

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

31ST JANUARY - 1ST FEBRUARY 2020

RESOURCE PACK

OUR PARTNERS



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The Mental Health Service for our Community

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THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

TRANSFORMING THE LANDSCAPE OF MENTAL HEALTH

A panel discussion

TUESDAY 28 JANUARY, 7.30PM, JW3 LONDON

Join Jami, The Mental Health Service for our Community, together with JW3 for a panel discussion to mark The Mental Health Awareness Shabbat.

The panel will focus on how collaboration between organisations in our community can help improve our mental health and how we can best work together to achieve this, before opening up the discussion to a Q&A from the audience to our panel of experts:

- **Laurie Rackind**, Chief Executive of Jami
- **Dr Ellie Cannon**, NHS GP, author and Mail on Sunday doctor
- **Rabbi Miriam Berger**, Finchley Reform Synagogue
- **Laurence Field**, Director of Gateways at JW3
- Panel to be chaired by **Adam Dawson**, Barrister and Chair of Jami's Board of Trustees

To find out more, or to book tickets please visit jamiuk.org/mhas



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WELCOME

Dear Friends,

Thank you for supporting The Mental Health Awareness Shabbat and for helping to raise awareness and promote conversations around mental health and mental illness in the Jewish Community.

This will be the fourth Mental Health Awareness Shabbat. Last year, events took place in more than 120 communities and we look forward to surpassing that number this year.

It is wonderful to see synagogues taking part from every denomination, joined by schools, youth and university groups, individuals and families. Panel discussions, speakers, youth activities and themed Friday Night dinners are just a selection of the ways that have been chosen to mark the event.

There is no doubt that together we are taking vital steps to transform the mental health landscape in our community, and I could not be prouder of what is being achieved.

Please ensure that you take full advantage of the enclosed resources and be sure to share your plans and stories with us, we cannot wait to hear how you get on.

Thank you for your support.

Best wishes,



Laurie Rackind
Chief Executive

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ABOUT JAMI

For over 30 years Jami has provided practical and emotional support for the mental health of the Jewish community.

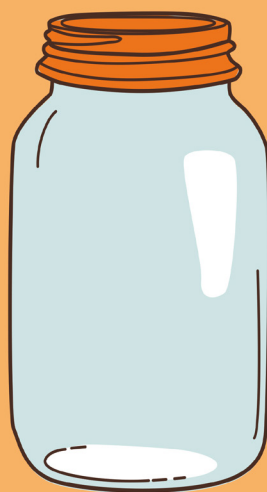
Jami's vision is a Jewish community which accepts, acknowledges and understands mental illness. A community which is resilient and has the capacity and capability to be healthy. A community in which symptoms of mental illness are as recognisable as a heart attack and trigger an equally appropriate First Aid response. A community in which Parity of Esteem is a reality and an environment which helps, not hinders recovery.

We work with individuals, communities and organisations to help prevent mental illness from developing, improve early intervention and promote wellbeing.

JAMI CURRENTLY....

- Delivers approximately 27,000 separate provisions of service annually
- Supports around 1,300 people at any one time and reaches thousands more through our education work across the community
- Employs 52 Mental Health professionals
- Operates programmes from 4 Community Hubs and 2 Enterprise Hubs
- Provides innovative peer-led services

To find out more please visit www.jamiuk.org, email info@jamiuk.org or call 020 8458 2223



LABELS ARE FOR JARS. NOT PEOPLE.

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WHY MARK THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT (MHAS)?

MHAS falls annually on Shabbat “Bo”, the weekly Torah portion which tells about the Plague of Darkness. The description of the plague of darkness has particular resonance with mental illness – the darkness was so intense that people couldn’t move from their position. This has parallels with descriptions of mental illness.

It is an opportunity to encourage people of all ages to be more in touch with their own mental health and wellbeing and to raise awareness of mental health and mental illness in the local and wider community.

Last year over 120 synagogues, student and youth groups across the full range of Jewish religious affiliation throughout the UK engaged in the MHAS.

“The subject of good mental health and mental health awareness and support is so important and impacts all of us. Thank you for setting up and running this initiative.”

– Rabbi Garber, Shenley United Synagogue

talk talk talk
mental health wellbeing friends
mind & body
fulfilling talk

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LETTER FROM A JAMI SERVICE USER

Dear friends,

The last Shabbat in January marks The Mental Health Awareness Shabbat, organised by Jami a London-based Jewish Mental Health charity. Congregations across the country are holding events to mark this occasion and raise awareness about the reality of mental illness in our community.

Mental illness can affect anyone and everyone; in fact, it's estimated that 1 in 4 individuals will experience it at some point in their life. Like all illnesses it doesn't matter whether you are young or old, rich or poor, it can afflict you just the same. Many of those living with these issues appear to be ok but are experiencing constant inner turmoil. Nothing is harder than battling daily against your own mind. People living with mental illness look just like you; they could be your brother, your sister, your best friend, or communal figures such as Rabbis and activists.

For many of us, even those with lived experience of mental illness, it's so difficult to know what to say. The line between comfort and trigger, encouragement or offence, is really vague. You want to say something supportive yet somehow it comes out like an empty platitude.

This frustrates us and may even deter us from saying anything at all.

On the flipside, sometimes a small word can make all the difference, even if you don't realise it.

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I cannot tell you what to say or do to help someone in a specific situation, but I can share some of my personal journey. In my case it started with a vigilant and caring roommate in Yeshivah. You see, my time there was cut short by my admission to the psychiatric ward at Morristown Memorial Hospital. My mental state had been rapidly declining to the point that my roommate suspected that things were not right. Instead of ignoring it, he encouraged me to find someone to talk to, I believe he even suggested candidates, but my memories of those days are blurred. Seeing my reluctance to trust anyone, he offered (or insisted) that he would talk to someone instead. That gave me the impetus to talk to one of the rabbis and later check myself into hospital.

While on the ward I learnt some important things; I wasn't the only one with mental illness, there are treatments available and there are people to talk to who understand these issues, either from professional education or due to life experiences. For the first time in quite a while, I felt safe. You may ask, what is the point of an awareness day? You may feel that you either don't know anyone with mental illness or couldn't help them anyway. I hope that by reading my story you will see the power of a friend's care and a teacher's ear.

For me the purpose of The Mental Health Awareness Shabbat is to

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extend that safe space beyond the confines of a secured hospital or dedicated day centre. To bring that spirit of acceptance, compassion and understanding into our community centres, schools, synagogues and homes. To remind us that we each process and experience things in our own way, be that festivals, synagogue honours or the prayers themselves. Everybody should be able to trust that they will be accepted for who they are. Whether they stand on the side lines on Simchat Torah because their depression prevents them from singing and dancing, or they have to be in the middle doing things, so they feel needed. Or even the ones whose anxiety prevents them from showing up all together. Whether you have depression or bipolar, OCD or BPD, no diagnosis or a combination thereof, you should always feel at home in our community. Finally, if you are in crisis or you know someone who is suffering, please reach out. Be it to your doctor, your Rabbi or a trusted friend, there is always help available. You can also reach out to Jami for day-to-day support and advice.

Remember, even the darkest night is followed by a glorious sunrise.

Shabbat Shalom

GB

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KEY FACTS ON MENTAL HEALTH

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

Mental health refers to our cognitive, behavioural, and emotional wellbeing - it is all about how we think, feel, and behave. It helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others and make choices.

Mental health also includes a person's ability to enjoy life - to attain a balance between life activities and efforts to achieve psychological resilience.

WHAT IS MENTAL ILLNESS?

A medically diagnosable illness which can result from a number of factors including biological or developmental. It can affect the way we feel, act and think and disrupts our ability to work or carry out other daily activities and engage in satisfying personal relationships. It can be managed through prevention, diagnosis, treatment and mental health recovery.

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY?

Mental health recovery means being able to live a good life, as defined by the person, with or without symptoms. It is a unique and personal experience that can have its ups and downs. Mental health recovery focusses on what a person CAN do rather than on what they can't. It is not necessarily easy or straightforward. Many people describe the need to persevere and to find ways to maintain hope through the most trying times.

PARITY OF ESTEEM

The principle by which mental health must be given equal priority to physical health. It was enshrined in law in 2012. The government requires NHS England to work for parity of esteem to mental and physical health through the NHS Mandate. This has still not yet been realised.

