

Mental Health Carers Update

Mental Health Carers Information, Advice & Support Service

Who are we?

The Bromley Well Mental Health Carers Pathway provides support to people living in Bromley who care for someone who has a mental health condition. We offer emotional support and information on how to manage your caring role, by exploring approaches to self-care, learning about mental health and thinking about the impact of the caring relationship. We hope for this to be a useful guide to give you the latest information and support for your caring role. We want to hear what you think, so we can keep improving it and making it relevant for you. We welcome your thoughts, and invite you to share feedback with us via wellbeing@bromleywell.org.uk

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New: Virtual Drop-in Service

We understand that being a carer for an adult with a mental health problem can, at times, be difficult. We appreciate it can raise questions and that carers may need more support for themselves to continue thriving in their caring roles.

Our new virtual drop-in is an opportunity for mental health carers to receive individual and confidential support from an independent wellbeing service.

We can help carers to discuss challenges and can provide information, advice and guidance to assist them in their caring role.

To book an appointment:

Simply text "DROP-IN" to 07718403574 to receive the next available Zoom* appointment.

Appointments available on Mondays: 1:30pm – 4pm

***Haven't used 'Zoom' yet? Don't worry, we can text you a short tutorial to get you going.**



 @BromleyWell

New: Carers Workshops

We are very excited to share with you the details of our new Virtual Carers Workshops. These will be delivered by Rocio (picture right) virtually using Zoom.

Workshop: Caring Well in Winter 2020

Summary: This one-off workshop will cover how the COVID-19 crisis is affecting the way carers look after others and will explore day-to-day strategies to help you cope with the pressures of caring during winter 2020. The workshop will include information on ways to support self-care, with a range of practical activities to enhance caregiver wellbeing. Participants can expect a 2.5 hour virtual workshop with a trained mental health professional, and all carers will receive free access to the mental health app "Silvercloud", plus a free digital (or print) workbook on Caring during COVID-19 produced by Bromley, Lewisham and Greenwich Mind

Introducing Rocio!

I'm really looking forward to meeting you!

Rocio is a trained counsellor and has been working for the Mind telephone counselling service for two years.



Dates: We are delivering this workshop on Tuesday mornings and Wednesday afternoons: Please see the dates below to decide what works best for you:

Booking info:

To book your place, please email: wellbeing@bromleywell.org.uk stating the name of the workshop and date that you would like to attend, or Text "Carers 2020" to 07718 403 574

Monday:

Tuesday:

	10am - 12:30pm	1:30pm - 4pm
November	10th 17th 24th	11th 18th 25th
December	1st	2nd

New to Zoom?

St Christopher's Hospice have created a wonderful 'how to' Zoom document. Click the link below to download their instructions on using Zoom:

<https://www.stchristophers.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Zoom-Instructions.docx>



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How do I sleep healthily?

Sleep is essential for the effective use, maintenance and restoration of all nervous and immune systems within the human body, and plays a significant role in brain development producing various benefits for our physical and mental health. Often when we are feeling stressed or anxious, we can struggle to settle when it comes to bedtime. Many people often find that very normal needs during sleep such as, turning over, using the bathroom, getting too hot etc. become difficult, can disturb sleep and prolong staying awake. In order to understand your sleep needs, it may first be helpful to keep a sleep diary to monitor the things you are doing before, during and after sleep. Visit: www.nhs.uk and search "Sleep Diary" for a sleep diary and sleep support advice.



Once you understand your sleep pattern, it can be easier to implement a new routine to help support good sleep hygiene and quality sleep behaviour. Having regular poor sleep, can lead to increased feelings of panic, or worried thinking which over time can make you feel more tired, frustrated and low. Looking at ways to establish a healthy sleep routine can help you to improve mood and feel well.

