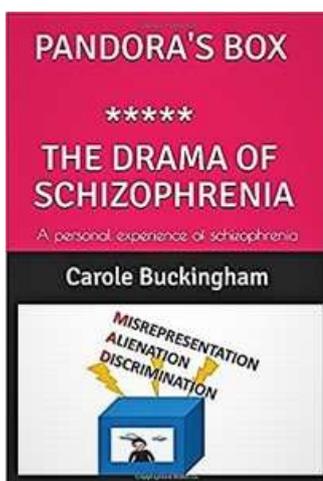
As people, we have difficulties because of our illness, but that does not stop us from being human and having a right to a life. Only the mentally ill and terror suspects can lose their liberty without right to trial.
(continued)

It is therefore imperative that safeguards are in place to guarantee our human rights are respected. But history has shown that the mentally ill are open to abuse.

Schizophrenia is both a biological and a social disease. There is the illness itself and the way society views it. Schizophrenia is a stigma that people will often hide away or hide from. The mentally ill are repeatedly blamed for bringing on their own illness. Such attitudes lead to individuals and their families not acknowledging the condition and seeking help. There is indeed a great need for education in all areas relating to mental health. Also, doctors need to be trained to help those with a diagnosis of schizophrenia gain insight into their illness. Being mentally ill does not necessarily mean that you are sub-intelligent and an informed knowledge of the illness can lead to early intervention and prevent relapse. Furthermore, doctors should see patients as having both mind and body and approach the illness holistically. We are *both mind and body and it is no use treating the mind if the side effects of the medication disable the body.*

There are many people whose minds are in torment in our society, many of whom are treated as outsiders or criminals. Who is guilty for mentally ill people being in jail or on the street? Who is guilty for the less sympathetic treatment of the mentally ill? This state of affairs is indefensible but no one wants to take the blame so blame is put on the mentally ill.

There is no cure for schizophrenia. For me it is a way of life. A gradual process of recovery and rehabilitation often marked by setbacks. Recovery is not necessarily getting rid of the symptoms but being able to face what has happened to you. We are not all unpredictable and dangerous. Actually, schizophrenia did not drive me insane, it drove me to delve deeper into my mind. The multitudes of thoughts that bombard my mind during an attack go from the very personal to my fears for all humanity. In many ways, illness has given me a philosophical insight into life which I would not have otherwise have made. Schizophrenia is a treatable medical condition; even more a human experience; but definitely not a criminal category.



Carole Buckingham is a published author of three books. Two of her books are on her experience of schizophrenia, the third is a collection of her poetry. Her books are on sale on Amazon.co.uk



Clic

Clic is a new online support community that anyone in the UK can access 24/7 for free mental health support. It includes an online forum where you can chat about how you're feeling and connect with others, as well as accessing mental health information tools, tips and resources. To ensure everyone's safety and security the site is moderated 24 hours a day.

<https://clic-uk.org/>



TAKE FIVE TO STOP FRAUD



Criminals may appear to be from government departments offering you Council Tax Reductions

STOP

Think before parting with your money or information

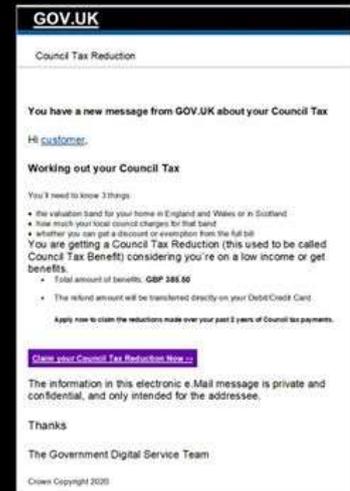
CHALLENGE

Could it be fake?

PROTECT

If you think you've fallen for a scam contact your bank immediately

For more information: <https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/coronavirus-fraud-and-scams/>



Coming to Henry Smith House has changed my life. 18 months ago all I had in my life was 1/2 hour in church each day, my cat Snowy and the television. I was isolated. As I have no family, friends are very important to me and friendship is what I have found in HSH. People have been warm and welcoming. I feel as though we bond because of a shared experience of mental health issues and the mental health system.

The staff are also kind, supportive and positive. I have been in the mental health system for over 25 years and I can honestly say that Henry Smith House is the best community based service that I have experienced. Whether it's just hanging out with other service users drinking tea, having a one to one with a member of staff or taking part in varied and interesting group activities, I always feel welcome and safe. Long live Henry Smith House! Poppy S

Need help to keep warm or reduce energy bills?