KEY FACTS ON MENTAL ILLNESS:

- At any given time, 1 in 6 working-age adults have symptoms associated with mental ill health. (NHS Digital, 2017)
- Mental illness is the largest single source of burden of disease in the UK. Mental illnesses are more common, long-lasting and impactful than other health conditions. (Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer, 2013)
- The total cost of mental ill health in England is estimated at £105 billion per year. (NHS England, The Five Year Forward View, 2016)
- While there are more people at work with mental health conditions than ever before, 300,000 people with a long term mental health problem lose their jobs each year, and at a much higher rate than those with physical health conditions. (The Independent Review of Mental Health and Employers, 2017)
- Nearly half (43.4%) of adults think that they have had a diagnosable mental health condition at some point in their life (35.2% of men and 51.2% of women). A fifth of men (19.5%) and a third of women (33.7%) have had diagnoses confirmed by professionals. (NHS Digital, 2017)
- 1 in 8 children have a diagnosable mental health disorder – that's roughly 3 children in every classroom. (NHS, 2018)
- Nearly half of 17-19 year olds with a diagnosable mental health disorder has self-harmed or attempted suicide at some point, rising to 52.7% for young women. (NHS, 2018)
- In 2018, there were 6,507 suicides registered in the UK, an age-standardised rate of 11.2 deaths per 100,000 population; the latest rate is significantly higher than that in 2017 and represents the first increase since 2013. Three-quarters of registered deaths in 2018 were among men (4,903 deaths), which has been the case since the mid-1990s. (ONS, 2019)

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NHS 5 WAYS TO WELLBEING

Evidence suggests there are 5 steps we can all take to improve our mental wellbeing.

If you give them a try, you may feel happier, more positive and able to get the most from life.



CONNECT

Connect with the people around you: your family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. Spend time developing these relationships.



BE ACTIVE

You don't have to go to the gym. Take a walk, go cycling or play a game of football. Find an activity that you enjoy and make it a part of your life.



KEEP LEARNING

Learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and a new confidence. So why not sign up for that cooking course, start learning to play a musical instrument, or figure out how to fix your bike?



GIVE TO OTHERS

Even the smallest act can count, whether it's a smile, a thank you or a kind word. Larger acts, such as volunteering at your local community centre, can improve your mental wellbeing and help you build new social networks.



BE MINDFUL

Be more aware of the present moment, including your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you. Some people call this awareness "mindfulness". It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges.

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WHAT CAN YOU DO?

There are many ways that you, your synagogue, school, student and youth group can get involved in 2020 and each community or individual is free to mark The Mental Health Awareness Shabbat in their own way.

This Resource Pack can assist you in doing so, for example, by using one of the sermons provided, arranging activities listed within the pages of youth materials and ideas, taking part in the wellbeing activities prepared by Jami's fitness expert or by using the conversation points as part of a discussion group.

Many communities choose to arrange for speakers within their congregations to share their own lived experience, or mental health professionals within their communities to lead a panel discussion. Please be sure to let us know what you have planned.

HEAD ROOM EDUCATION COURSES & WORKSHOPS

There are a variety of mental health awareness courses and workshops, facilitated by Jami, that can be booked for your community throughout the year.

You can host a Jami course or a bespoke learning event can be created for your community.

Please browse the Head Room Education courses here or download the prospectus:
jamiuk.org/get-support/what-we-do/training

JAMI SPEAKER

To arrange for a Jami speaker to come to your community during or around The Mental Health Awareness Shabbat please complete the 'Get Involved for 2020' form at jamiuk.org/get-involved/mhas

Speakers will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

Jami offer educational opportunities throughout the year across the Jewish community. There are a variety of mental health awareness courses and workshops, facilitated by Jami, that can be booked for your community.

The Head Room education team are able to provide and advise on interactive and educational workshops to mark The Mental Health Awareness Shabbat. The following is a list of suggested programmes suited to community settings.

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SUGGESTED PROGRAMMES

SELF-HARM IN YOUNG PEOPLE

According to NHS Digital, 1 in 4 11–16 year-olds with a disorder have self-harmed or attempted suicide. CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) have seen a huge spike in referrals for self-harm in the last few years, with no sign of change. This seminar sets out to explore the current rise in self-harm and how it is related to young people's mental health. Why do young people self-harm? We will look at the practicalities of the "dos and don'ts" around supporting someone who discloses self-harm and the challenges this exposes for youth workers, volunteers and school staff.

MENTAL HEALTH IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

1 in 4 British adults will experience a mental health problem each year - and our community is no exception. Come and join us to explore mental health and wellbeing, the social impact of mental health problems, the risk factors and how we as a community can look after ourselves and others.

THE RIPPLE EFFECT: THE IMPACT OF SUICIDE

Suicide creates a huge impact on the family of the person who has died, as well as friends, colleagues and all the other people who had a relationship with the person. This phenomenon is called "the ripple effect" and has a profound effect on our community life, be that synagogue, school or organisation. During this session we look at the impact of suicide and what we can do to build hope and education around this sensitive area of communal life.

BUILDING RESILIENCE IN OUR FAMILIES

Families face more pressure than ever. Gain more insight and confidence into how to build resilience in our children and young people. Recognise when we need to ask for help and learn how to manage those transitions from childhood to adolescence.

THE "SANDWICH GENERATION"

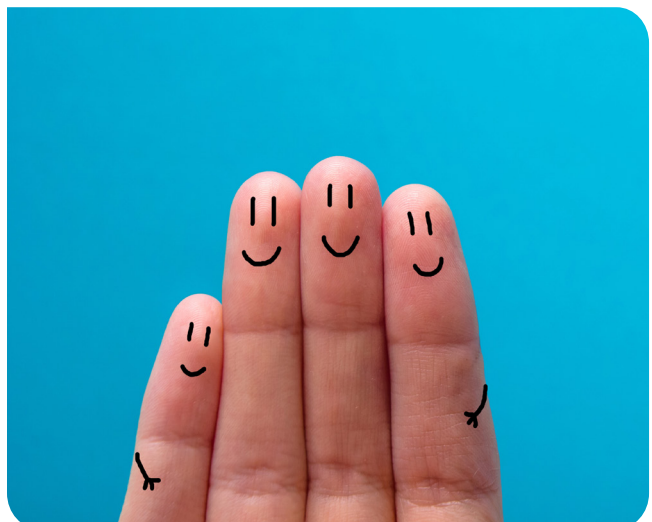
Meet the sandwich generation – the ones stuck in the middle caring for children and elderly parents. This invisible, unpaid work can take a huge toll on our wellbeing and overall quality of life. What's it like to be part of the sandwich generation and what help is out there to support your wellbeing so you can support others?

SNAPCHAT, STRESS AND OUR WELLBEING (AIMED AT YOUNG PEOPLE)

Join us to explore our wellbeing and the stresses in our lives and the lives of our peers. By understanding what stresses us and how this can impact on our mental health, we can work together to manage the pressures and expectations of today's world.

MINDFULNESS AND MILKSHAKES (AIMED AT YOUNG PEOPLE)

If you're aged 14-18 and would like to take part in some mindful and creative activities that will boost your wellbeing, come and join us. Milkshakes included.



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SUGGESTED PROGRAMMES

ADULT MHFA

We are accredited providers of Adult Mental Health First Aid. This internationally recognised training course is the gold standard in equipping you with skills you can use as a 'first aid response' to help someone in distress.

Come and join us to learn more about a variety of mental health problems, including recognising and supporting people in suicidal crisis. We also look at treatments currently used in England and increase your confidence in supporting others.

Please be aware there is a cost for this course.

YOUTH MHFA

We are accredited providers of Youth Mental Health First Aid. We know that in recent months there has been an increase in concern around young people's mental health in our community.

Come and join our training group as a parent, a teacher or a youth worker, if you want to learn more about a variety of mental health problems, treatments currently in use and increase your confidence in supporting young people.

Please be aware there is a cost for this course.

To arrange for a Jami speaker to come to your community during or around The Mental Health Awareness Shabbat please complete the 'Get Involved for 2020' form at jamiuk.org/get-involved/mhas
Speakers will be allocated on a first come first served basis

ADULT MHFA

Sundays, 10.30am – 5.30pm

16 & 23
February 2020

Martin B. Cohen Centre,
Edgware

Cost: £75

For more information
on costings please get in
contact.

two day course



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FUNDRAISING FOR MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING



MHFA England

The Mental Health Awareness Shabbat's primary aim is to raise the profile of mental health in the Jewish Community, but if you or your community would like to put on a fundraising event to mark the Shabbat we have listed some great ideas on this page. In turn, the funds that you raise could cover the cost of Mental Health First Aid training to be offered to your community.

Jami are accredited providers of Adult Mental Health First Aid, Youth Mental Health First Aid, Mental Health First Aid Youth for Adults and Higher Education Mental Health First Aid. These internationally recognised training courses are the gold standard in equipping you with skills you can do as a first aid response to help someone in distress. Numbers are limited to a minimum of 8 people and a maximum of 16 people per course.

COSTS

Adult / Youth

£500 for a 2 day course plus manuals

- Adult Manuals £25 each
- Youth Manuals £20 each

Adult / Youth / Higher Education (Our Higher Education Mental Health First Aid courses are for people who work or study in a university environment)

£350 for a 1 day course plus manuals

- Adult Manuals £20 each
- Youth Manuals £18 each
- Higher Education Manuals £25 each

Please note that we deliver these courses to Jewish Societies at Universities without charge

FUNDRAISING IDEAS

SPONSORED "WALK FOR WELLBEING"

Walking and talking in a group can reduce loneliness and isolation, improve our mood and reduce stress and anxiety.

ARRANGE A BAKE SALE AND GET TOGETHER FOR TEA AND A TALK

Raise funds while joining friends for a cuppa and a conversation about your own mental health.