Healthy sleep ideas

1. **Support your diet** e.g. the body is restoring during sleep and often we can wake due to excessive thirst or hunger. Drink plenty of fluid, reduce alcohol in the week and think about small protein based snacks in the evening to support restoration throughout the night.
2. **Relax before bed** e.g. turn off your mobile, connect with family or friends, do some yoga or stretching, read a book, do something creative or watch a film. Time to unwind is vital to help you decompress naturally before sleep, ahead of you hitting the hay!
3. **Establish a sleep routine** e.g. relaxed before bed, have a hot shower or bath, have clean pajamas, keeping the bedroom cool and dimly lit, put essential oils on the pillow.
4. **Practice mindfulness** e.g. use a sleep support app such as Sleepio, or a mindfulness guide such as the Pacifia App to help you ease gently into sleep.

For more information and advice visit:
www.sleepfoundation.org

Do you need help to cope with anxiety, stress or depression? We're here to help.

The Bromley Well Mental Health and Wellbeing Service offer free workshops for local people needing more support on ways to understand and cope with common mental health problems, as well as how to navigate local services in the community that may be able to help restore confidence and wellbeing.

Booking is essential. Workshops are free and attending all three is recommended. The next series will be taking place on:

12th November 2020

Coping with Low Mood and Other Emotions

19th November 2020

Coping with Stress and Poor Sleep

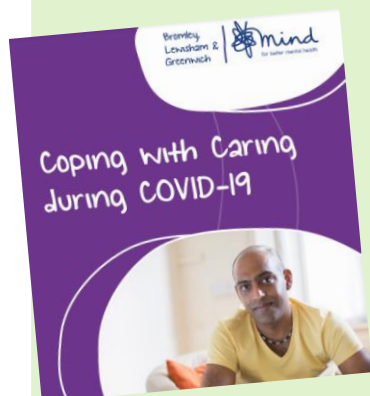
26th November 2020

Coping with Worry and Panic

If you are interested in hearing more about the workshops, or to book your place please email:
wellbeing@bromleywell.org.uk

Help and Information during the pandemic

BLG Mind 'Caring During COVID' Booklet



Bromley, Lewisham and Greenwich Mind have produced a new booklet for carers supporting adults during the COVID-19 crisis. You can download a copy from the Bromley Well website here: <https://www.bromleywell.org.uk/assets/documents/caring-during-covid-booklet>

Alternatively you can receive your FREE printed copy posted to your home by texting the word "BOOKLET" to 0771 403 574.

The aim of the booklet is to provide you with key support and information that may be helpful to your caring role during this pandemic period. It has been designed with the support of feedback from carers, and staff and volunteers who work with carers.



Latest report

Carers UK have published a report examining the impact of COVID-19 on carers in the UK. They found that:

- 4 in 5 unpaid carers (81%) are currently providing more care than before lockdown.
- More than three quarters (78%) of carers reported that the needs of the person they care for have increased recently.
- Most carers (64%) have not been able to take any breaks at all in the last six months.
- More than half (58%) of carers have seen their physical health impacted by caring through the pandemic, while 64% said their mental health has worsened.

To raise awareness of the increased support carers urgently need to help them through winter, Carers UK are asking that you write to your local MP to share with them your own personal experiences of caring during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is vital that MPs hear first-hand how the pandemic has made it harder for their constituents to care for those close to them.

Visit their website to read the full report.

Website:

http://www.carersuk.org/images/News_and_campaigns/Behind_Closed_Doors_2020/Caring_behind_closed_door_s_Oct20.pdf

Self-Isolation Pack

A team of assistant psychologists from Green Parks House have put together a 'Self-Isolation Pack'. This is filled with helpful information and advice for looking after your wellbeing during a period of isolation.

Oxleas have offered to send this directly to carers. Please email helen.brushett@bromleywell.org.uk

if you are interested in receiving this pack.



Self-Care

National Self-Care Week: 16th – 22nd November 2020

National Self-Care Week is organised by The Self Care Forum, a charity which aims to further the reach of self care and embed it into everyday life.