To find out if you are entitled to free or discounted home energy improvements call

0300 123 4044
(local rate) or email info@hertshelp.net

HertsHelp

Herefordshire Warmer Homes
In partnership with the ten district & borough councils of Herefordshire and Herefordshire County Council



The **Guideposts Information Service** will equip you with important life skills, help you make social connections, and guide you to the right support to feel happier and healthier. Housing problems, financial stress, caring responsibilities, or living with a long-term condition can all have an impact on our health and wellbeing. Call our support line: 0800 048 7035 Monday to Friday: 9:00am-5:00pm. Calls to the support line are free. Email: hereinfo@guideposts.org.uk

How can I protect myself from doorstep scams?

There are things you can do to feel safer when answering the door, such as:

- **Putting up a deterrent sign.** You could put a 'no cold callers' sign up on your door or window, which should deter any cold callers from knocking on your door.
- **Setting up passwords for utilities.** You can set up a password with your utility companies to be used by anyone they send round to your home. Phone your utility company to find out how to do this.
- **Nominating a neighbour.** Find out if you have a nominated neighbour scheme where a neighbour can help to make sure if callers are safe. If someone does come to the door, it's important to remember the following:
 - **Only let someone in if you're expecting them** or they're a trusted friend, family member or professional. Don't feel embarrassed about turning someone away.
 - **Don't feel pressured.** Don't agree to sign a contract or hand over money at the door. Think about it and talk to someone you trust.
 - **Check their credentials.** You should always check someone's credentials - a genuine person won't mind. You can phone the company they represent or check online, but never use contact details they give you.
 - **Don't share your PIN.** Never disclose your PIN number or let anyone persuade you to hand over your bank card or withdraw cash.
 - **Call the police.** Call the police non-emergency number 101 if you're not in immediate danger but want to report an incident. But call 999 if you feel threatened or in danger.

Take the time to think about any offer, even if it's genuine. Don't be embarrassed to say 'No' to people or ask them to leave.

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/money-legal/scams-fraud/doorstep-scams/>





Guided Meditation by Louisa S

Preparation: Find a quiet airy spot, a space you feel comfortable and will not be disturbed. Can be done on your own or up to a hall full of 20 people. Above all, relax and enjoy – this is your ‘me time.’

~ The Sea waves crashing. You dip your feet into the cool, glacier Ocean. Feel this coolness wash over you, taking away your fears. Focus on your breath, in through your nose and out through your mouth, in the shape of an ‘O’

~ There is a quiet piano in the background, playing softly, soothing sounds. You feel magical. The glowing sun is rising, feel it getting through to your bones, giving a feeling of wellbeing, and relaxation.

~ You hear birds in the sky, crowing happily and contentedly. Enjoy it. You deserve it.

~ You turn a corner, and in front of you is a white light glowing. Feel its positivity and focus on this light as it works its way up your body, from toes to head, and all in between. Feel the wellbeing flow through you.

~ To the left, you glimpse a forest and it is full of lush greenery, a cool breeze stirs you beautifully. As you explore this scenery, you appreciate the leaves detoxing your soul. Sounds of ‘swish, swish, splash, splosh.’ An icy light rain falls from the skies, serving to hydrate and cool you.

~ You walk further into the lakes, where you spot a mother duck, gliding in the water, followed by her little baby ducklings. Pausing, you pick up some seeds from your pocket, and scatter them on the ground for the mother duck, and her baby offspring. It feels good. You glow a happy feeling of wellbeing, and productivity, knowing that you have helped these babies and their mother have a decent feed.

~ As you explore forwards, you reach a little hut in the woods. All the windows are open. On opening the door, you are greeted by a big, fluffy beautiful black dog, Casper. You notice a yellow tennis ball on the wooden table. Cue ballgames outside with beautiful blue skies as your backdrop with Casper. He makes for a loyal companion, and makes you feel safe and happy.

~ As you look behind, you notice a beaming rainbow, lighting up the sky in an array of mood-lifting colours. The pinks and reds make your heart soar, yellow and oranges lift the spirits and makes you smile a proper wide smile of joy. Green and blue rays bring on instant calm. But it is the majestic purple that shines that translates to a steady hope.