TAKE PART IN A CHALLENGE EVENT

Whatever the challenge is, being physically active can help support your emotional and mental health.

PUT ON A MOVIE NIGHT

Have a fun movie night with popcorn, drinks and snacks! Individuals that spend more time engaging in enjoyable activities are known to have greater psychological wellbeing.

ORGANISE ANY TYPE OF SOCIAL EVENT

Interacting with others boosts feelings of wellbeing and decreases feelings of depression. Research has shown that one way of improving your mood is to work on building social connections.

For help to plan an event contact Laura Bahar
laura.bahar@jamiuk.org

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SUGGESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS

If you are not a shul goer or part of a communal organisation but would like to mark The Mental Health Awareness Shabbat then we have listed below some suggested conversation points that can be discussed over a coffee, at a Friday night meal or Shabbat lunch with friends.

1. What does happiness mean to me?
Enjoy a discussion about what happiness means to each person.
2. An increasing number of young people are speaking out about their mental health. Do you think youth mental health has been negatively influenced by the world we live in today? Discuss.
3. As a Jewish community we are fortunate to have a plethora of communal organisations. How does this sense of community support our mental health? Can it hinder our mental health if we feel we don't fit in?
4. Our self-care, i.e. looking after our mental wellbeing, can often fall by the wayside. Why is this and what can we do about it?
5. Do you feel that social media helps or hinders our mental health? Discuss.



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GUIDELINES FOR SHARING LIVED EXPERIENCE

If you choose to tell your story to your community on The Mental Health Awareness Shabbat here are a few suggestions to help you stay in control of what you share.

SPEND TIME ON THIS

Think about which parts of your story you wish to share and write a first draft. Put that away for a couple of weeks and then revisit it. Have you opened up about experiences that actually feel too raw to share with others? Can you make some edits and tweaks?

KEEP IT SIMPLE

A human story simply told has the power to grip an audience and capture both hearts and minds.

EXPERT BY EXPERIENCE

You are an 'expert' on your lived experience, don't forget that.

SET BOUNDARIES FOR QUESTIONS

Decide what you are prepared to answer questions on and what you will not discuss.

People are naturally curious and their questions may feel too intrusive. So, decide if you are prepared to take questions after your talk. There may be areas that you do not wish to answer questions on. Some speakers for example who talk about their experience of eating disorders make it clear they are not prepared to answer questions about their weight or what they eat.

REFLECT

Give your talk to a friend or relative and reflect on how telling your story makes you feel. Then imagine telling the same story to a room full of people. It will feel different, so if anything felt too triggering or made you feel vulnerable in front of one person, think about how you might feel in front of others.

MAKE FINAL EDITS AND PRACTICE

We suggest that you write and rehearse your story several times before it gets a public outing.

LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

Whenever we're taking on something big it's important that we make time to look after ourselves. Think about who you may want to spend time with or chat to after you've given the talk. Perhaps there's an activity or hobby that you really enjoy and would like to do. It's great to plan ahead with this to ensure you have the time to unwind.

BE PROUD

Sharing your story is a courageous act. By sharing your account you will inspire those who listen who also identify with lived experience of mental illness and educate and inform others.

IF YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND

There are many online resources where people share their personal stories via video or on a blog which our communities can access. For example, Time to Change and Mind both provide real life personal stories which can be found here:

- time-to-change.org.uk/personal-stories
- mind.org.uk/information-support/your-stories/

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YOUTH MATERIALS & IDEAS

Over 120 communities and organisations across the UK take part in helping to raise the profile of mental health in the Jewish Community as part of The Mental Health Awareness Shabbat.

This range of great resources has been developed to be used by teachers and youth leaders in the run up to the MHAS as well as throughout the year.

We hope that this pack can support you in how you educate and talk about mental health with young people.

These resources can be used to develop your understanding of how a range of factors can contribute to young people's wellbeing.

In this pack we provide you with practical examples of age appropriate activities that promote wellbeing in young people.

Please note the year groups given are just a suggestion and some of the activities are interchangeable between year groups.

Many of the activities will work in both formal and informal education settings.

We have also included our wellbeing handout and resources needed for the different activities.



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GUIDELINES AND TIPS FOR SPEAKING TO YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

WHY DO WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH WITH YOUNG PEOPLE?

- One in eight (12.8%) 5 to 19 year olds had at least one mental disorder when assessed in 2017. Emotional disorders were the most prevalent type of disorder experienced by 5 to 19 year olds in 2017 (8.1%).¹
- A variety of stress and pressures on young people including social media and technology, can affect their ability to cope and impact possible mental health issues.
- We know that most adults living with mental illness experienced their first mental health problems at a young age. In fact, 50% of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by the age of 14 and 75% by the age of 24.²
- If young people know that support is available for their mental health and they know where they can get this support, we help build the foundations for a better future.

HOW DO WE TALK ABOUT IT?

- We need to use boundaries when working with groups of young people. Setting out the aims for our conversations about the subject can help us stick to these parameters. Our aims for these sessions may be:
 - To raise awareness about mental health as something that affects us all.
 - To encourage people to talk to each other rather than isolating themselves.
 - To encourage the young person to seek help when they need it. If you broke your ankle you would not wait to see if it could get better on its own. We should take the same approach with our mental health.
 - Use a 'light' voice when talking about the subject. If we convey anxiety or seem uncomfortable with the information, we give the impression that this is a hard or 'heavy' discussion.

KEY POINTS TO EDUCATE YOUNG PEOPLE ON MENTAL HEALTH:

- We all have mental health just as we all have physical health.
- Mental health is about the way we feel about ourselves and the world. Our feelings and thoughts are part of our mental health.
- No one can see inside our head, so we need to tell people how we feel.
- When our feelings and thoughts seem to be out of control or worry us we need to speak to a trusted adult. We may decide to speak to someone we know well and feel comfortable with such as a parent or carer, grandparent or other family member or a school counsellor or teacher. There are also charities such as ChildLine and Young Minds where we can speak to someone anonymously.
- We can get help to get better after mental health problems.

HOW DO WE LOOK AFTER OUR MENTAL HEALTH?

- Talk to our friends and socialise with people who make us feel good about ourselves.
- Make sure we get enough sleep and enough food to eat (we need to look after our minds as well as our bodies!).
- Social media can be a great way to socialise and films and TV can help us unwind but we do need to take regular breaks. We also need to be aware that light from phone screens and laptops or computers can interfere with a good night's sleep.
- Hobbies such as team sports, walking the dog, listening to music or expressing ourselves through art or writing can make us feel better and distract us from life's stresses.
- It's okay to speak to an adult we trust about how we feel.

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ACTIVITIES FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL AGED CHILDREN

Introduce the subject of mental health by asking them this riddle:

“You can’t see me, you can’t hear me and you can’t touch me but I’m always there. What am I?”

The answer to the riddle is our mental health which is made up of our thoughts and feelings.



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THE COKE BOTTLE: PRIMARY SCHOOL

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This activity is a good introduction to how small things in life can mount up and impact our overall wellbeing.

INSTRUCTIONS

Demonstrate this to the group to start with. Begin by mentioning something which might be frustrating such as "My sister finished the Coco Pops at breakfast this morning before I had any" then shake the bottle. Then suggest another everyday annoyance which may happen next and shake the bottle again.

We recommend suggesting multiple small things which might happen during the day whilst shaking the coke bottle in between each one. We have suggested a script below, remember everything mentioned should be something which may be annoying or frustrating.

SUGGESTED SCRIPT

"My sister finished the Coco Pops at breakfast this morning"

Then shake the bottle

"I forgot something at home which I really needed at school"

Then shake the bottle

"My teacher marked me late at registration"

Then shake the bottle

"A good friend spread a rumour about me in the playground"

Then shake the bottle

"My sibling changed the TV channel when I was watching my programme after school"

Then shake the bottle

"My dad shouted at me for not eating my dinner"

Then shake the bottle

To finish the activity, ask the group "Why would I not want to open this bottle now?". The answer is that it will go everywhere and will make a mess! Then ask "If I wanted to open this bottle without the coke going everywhere, how would I do this?". Wait for an answer such as "You have to do this slowly". Get the group to be quiet and slowly open the bottle to release some of the gas that has built up inside.

Ask the group what the activity with the coke bottle might tell us about ourselves. For example, say "if I am the coke bottle and all these small things happen to me what might I feel like inside?".

The bottle shows how even small things can mount up and begin to affect our mental health or how we feel. To make sure we are looking after our mental health we need to 'release the pressure gradually.'

We can do this by making sure that every day we are doing things that help us let go of whatever is on our minds.

Ask the group what some of these things might be? Get them to think about what helps them de-stress or what they do to enjoy themselves.

Some examples might be: exercise such as football, dance class or walking the dog, listening to music, writing lyrics or poems, doing something kind for other people, or socialising with friends or family.

TIME REQUIRED:

Approximately 30 minutes.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

Coke Bottles.

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

Jami

The Mental Health Service for our Community

CHARACTER SCENARIOS: PRIMARY SCHOOL

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To think about how young people may feel in certain situations and discuss ways in which they could talk to someone.