Check out their website: <http://www.selfcareforum.org/>

This year **Bromley Well** are participating and organising a week of online interactive events. The Bromley Well Mental Health and Wellbeing Pathway, and Mental Health Carers Pathway are leading the activities on 20th November. We are really excited to be a part of this and hope you will join us. Look out for more information coming soon on how to book or check the website:

<https://www.bromleywell.org.uk/events/item/44511353>



Healthily: Partners of the Self Care Forum. Designed by doctors, used by millions, Healthily is the free, award-winning self care app that helps you look after you every day. [Healthily](#) believes self care can change lives. Healthily gives you the tools you need to understand your health and take the next step – whether that's seeing a doctor, managing an issue yourself, or making small changes to feel better every day.

Take the best steps for your health by downloading the app today. [Get it free.](#)

Take a moment for yourself

Grounding Technique

How it Helps: This technique will use your five senses to remind you of the present. This is a calming technique that can help you get through tough or stressful situations or relax you before starting an activity.

Guidance:

First, take a deep belly breath to begin.

5 - LOOK: Look around for 5 things that you can see, and say them out loud. For example, you could say, "I see the computer, I see the cup, I see the picture frame."

4 - FEEL: Pay attention to your body and think of 4 things that you can feel, and say them out loud. For example, you could say, "I feel my feet warm in my socks, I feel the hair on the back of my neck, or I feel the pillow I am sitting on."

3 - LISTEN: Listen for 3 sounds. It could be the sound of traffic outside, the sound of typing or the sound of your tummy rumbling. Say the three things out loud.

2 - SMELL: Say two things you can smell. If you're allowed to, it's okay to move to another spot and sniff something. If you can't smell anything at the moment or you can't move, name your 2 favourite smells.

1 - TASTE: Say one thing you can taste. It may be the toothpaste from brushing your teeth, or a mint from after lunch. If you can't taste anything, then say your favourite thing to taste.

Take another deep belly breath to end.



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Carers Rights Day 2020

The theme for Carers Rights Day 2020 is 'Know Your Rights'

"Carers need to know their rights wherever they are in their caring journey: whether they are in the workplace, in a healthcare setting, when interacting with professionals or at home. This Carers Rights Day, we want to empower carers with information and support, so they can feel confident asking for what they need. We also want carers to know how to challenge things when their rights are not being met."



Thursday 26th November

This year on 26th November 2020 we shall be using our Facebook page to get together to talk about:

- Ensuring you are aware of your rights
- Helping you know where to get help and support
- Raising awareness of the needs of carers

Carers Rights Day is all about you. Help us raise the issues that concern you the most. **Look out on Facebook and email for further information coming soon.**

Join us on
Facebook



Search: '**Bromley Well Mental Health Carers Service**' to join our private peer support page.

We are using this platform to help you feel connected during this socially distanced time.

Last, but not least...

Many of you will have heard me talk about the 'cup of water'. They say, if you see the cup 'half full' you are optimistic, if you see it 'half empty' you are pessimistic. My view is that the cup needs to be viewed in its entirety, and only if you acknowledge the emptiness can you really appreciate the part that is full. You can only know happiness when you have felt sadness; it was in the first lockdown that I found a new appreciation for my friends and family. It is ironic that the one constant in our lives is 'change', but every day we change and grow, and every day we get closer to the end of this lockdown. We don't know what will come next, we can only contend with today, and whatever you are feeling, that's ok. My little one is nearly 18 months old, and the time has been full of highs and lows, from sleepless nights to first steps and words. When things seemed tough a friend offered the mantra "this too shall pass". These are the words that I pass on to you now. I find it difficult to find the right words to describe the last year (since lockdown in March), but I can offer you the same mantra which got me through some difficult moments: **This too shall pass.**



from Helen

Like our updates? Thank you for taking the time to read. We are a small team and we write and design in-house. Please contact us if there is something you would like us to include in future editions.

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🌐 www.bromleywell.org.uk