~ With your eyes still closed, bring your hands together, rubbing briskly. Notice how your breathing is at more of an even keel. Continue to rub your hands together, creating warmth for ten more seconds. Bring your warm hands up to your closed eyes on your face. Hold them there as you very slowly begin to open your eyes.

~ Notice a new-found peace, and take a few deep breaths in, and out. **Hands by your side, this exercise is now complete.**



Henry Smith House A Supportive Space in Watford



Enabling people with mental health problems to transform their lives, achieve greater wellbeing and build supportive connections in their community is intrinsic to all that we do.

The support of the #GuidepostsCommunity makes it possible.

Established 26 years ago, Guideposts Henry Smith House is a supportive space that enables people with mental health problems to achieve greater wellbeing by helping them gain skills, confidence and opportunities. **Henry Smith House** is located in Watford, Hertfordshire and works with over 250 people each year through a combination of group activities and one-to-one support. **Lee, Mary Lou and Ben explain how Guideposts Henry Smith House has helped change their lives:**

"I would recommend Guideposts to people because it builds up their confidence, helps them make new friends and have the time of their life really. Guideposts is brilliant, cheerful and astonishing."

Lee, 2018

"I went to my doctor feeling absolute "beep". They told me about some groups and then my friend James mentioned Guideposts Henry Smith House and I thought I'd join. It's such a great place. Everyone is so helpful. I am much happier now"

Mary-Lou, 2018

"I have been coming to Henry Smith House for a while. I made lots of new friends here. It is my new social group really. If I didn't have guideposts I wouldn't have anything to go to. Friends I have here are amazing. I am going to the under 30s, go for meals out, or bowling, the cinema. Before I came here I was an introvert, but since coming here I have come out of my shell. The staff, the friends... Guideposts has basically been a lifeline for me. It keeps my mental health stable. If I didn't have that I would be all over the place. Makes your day!

Changes everything completely..."

Ben, 2018

**You can hear Ben's story
over on our Youtube Channel**

@GuidepostsUK

To use the QR code with an iphone **open your camera over the code (right) / Android users please look at a QR scanning app >>**



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OUR SERVICES 2020

Personal Budgets apply or self-fund.
Referrals are from health or social care staff, or self-refer.

For further details please contact us on 01923 223 554 or email: hsh@guideposts.org.uk

1:1 MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Crisis Support Recovery Star

Peer 2 Peer Community Support and Connect Service

- + 1:1 Volunteer support
- + Telephone / Email Volunteer support
- Community Support Groups:
 - + Borehamwood / Potters Bar
 - + South Oxhey / Watford
 - + Allotment Project
 - + Pool/Bowling Group
 - + Volunteering opportunities

OUTREACH GROUPS

Borehamwood
Garston
Rickmansworth

COURSES AND PROJECTS

- + Anxiety Management Course
- + Asperger's Socialising Course & Group
- + "Art and Start" Course
- + Photography Course
- + Dancing Course

HENRY SMITH HOUSE GROUP ACTIVITIES

- + Art
- + Women's Group
- + Book Club (User Led)
- + Craft
- + Member Reps
- + Current Affairs
- + Film Club (User Led)
- + Gym sessions
- + Happiness Group (User Led)
- + Hearing Voices (User Led)
- + Men's Group
- + Mini Trips (User Led)
- + Monthly Carer's Support
- + Music Appreciation
- + Open Socials (Wed, Fri & Sat)
- + Over 30s
- + Relaxation
- + Seated Exercise Group
- + Under 30s
- + Walking Group
- + Yoga Techniques

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You are the #GuidepostsCommunity

With your continued support, our community will continue to grow

1. Tell a friend about Guideposts and the difference your support makes.
2. Give As You Live – shop online through their search or through Amazon Smile and raise money for Guideposts.
3. Give a gift in celebration, for example, ask for donations to Guideposts in place of presents or create a Facebook Fundraiser.
4. Take part in an event, or encourage a family or friend to do so in support of Guideposts.
5. Give as you work through Payroll Giving or a variety of fundraising events – why not ‘Dress Down Friday’, hold a bake sale, take part in a sponsored walk, hold a charity ball?
6. Sign up to take part in our Unity Lottery and raise 50p per play.
7. Give in memory – celebrate the life of someone special, make a donation to mark a meaningful date.
8. Go online – visit our website, follow us on socials @GuidepostsUK and share what we do, visit our Youtube channel and hear stories from the people you help support, or donate goods to us to sell on our eBay store.

Guideposts
Here for You

THANK YOU