INSTRUCTIONS

Using the character scenarios provided in this pack divide the group into smaller groups and give each small group a character. Ask them to read the character scenario and think about how the character might feel, who the character might want to talk to and how they could do this.

If you are doing this activity with younger primary school children, you could read each scenario out and discuss it with them in a larger group.

TIME REQUIRED

Approximately 30 minutes.

RESOURCES REQUIRED

Character scenarios sheet.

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
Jami

The Mental Health Service for our Community

SELF CARE BINGO: PRIMARY SCHOOL/YEAR 7

Self Care Bingo is a great activity for primary school / year 7 pupils to get them thinking and talking about what they've done recently to look after themselves. It could be spending time outdoors, listening to music or trying something new.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To encourage young people to compare and discuss with one another what they do for their own wellbeing.

INSTRUCTIONS

Explain to your pupils that you are going to play bingo with a twist!

Give everyone a self-care bingo card and a pen.

Each pupil should walk around the room and ask one another "what do you do for self-care"?

If someone's answer is on the sheet, write their name in the appropriate box and if not, write their idea at the bottom of the bingo card.

You can only ask each person once.

Keep playing until either a line or the whole page is completed.

TIME REQUIRED:

Approximately 30 minutes.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

Bingo Cards and pens.

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
Jami

The Mental Health Service for our Community

ACTIVITIES FOR OLDER CHILDREN

STRENGTH RECOGNITION: YEAR 6

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This activity is to demonstrate the importance of recognising both our strengths and the strengths of others.

INSTRUCTIONS

Students should be presented with the strength cards provided, with the following adjectives: brave, creative, respectful, sociable, loving, wise, funny, strong, musical, honest, cheerful, artistic, helpful, clever, intelligent, sporty, graceful, playful, thoughtful, happy, generous, friendly, sensible and caring.

1. Ask students to choose 5 adjectives that they think can be used to describe themselves.
2. Ask students to choose 2 adjectives that they think can be used to describe their pair.
3. Ask students to choose 1 adjective that they admire in a family member, friend or famous person and describe why they think this trait is admirable.

Please encourage students to really think about which strength they choose and why.

If they are happy and comfortable to, ask students to share with the group/class what they discussed in their pairs.

Discussion points you may wish to use:

Why is it important to recognise my strengths?

Why is it important to recognise my friends/ classmates' strengths?

TIME REQUIRED:

Approximately 25 minutes.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

Strength cards provided.

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

Jami

The Mental Health Service for our Community

GOAL SETTING: YEAR 7

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This exercise helps you determine the importance of mini goals or action steps needed to reach a main goal.

When you set a goal, you often need to set multiple smaller goals which act as steps to help reach an overall goal.

INSTRUCTIONS

First ask the class what goal setting is. Emphasise the importance of having lots of smaller goals, which are steps needed to reach a bigger / overall goal.

Activity 1:

Ask students to complete the Goal Setting Worksheet (see resources).

Activity 2:

Ask students to write a letter to themselves about what they hope to achieve during the year. Tell students that these letters will be handed out at the end of year 7 (if appropriate or teacher agrees).

TIME REQUIRED:

Approximately 30 minutes (15 minutes per activity).

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

Goal Setting worksheet, pens and lined paper.

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
Jami

The Mental Health Service for our Community

SOCIAL MEDIA: YEAR 8

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This activity is to demonstrate that what we see on social media is not always a realistic depiction of what is happening in real life.

INSTRUCTIONS

Activity 1:

Divide students into pairs and give each pair one of the Instagram style pictures provided.

Ask students to spend some time looking at their picture and ask them to discuss what they think happened before the picture was taken e.g. the smoothie took a long time to prepare and multiple photos were taken before the final picture was chosen.

Come back together and ask each pair to feed back to the group what they discussed.

Watch this video if appropriate, which demonstrates how social media does not always depict reality.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=0EFHbruKEmw

Activity 2

Option 1: Social media debate

Split the group or class in two. One group should discuss how social media can boost our mental health and wellbeing and the other group should discuss how social media can deplete our mental health and wellbeing.

You may want to prompt them with ideas about how social media may help someone feel connected to a group of friends, keep in touch with someone abroad or different apps that people may use for their wellbeing e.g. mindfulness apps. For the other side of the argument ask the group to think about what happens when you spend too much time on social media or see someone's holiday pictures. After 10 minutes tell the groups they are about to take part in a debate. Each group will get 2

minutes to present their position. After each group has done this they will each have a chance to ask the other group questions.

Encourage the group to respect each other's opinions, but to think about why and when social media can boost our wellbeing and when we might want to use it less.

Activity 2

Option 2: Balloon Debate

Split the group into approximately 5 groups of 6. Allocate each group a social media forum: Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Facebook and YouTube.

Ask each group to advocate for why their social media forum is the best for wellbeing and if we could only have one forum why it should be theirs.

After 10 minutes tell the groups they are about to take part in a debate. Each group will get 2 minutes to present their forum. After each group has done this they will each have a chance to ask the other group questions.

Encourage the group to respect each other's opinions but to think about why their social media forum is the best for wellbeing.

(If you would like, at the end of the debate you can ask students to rank from 1-5 the forums and see which comes out top).

TIME REQUIRED:

Approximately 45 minutes (15 minutes for activity 1 and 30 minutes for activity 2).

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

Instagram style pictures provided.

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
Jami

The Mental Health Service for our Community

SELF-CARE: YEAR 9

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To consider the various ways in which one can manage wellbeing and to think about which self-care product or technique works best for me.

INSTRUCTIONS

Activity 1:

Divide students into approximately six groups of 5 and ask each group to come up with a self-care idea that they, their friends and classmates can use to help manage their wellbeing (give examples such as listening to music, doing sports or outdoor activities, seeing friends).

Encourage students to think about organisation / planning, looking after oneself, environment and pathways to support when designing their product.

Encourage them to be as innovative and creative as possible. Ask students to present their ideas back to the group – they can do this through a skit, song, dance or mime.

Activity 2:

Discuss the importance of self-care and emphasise how it should be part of our daily routine.

Discussion points you may wish to use:

Why it is important to practice self-care?

What are some of the ways we can practice self-care?

What could happen if we don't take care of ourselves?

Key Messages

- We all have mental health just as we all have physical health
- Mental health is about the way we feel about ourselves and the world. Our feelings and thoughts are part of our mental health.
- We need to look after our mental health, just as we look after our physical health.
- We can support our wellbeing by doing things we enjoy or help de-stress us.
- No one can see inside our head, so we need to tell people how we feel.

TIME REQUIRED:

Approximately 40 minutes (20 minutes for activity 1 and 20 minutes for activity 2)

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

Pens and paper.

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
Jami

The Mental Health Service for our Community

EMOJI EXERCISE: YEAR 10

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To find out how young people feel about different aspects of their lives.

INSTRUCTIONS

Use the emoji faces provided and place each emoji spread out along a piece of string.

Give students 10 different colour clips each.

Present the students with a list of 10 topics including: school exams, friendships, social media, world news, UK politics, economy, finding a job, peer pressure, bullying and body image.

Each colour clip represents a topic e.g. yellow clip represents body image – tell students which colour represents which topic.

Call out different topics and ask students to put the colour clip that represents that topic next to the emoji they feel this aspect of their life relates to.

Once the activity has finished, ask the students to work with the person next to them and discuss how they rated the topics and why.

Following this, ask the students to feedback to the group/class what they discussed in their pairs about how they rated the topics and why.

Then ask the students about some of the topics that bothered them and what they can do to help resolve these issues, if they are really stressed encourage them to think together as a group about what they can do to manage that. This might involve practical actions like speaking to a trusted adult such as a teacher, youth worker, parent or friend. Getting in the habit of using self-care strategies to help manage their stress is also very useful. Examples of self-care suggestions can be found at the end of this pack in the Wellbeing Handout.

TIME REQUIRED:

Approximately 25 minutes.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

Emojis, clips, string, list of topics.

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
Jami

The Mental Health Service for our Community

SELF-RESPECT AND WELLBEING: YEAR 11

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To think about the connection between self-respect and wellbeing.

INSTRUCTIONS

Activity 1

Play Word Association – the first person starts with the word self-respect, the next person needs to say a word they associate with self-respect e.g. self-esteem the person after then needs to say a word they associate with self-esteem and so on.

A variation of the game can be played, where the first person starts with the word self-respect and all following players have to say a word they associate with self-respect.

Activity 2

Ask students to write down or think of three things they like about themselves, if they feel comfortable, ask the students to share their answers with the rest of the class/group.

Activity 3

On a big canvas write on the one side 'What self-respect is?' and on the other side 'What self-respect is not?'

Ask students to look through magazines and newspapers cut outs and pictures and group together ones that they think answer or represent 'What self-respect is?' and 'What self-respect is not?'

Once everyone has finished, look at the groups as a class and asks students to explain why they chose certain cut outs and pictures to answer the questions 'What self-respect is?' and 'What self-respect is not?'

TIME REQUIRED:

Approximately 50 minutes (15 minutes for activity 1 and 15 minutes for activity 2 and 20 minutes for activity 3).

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

Marker pens, poster paper, magazines, newspapers.

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
Jami

The Mental Health Service for our Community

PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE: YEAR 12 / YEAR 13

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To consider how much we focus on the past, present or future.

Mindfulness is largely being present, requiring us to release ourselves from thoughts of the past and thoughts of the future and bringing our attention to the present moment.

INSTRUCTIONS

Give each student a piece of paper and a pen. Ask them to write down all their thoughts for 3 minutes.

At the end of 3 minutes ask them to label thoughts dealing with the past with a "P", label thoughts dealing with now with an "N" and thoughts of the future with an "F".

Ask students to turn the sheet over and divide it into 3 columns. The first column being "Past", the second column being "Now" and the third column being "Future".

Ask students to tally their thoughts from the front sheet into these three categories. Finish with a discussion about how their thoughts were divided.

Discussion points you may wish to use:

Which column did the majority of your thoughts fall into (the past, now or future)? Why?

What is the impact of being mindful and focusing on the "Now"?

What sort of activities require us to be mindful and focus on the "Now"?

Think about juggling or colouring.

TIME REQUIRED:

Approximately 30 minutes.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

Pen, paper and timer.

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
Jami

The Mental Health Service for our Community

ARTICLE DISCUSSION: YEAR 12 / YEAR 13

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To think and talk about how the media discusses mental health.

INSTRUCTIONS

Set the scene for this activity by telling the group that over the last 8 years or so, the media has started to support mental health awareness by promoting stories from famous people talking about mental health as you will see in these articles.

Give the group the articles we have supplied in this pack. Give them time to read them and then lead into a discussion. You can prompt the group to think about the following:

- Is it good to have famous people sharing their experiences of mental health difficulties in the media? (Encourage both sides of the argument to be aired and various opinions shared)
- What impact do you think it has on people going through mental health difficulties, when they see stories like these in the media?
- How does having the royals speaking up about their lived experience of mental health help people?

TIME REQUIRED:

Approximately 40 minutes.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

Articles provided.

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
Jami

The Mental Health Service for our Community

SELF-CARE: YEAR 12 / YEAR 13

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To emphasise the importance of self-care and to think about the different ways to look after one's wellbeing and practise self-care once leaving school.

INSTRUCTIONS

Divide students into four groups.

Give each group a topic

- 1) Academic
- 2) Social
- 3) Relationships
- 4) Maintaining Student Digs

Give each group approximately 10 minutes to discuss their topic – ask them to consider the challenges associated with their topic and the ways in which they can manage this area of their lives once they leave school.

Go around the groups when they are discussing their topics and ask questions such as:

“How do you think learning and life may change when you get to university / leave home?”

After 10 minutes ask the groups to present their discussion back to the rest of the class and explain to the class some of the ways in which they can manage (learning, social, relationships, maintaining student digs) after school.

TIME REQUIRED:

Approximately 40 minutes.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

Pen and paper.

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

Jami

The Mental Health Service for our Community

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Show the group the Jami postcards provided:

- Labels are for Jars not People
- The Cat and the Lion
- Elephant in the Room
- I'm Fine

Ask the group to consider the following questions about the images:

- Do you like the images or dislike them?
- What do you think the postcards are saying to us about mental health?
- Are you surprised by any of the images?

Tell the group these postcards were designed by Jami to raise awareness of mental health in the Jewish community. They have featured in Jewish newspapers and appear on our publicity and leaflets.

Ask the group, if they were going to create a mental health awareness campaign what images would they use?

You might want to use art materials to explore these ideas.

This can also be a great activity for any age group.

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
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The Mental Health Service for our Community

TOP TIPS FOR WELLBEING AT UNIVERSITY

University can be a stressful time. The transition from adolescence through to becoming young independent adults living away from home can create a range of specific issues affecting students' mental health.

A 2016 YouGov survey of Britain's students showed that more than a quarter (27%) report having a mental health issue with a significant proportion of these (47%) finding this is causing them problems with day-to-day tasks. Depression and anxiety are by far the most commonly reported mental illnesses.



BE A FRIEND TO YOURSELF

Set aside "me" time. University life can be fast paced. Make time to relax and take time out. You don't have to go to every possible social activity.



VALUE YOURSELF

Social media means we are constantly comparing ourselves to others. Remember, people's lives are far from the perfect images portrayed on Instagram.



MANAGE YOUR EXPECTATIONS

University life can be great, but it can also be overwhelming and at times even lonely, as we adjust to campus life. Don't forget, asking for help is not a weakness. Take responsibility and get help if you need it.



SLEEP

Make sure you get enough zzzzzz. Adequate sleep is vital for positive wellbeing.



EAT WELL

Even on a limited budget be smart about the food you buy. You could cook with someone else – not only can you pool finances, you are also making connections with others.



BUILD HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Find friends you can talk to, people who are good listeners. And don't forget to stay in touch with friends at home.



BE A FRIEND TO OTHERS

Doing things for other people makes us feel good. The wellbeing benefits of volunteering can be enormous. You can meet new people, connect with others and learn new skills.

Jami Student Wellbeing reps raise awareness and provide mental health education and wellbeing events.

To find out more visit jamiuk.org/campus/

RESOURCES FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL: CHARACTER SCENARIOS

Jake

When Jake gets home from school each day he always watches his favourite TV show. It's the perfect time to watch TV because his older siblings haven't arrived home yet so he can have the television to himself. Today Jake's older brother has caught the earlier bus and barges into the TV room and snatches the remote control. He sits down next to Jake and changes the TV channel. Jake says that he was in the middle of watching something but his brother ignores him and puts the remote control on a high shelf which Jake can't reach.

Annie

Annie has always liked maths class. It's her favourite subject and she really likes her teacher. She sits next to Toby who she gets along well with. Today they are doing division and Toby is struggling with one of the harder sums. He whispers to Annie to help him. When she starts explaining the maths problem to him quietly the teacher looks up and tells her off for talking during quiet work. Annie tries to explain that she was helping Toby but the teacher says 'no talking means no talking'. Annie tries to protest again so the teacher says she will be kept inside for 10 minutes at break time for arguing.

Roger

Roger loves playing football in break time with his friends. They always run straight to the football pitch at lunch to make sure they get to play. The boys are usually on the same team and Roger always plays the same position. Today there was a new boy in the classroom and when Roger heads to the football pitch at break the new boy has joined his team and is playing his position. The team say there is no room for Roger so he can't play with them today.

Jenny

Jenny has two best friends, Lucy and Katie. They've been friends for a few years, since they met in nursery. They do everything together. They sit next to each other in school, they always tell each other everything and they have frequent sleepovers at

each other's house. Over the past week, Jenny has seen Lucy and Katie whispering together. When she joins them though they stop talking. When she asks what they are talking about they say 'it's nothing'.

Samuel

Samuel loves being an older brother to Mikey but sometimes he wishes he would leave him alone. Samuel's mum has said that if he gets his homework done quickly he can play a video game before bed, but only if there is enough time. Samuel is trying to concentrate to get his work done but Mikey keeps asking him to come and play. When Samuel says that he can't Mikey makes a fuss, shouting and screaming that it's 'not fair'. If Mikey doesn't stop distracting Samuel he won't get his work done with enough time to play his game.

Joanna

It's Joanna's birthday and the whole year group is invited to her party at a local leisure centre for trampolining. Rachel is really excited, she loves going on the trampoline in her friends' gardens. When Rachel tells her mum about the party her mum says she can't go. They are visiting Rachel's grandparents that Sunday and family comes first. Rachel explains that everyone is going to the party and she can't be the only one that doesn't go. Her mum says there will be more birthday parties and she can't miss seeing her grandparents.

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

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The Mental Health Service for our Community

RESOURCES FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL / YEAR 7: SELF CARE BINGO

ATE SOMETHING DELICIOUS	DID SOMETHING I'VE BEEN PUTTING OFF	MADE A HEALTHY FOOD CHOICE	SPOKE TO SOMEONE I TRUST	TOOK A NAP
SAID 'NO' TO SOMETHING WHEN I WAS BUSY	PRACTISED MINDFULNESS OR YOGA	PLAYED A GAME	WATCHED A MOVIE OR TV SHOW	MADE A TO DO LIST OR ORGANISED SOMETHING
LISTENED TO MUSIC	MADE A GRATITUDE LIST	PAMPERED MYSELF	VOLUNTEERED MY TIME	GOT CREATIVE WITH ART MATERIALS
TOOK QUIET TIME	SPENT QUALITY TIME WITH SOMEONE I LOVE	TRIED SOMETHING NEW	EXERCISED	HAD A HOT DRINK
READ A BOOK OR MAGAZINE	SPENT TIME OUTSIDE	WENT TO BED EARLY(ISH)	TOOK A RELAXING BATH	CUT MYSELF SOME SLACK

**THE MENTAL HEALTH
AWARENESS SHABBAT**

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

Jami

The Mental Health Service for our Community

RESOURCES FOR YEAR 6: STRENGTH CARDS

BRAVE

STRONG

SPORTY

HELPFUL

THOUGHTFUL

LOVING

FRIENDLY

SOCIABLE

SENSIBLE

CHEERFUL

CLEVER

HAPPY

**THE MENTAL HEALTH
AWARENESS SHABBAT**

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

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RESOURCES FOR YEAR 6: STRENGTH CARDS

FUNNY

GRACEFUL

RESPECTFUL

HONEST

MUSICAL

ARTISTIC

WISE

CREATIVE

GENEROUS

PLAYFUL

INTELLIGENT

CARING

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT



The Mental Health Service for our Community

RESOURCES FOR YEAR 7: GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET

Goals need plans of action. When you set a goal, you often have to set many smaller goals which are the steps to reach the overall goal. This exercise helps you determine the mini goals or steps needed to reach the main goal.

See example below first and then complete the exercise.

RESOURCES FOR YEAR 7: GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET

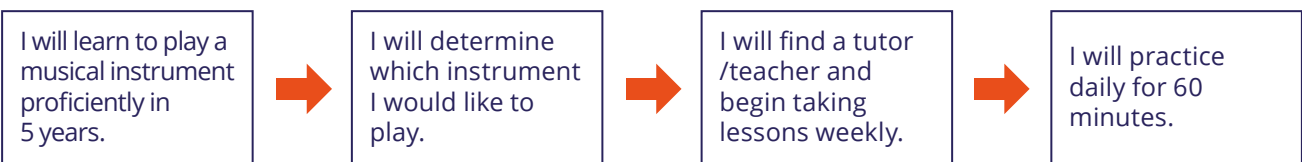
Goals need plans of action. When you set a goal, you often have to set many smaller goals which are the steps to reach the overall goal. This exercise helps you determine the mini goals or steps needed to reach the main goal.

See example below first and then complete the exercise.

RESOURCES FOR YEAR 7: GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET

Goals need plans of action. When you set a goal, you often have to set many smaller goals which are the steps to reach the overall goal. This exercise helps you determine the mini goals or steps needed to reach the main goal.

See example below first and then complete the exercise.



In each box below, state a goal that is important to you and then identify the mini goals/action statements needed.

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

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The Mental Health Service for our Community

RESOURCES FOR YEAR 8: INSTAGRAM STYLE PICTURES



THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

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RESOURCES FOR YEAR 10: EMOJIS



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RESOURCES FOR YEAR 10: TOPICS

- SCHOOL EXAMS
- FRIENDSHIPS
- SOCIAL MEDIA
- WORLD NEWS
- UK POLITICS
- ECONOMY
- FINDING A JOB
- PEER PRESSURE
- BULLYING
- BODY IMAGE

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

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The Mental Health Service for our Community

RESOURCES FOR YEAR 12: JAMI WELLBEING HANDOUT (can be used across the secondary school age range)

- We all have mental health just like we all have physical health.
- Mental health is about the way we feel and think about the world around us and our relationships with friends and family. Our mental health reflects how we manage change, uncertainty and stress.
- Just like our physical health we need to manage our mental health. It does not just look after itself.
- We need to decide as individuals what we do to support our mental health. Some of us find exercise helps us, others enjoy reading or walking the dog! Whatever we do we need to commit to it. See our top tips for more ideas.
- Sometimes our mental health does not feel so great. Just like with our physical health, we can have set backs. Perhaps we are sad about something that has happened or worried about the future or school work. If we feel we can't cope we need to speak to a trusted adult such as a teacher or a parent or carer. If we can access a counsellor at school that can also be helpful.

OUR TOP TIPS FOR SELF CARE:

- **Connect and Socialise** – this could be making new friends or making an effort to connect with our current friends. Socialising can be great for our wellbeing and many of us find it helpful to have someone we trust who we can talk to.
- **Volunteer** – helping others is a great way to boost our own wellbeing. Are there projects in school or your local community which you can become involved in?
- **Exercise** – we aren't all born loving exercise so we might need to think outside the box here. We may enjoy exercise as a solitary activity or we may find exercising with friends can motivate us and make it more enjoyable. Do we prefer to go to the gym and use the machines or go for a run outside? Can we walk somewhere instead of taking transport or attend a dance class?
- **Managing Our Time** – it can be hard to find time to take a break, particularly when we are stressed. One way to get organised is by breaking up our work – whether school work or chores – into manageable chunks. This means separating our work into smaller tasks, taking a short break in between each one.
- **Hobbies** – having a hobby whether creative, sports-related or relaxing is a great way to boost our mental wellbeing. A hobby can be anything that we enjoy doing and can distract us when we're stressed. For example, listening to or writing music, baking, painting, playing a sport or practicing yoga.
- **Good Night's Sleep** – we all need different amounts so find out what works for you. On average a young person requires 8 hours of sleep a night. We should also be aiming to have this sleep at approximately the same time every night so we have a consistent sleep cycle. To maximise the quality of our sleep we should also think about not using our technology at least 1 hour before bed as the high level of blue light suppresses our hormone melatonin which makes us feel tired and helps us sleep.



THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
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The Mental Health Service for our Community

RESOURCES FOR YEAR 12/13: ARTICLE DISCUSSION

PRINCE WILLIAM: NO MORE STIFF UPPER LIP OVER MENTAL HEALTH



*The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge
with their two children*

The Duke of Cambridge has praised the high-profile public figures now speaking openly about their mental health, as he warns no-one should try to keep a stiff upper lip at the expense of their own wellbeing.

The Duke, whose brother Prince Harry has disclosed he has had therapy to help come to terms with their mother's death, said there has for too long been a "taboo" about speaking about such important issues.

Saying the idea that successful, strong people do not suffer their own emotional difficulties is false, he added: "We all do. It's just few of us speak about it."

The Daily Telegraph published an exclusive interview with Prince Harry in which he spoke candidly about the difficulties he endured after shutting down his emotions after the death of his mother, Diana, Princess of Wales.

In it, he told how the Duke had tried to help him, telling him: "This is not right, this is not normal, you need to talk about stuff, it's OK."

In an interview for CALMzine, the charity magazine aimed at tackling mental health in men, the Duke has now said: "Attitudes are changing and this is being helped by high-profile people talking about their experience."

"Men like Professor Green, Freddie Flintoff and Rio Ferdinand have led the way and made films for Heads Together showing the conversations they have had about pressures on their mental health."

"The recent interview by Stormzy about his depression

was incredibly powerful and will help young men feel that it's a sign of strength to talk about and look after your mind as well as your body.

"There may be a time and a place for the 'stiff upper lip', but not at the expense of your health."

On how best to tackle stressful situations, he added: "Sometimes, emotions have to be put to one side to get the job done, but if you have been through an especially traumatic or stressful situation it is essential to talk it through after the event."

"If you don't acknowledge how you feel it will only bottle up, and could reassert itself later as illness."

The interview, released now but conducted before Prince Harry's podcast was aired, also saw the Duke speak of his hopes for the future after noticing a new generation of emotionally articulate children during his work in schools.

"Catherine and I are clear that we want both George and Charlotte to grow up feeling able to talk about their emotions and feelings," he said.

Prince Harry also told the magazine: "We will all go through tough times in our lives, but men especially feel the need to pretend that everything is OK, and that admitting this to their friends will make them appear weak."

"I can assure you this is actually a sign of strength."

The Prince, 32, was roundly praised yesterday after speaking to Bryony Gordon's new podcast Mad World about the "total chaos" he experienced in his 20s as he struggled to process his mother's death.



*Prince Harry and the Telegraph's Bryony
Gordon* CREDIT: ANDREW CROWLEY

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
Jami

The Mental Health Service for our Community

RESOURCES FOR YEAR 12/13: ARTICLE DISCUSSION

Paul Farmer, chief executive of mental health charity Mind, said: "Prince Harry speaking so candidly is a true turning point that shows that as a society we must no longer adopt a 'stiff upper lip' attitude and that we need to talk openly about mental health, something that affects us all directly."

Rosa Monckton, charity campaigner and one of Diana, Princess of Wales' close friends, said: "It is a very courageous act and I hope it will encourage many others to confront their own demons."

"I am sure Diana, who was always brave in the causes she embraced, would have been proud of him."

Julia Samuel, founder patron of Child Bereavement UK and author of Grief Works, who was also a friend to Princess Diana and is godmother to Prince George, said: "I wholeheartedly support the campaign and I'm so grateful for him having the courage to speak out."

"To open up and model that it's very important to speak about grief helps change and move the dial in our understanding about grieving, because it's still a taboo."

everyone would have a Prince William in their life to gently keep nudging them towards seeking help; but a professional will have the skills to guide the grieving process so that we may - rather than ever 'get over' a loss - begin to 'grow around' it, taking our memories of, and connection to, the person we have lost with us through life.

"As a charity that supports children and young people's mental health in schools, we are immensely grateful to Prince Harry for his willingness to share his own experience of the impact of the loss of his mother, and to talk so openly about how he has sought help to process his grief."

Furness, Hannah, 2017, "Prince William: No more stiff upper lip over mental health", telegraph.co.uk

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/04/17/prince-william-mental-health-attitudes-changing-thanks-high/> (Accessed on 13.08.2018)



The three young Royals will join runners at the London Marathon with their Heads Together headbands this weekend

Dr Fiona Pienaar, from children's mental health charity Place2Be, said: "Prince Harry's willingness to talk so intimately about the impact of the loss of his mother 20 years ago, as well as how he has processed his grief, is a gift from the young royal."

"Friends and family are vitally important when we experience grief and loss, and we would hope that

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RESOURCES FOR YEAR 12/13: ARTICLE DISCUSSION

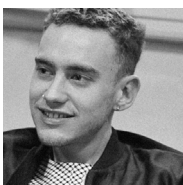
CELEBRITIES SPEAK OUT ABOUT THE SHAME AND STIGMA SURROUNDING MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

On last week's episode of The Surgery with Gemma and Dr Radha our experts discussed feelings of shame surrounding mental health, why they happen and how everyone can help stop them.

Even celebrities aren't immune to these feelings, but thankfully they're opening up to try and stop the stigma of mental health issues, whether that be depression, anxiety, eating disorders or any number of other afflictions.

Here are just a few of the famous faces who are getting vocal about shame - and why it shouldn't be a thing.

OLLY ALEXANDER



Appearing on The Surgery back in January, Years & Years' Ollie Alexander spoke out about feeling like he couldn't tell anyone about his bulimia and self-harming. "All throughout school I really struggled with mental health problems, loads of different things, and I never told anyone," he said. "Never told my mum. And I think, looking back, it began to eat away at me. I wish I had talked sooner."

Now, Ollie knows the importance of speaking up, after seeking help from a therapist. "Today and for the rest of my life I think I'll be using the tools I've learnt from medical professionals, from what I've learnt from therapy, from what I've learnt from friends and talking about things."

KRISTEN BELL



In an interview with The Off Camera Show, Veronica Mars star Kristen spoke out about her anxiety and depression, and how nobody should feel shame over taking medication to control their mental health.

"I got on a prescription when I was really young and I still take it today and I have no shame in that because my Mom had said to me, 'If you start to feel this way, talk to your doctor, talk to a psychologist, see how you want to help yourself,'" she said.

"If you do decide to go on a prescription to help yourself, understand that the world wants to shame you for that, but in the medical community, you would never deny a diabetic his insulin."

DWAYNE 'THE ROCK' JOHNSON

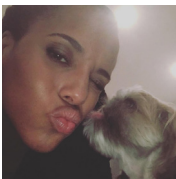


Appearing on an episode of Oprah's Master Class, Dwayne - who suffered from depression in his early 20s - emphasised the importance of not hiding or being ashamed of mental health issues.

"I found that, with depression, one of the most important things you could realise is that you're not alone," he said. "You're not the first to go through it; you're not going to be the last to go through it... I wish I had someone at that time who could just pull me aside and [say], 'Hey, it's gonna be okay. It'll be okay.' So I wish I knew that."

RESOURCES FOR YEAR 12/13: ARTICLE DISCUSSION

KERRY WASHINGTON



Speaking to Essence magazine in 2009, the Scandal star talked about her unhealthy relationship with food and compulsive exercising.

"I used food as a way to cope - it was my best friend," she said. "I'd eat anything and everything, sometimes until I passed out."

"But then, because I had this personality that was driven toward perfectionism, I would tell people I was at the library, but instead go to the gym and exercise for hours and hours and hours. Keeping my behaviour a secret was painful and isolating. There was a lot of guilt and a lot of shame."

Kerry went to therapy, after being approached by her dance teacher about her eating disorder, and continues to see a therapist – as well as a nutritionist – to help her communicate her feelings instead of using food as a crutch.

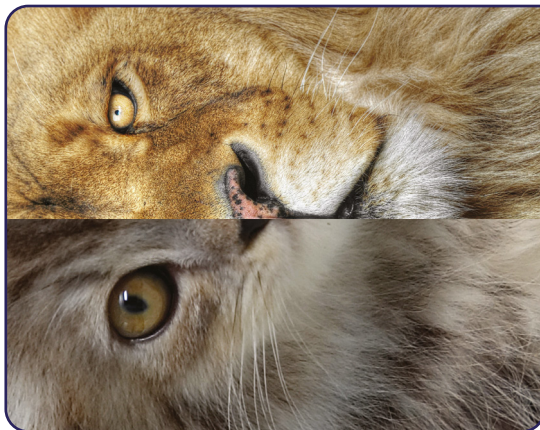
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RESOURCES FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: POSTCARDS



LABELS ARE FOR JARS. NOT PEOPLE.



I'm fine!

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YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

We all have mental health and it is just as important as our physical health. Starting a conversation about mental health is a really important way to challenge the stigma and to get people thinking and talking about their perceptions of mental health and mental illness.

SUGGESTED CONVERSATION STARTERS

- What do you think the main concerns are facing young professionals today in relation to their wellbeing?
- How supported did you feel moving from High School to University and from University into the workplace?
- How do you think employers can better look after the mental wellbeing of their employees?
- How do you practice self-care and de-stress?
- Do you feel that social media is detrimental to your mental health or that it can have a positive impact on your wellbeing?
- What role does having a healthy lifestyle play in the prevention of mental health problems in young people?

MYTH BUSTER QUIZ

It is useful to understand the real facts about mental health and mental illness as there is a lot of misinformation and myths surrounding the topic.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Choose one person to read out the facts or myths from the "Quizmaster sheet" in the Resources section. Hand out the "Fact or Myth?" sheet.

Discuss which you believe are facts or myths and why.

The quizmaster will then announce the answers and provide further information.

RESOURCES REQUIRED

Quizmaster Sheet, Fact or Myth? Sheet.

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RESOURCES FOR MYTH BUSTER QUIZ: FACT OR MYTH?

1. PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILL
HEALTH ARE VIOLENT

2. ANYONE CAN DEVELOP
MENTAL ILL HEALTH

3. PEOPLE CAN RECOVER
FROM MENTAL ILL HEALTH

4. I CAN'T DO ANYTHING TO
HELP MY FRIEND OR FAMILY
MEMBER WITH THEIR
MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM

5. PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILL
HEALTH CANNOT HOLD
DOWN A JOB

6. BAD PARENTING CAUSES
MENTAL ILL HEALTH

7. MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS
PROMPT THOUSANDS
OF PEOPLE TO TAKE THEIR
OWN LIVES

8. 1 IN 8 FIVE TO NINETEEN
YEAR OLDS WILL
EXPERIENCE A MENTAL
HEALTH PROBLEM

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RESOURCES FOR MYTH BUSTER QUIZ: QUIZMASTER SHEET / ANSWERS

1. MYTH

People with mental health problems are more likely to be the victim of violence than the perpetrator.

2. FACT

There is no immunity to mental ill health. Mental ill health is more common and impactful than other health conditions.

3. FACT

Mental health recovery doesn't always refer to the process of complete recovery in the way we may recover from a physical health problem. Personal recovery means that it is possible for someone to regain a meaningful life despite mental ill health.

4. MYTH

Showing support to your friend or family member is a great help. Visiting, phoning and checking in with someone can make a real difference to their recovery.

5. MYTH

Productivity is maximised when there is a good match between the employee's needs and their working conditions. Many successful business people are living with mental ill health.

6. MYTH

No one factor can cause mental ill health. Mental illnesses are complicated conditions that can arise from a combination of genetics, biology, environment and life experiences.

7. FACT

In 2018 there were over 6,000 suicides registered in the UK and it's the biggest killer of men up to the age of 49. Men account for three-quarters of the total figure.

8. FACT

This is roughly 3 children in every classroom. Parental help, professional help and talking things through can support children with their recovery.

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SERMON / LIBERAL

By Rabbi Monique Mayer, Bristol & West Progressive Jewish Congregation.

Three final, devastating plagues laid waste to the land of Egypt: locusts, darkness, and the slaying of the firstborn. The eighth plague of locusts stripped the land of all remaining crops, eating up all the grasses and fruit while the tenth plague stripped the Egyptians of their children. But what of the plague of darkness? If we understand the plagues to go up in level of intensity, what could make darkness worse than locusts and exceeded in severity solely by the slaying of the first born?

Vayeit Moshe et yado al hashamayim. Vay'hi choshekh-afeilah b'chol erets mitzrayim shloshet yamim. Lo ra'u ish et achiv, v'lo kamu ish mitachtav shloshet yamim.

"And Moses held his hand toward the sky and thick darkness descended upon all the land of Egypt for three days. People could not see one another, and for three days no one could get up from where he was...." (Exod 10:22-23)

How is it that the ninth plague was so debilitating that people were prevented not only from seeing each other but from moving, from getting up from where they were sitting? After all, in the dark, we may not be able to see what is in front of us or behind us, but we can still rely on our senses of smell, hearing, and touch to detect and navigate what is around us. We can move and interact. We can still get up.

The text itself offers insight. The latter word in the Hebrew translated as "thick darkness"—*afeilah*—can also be understood as "gloomy"—in other words, a gloomy darkness descended upon the land. Adding this shade of meaning tells us that the darkness was not physical but psychological. After the first eight plagues, emotionally battered by forces beyond their control, the Egyptians were plunged into deep, deep desolation, unable to lift themselves and get on with living. They didn't hear or see anyone around them. They couldn't reach out to hold anyone. No one was there to reach out to them. They sat in their places for three days, in suffering and isolation.

Mental illness also isolates the people experiencing it, interfering with their ability to process sensory information and function in a healthy way in daily life and in their relationships with others. Everyday tasks become difficult, initiating conversations with friends, emotionally exhausting. It is the rare individual who can navigate out of the darkness of suffering on their own. Most who are experiencing mental health issues need assistance from others. And although few of us are professionally trained to handle deep-seated issues, we all can do one simple thing to support people whom we see and know are in distress: listen.

Listening is the most powerful tool we have to create a bridge between darkness and light. In the Jewish ethical tradition of *Mussar*, *Shmiat HaOzen*—attentive listening—is an important character trait. *Shmiat HaOzen* requires ignoring distractions and focus exclusively on the other person. *Shmiat HaOzen* teaches us to listen out for what is not being said and to ask ourselves, "What is the other person's hope or fear behind what they are saying? Is there more to this situation than what this person is expressing?"

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By practicing *Shmiat HaOzen*, we support those who are suffering by showing them how much we value them. We don't try to fix them or solve their problems. We don't give unsolicited advice (and even then, we practice restraint). And, we don't push them to do something they're not ready to do. We listen with empathy, sitting with this wounded soul in their despair to be fully present with them. By practicing *Shmiat HaOzen*, being with someone in their pain, we can make it safe for the person to explore options and support them in making good choices to move themselves in a positive, healing direction.

On this Mental Health Awareness Shabbat and onward, let us become good practitioners of *Shmiat HaOzen*, reaching out to those who are suffering, being with them in their pain, and supporting them as they journey from darkness to light.



THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

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The Mental Health Service for our Community

SERMON / MASORTI

By Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg , Senior Rabbi of Masorti Judaism

Rebbe Nachman of Breslav, the great teacher and story-teller to whose grave in Uman thousands make the pilgrimage every New Year, used to say: '*Asur Lehitya'esh* – It is forbidden to despair.' To this was added, by him or by subsequent folklore, the rhyme: '*Rak Lismoach Yesh* – Only and always be happy'.

It won't come as a surprise to learn that he suffered periodically from severe mental anxiety.

For several years the Shabbat on which the account of the ninth of the Ten Plagues, the plague of darkness, is read has been chosen by Jami, the mental health service for the Jewish community in the UK, as The Mental Health Awareness Shabbat, because 'the description of the plague of darkness has particular resonance with mental illness.'

The Torah refers to this bleak plague as *choshech afelah*, darkness both physical and spiritual. It describes a night so thick that, like the London smog of 1952 which finally led to the Clean Air Act, 'nobody could see another person or get up from his place for three days.' (Exodus 10:23) It must have been terrifying.

Even more frightening is the emotional reality the description evokes. The Torah's exact words are *Lo kamu ish tachtav*: literally, 'no one could raise himself up from his low place'. We have them inside us, such spaces. They are located in our personal Egypt, our inner mitsrayim, or 'narrow spaces' where we feel ourselves helplessly and irredeemably trapped. If we've been spared ever visiting those grim internal realms we're blessed. I know this from listening to other people and from those dreadful hours which few of us never experience.

One descends inside oneself to places where one's terrors and persecutions become one's dominant reality; down to the basement of the soul, where the words above the entrance read like the sign over the portal to Dante's hell: 'Abandon hope all you who enter here'. There one may sit, beset by the inconceivability of any escape, mentally locked in, staring at the grey-brown walls, entertaining in the bleakest hours the thought that maybe there is only one way out...one feels utterly, unreachably alone: as the Torah says, 'no one could see his brother'...

Rebbe Yehudah Aryeh-Leib of Ger, known after his work as the *Sefat Emet*, understands this inability to see or to be or feel seen, the fact that no one notices each other, as the very cause and essence of the plague:

Since "no one could see his brother" or realise what those around him lacked, since no one could be bothered to be concerned about other peoples' needs, the result was that "no one could move from his place": that is, the people were stuck in the same low state and couldn't get themselves out of it.

It's unarguable that what brings light and hope to any society is the capacity to see and respond to one another's needs and troubles, whether the issue is poverty, or physical or mental illness.

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But considered from inside depression and mental anguish, the words of the *Sefat Emet* echo differently; they carry a further depth of meaning.

There may be people one loves in the next room; they may even be in the same room, talking to one, with every good intention of trying to help. But some impenetrable membrane separates them off. They belong to another universe. One knows they exist and that their care is real. They may even be one's partner, one's children. But they and their love exist along coordinates which have no point of intersection with one's own state of mind. And that augments the torment; this very thought that one has failed those who love one, who are desperately trying to draw near; that at this very moment one may be failing them terribly.

I've heard people say: 'I was there. I loved him and kept telling him I loved him. Wasn't my love good enough?' But it's not the case that this love is insufficient; it's that in the cruellest hours it can't reach and breach across that impermeable membrane.

The Torah continues: 'But the Children of Israel had light in their dwellings'. The plain meaning of the verse is that their homes were untouched by the plague of darkness. As G-d had promised earlier, the plagues only affected the intended target group. But the *Or Hachayim* reads the words differently; he takes 'their' to refer not to the Israelites own homes but to the houses of the Egyptians. Whenever Israelites entered the home of an Egyptian, they brought light with them into the benighted houses of their neighbours, highlighting the difference between the two nations.

This seems singularly cruel. But it reflects what people struggling with painful difficulties sometimes say: everyone else appears just fine; they don't seem to have troubles; their children are doing brilliantly; they haven't lost their jobs; their marriages aren't in trouble; their nights aren't tormented with worry; they don't suffer mental tortures.

It's fatuous to contradict them, simply to tell them it's not true, that everyone has better days and bad days, that those people are few and far between who don't carry fears and anxieties of their own. In the world of emotional darkness, it can feel as if everyone else is in the sunlight and when they have the insensitivity to trespass into one's personal space one can't avoid noticing their halo.

But that is no reason to forsake people, to keep one's distance and abandon them in their pain. '*Kumu, kumu* – get up, rise up,' one says to a bereaved person at the end of the shivah, the seven days of mourning, offering one's hand to raise them out of the traditional low chair. Similarly, we must hope that the hand stretched out to us in our hours of darkness, the hands we hold out to others, like the heartfelt intention behind our inadequate words, will reach and make contact, and that we will manage to help each other up.

Hopefully, we are able to return with relief from dark places back into the daylight. Just as God, after hovering over the void where 'darkness covered the deep' calls out 'Let there be light', so, hopefully, the spirit of God inside us will once again sing in appreciation of the wonder of light.

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We don't know the inner reality of other people's lives. We can never understand in full the brightness of their light or the depth of their darkness. But we do know that we can and must try to be aware of one another, younger or older; that we can and should show solidarity to each other by opening the doors of our community, and, if we are able, our homes; that we can and should acknowledge the pain which long hours of darkness entails, and help each other find support and understanding. Depression and mental illness can make not just those directly affected but everyone around them feel bewildered and helpless. But often just being there, with patience and thoughtfulness, may make more difference than we can imagine.

We must not lose faith that one day we will once again together bless the wonder of life and light.



THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

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SERMON / REFORM

By Rabbi Miriam Berger, Finchley Reform Synagogue.

People never tell me they think they might come off their insulin because, although they are diabetic, they are going to try and cope without. People never say, "We hadn't wanted to tell you that our child had a broken leg, so we were just encouraging them to keep living a normal life in the hope no one would notice and they would grow out of it".

So why, in 2020, when government statistics tell us that one in four adults have struggled with a mental health condition, do we imagine that mental illness is something that will just go away? How can we be content to say that we will wake up feeling stronger tomorrow? Or that our children will grow out of it? Or that we need to keep our partners out of the public domain because they might be embarrassing?

Whether numbers are rising or we are just getting better at diagnosing people, whether the pace of life and social media is to blame or we are now labelling conditions we never previously had language for, we cannot harden our heart to it, learn to ignore it, or 'just live with it'. We have to acknowledge it in ourselves and in others, in order to get the help we need.

In this and last week's Torah portion, we see Pharaoh's heart being hardened to the plagues. Each time he thinks one will break him and he will let the Israelites go:

כִּזְ וַיִּחְזַק יְהוָה, אֶת-לֵב פַּרְעֹה; וְלֹא אָבָה, לְשַׁלְּחָם.

27 God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go.

During the other plagues one could do little to avoid it but for the plague of darkness we must surely wonder why the Egyptians didn't light candles to bring artificial light if there was no natural light. The commentary in the Etz Hayim chumash explains that "perhaps it was a psychological darkness, a deep depression. The word melancholy comes from a Greek word meaning "dark mood". People suffering from depression often lack the energy to move about or to be concerned with anyone other than themselves, precisely as the Torah describes the Egyptians. Perhaps the Egyptians were depressed by the series of calamities that had struck them or by the realisation of how much their own comfort depended on the enslavement of others." The plagues had become an accepted part of society. They were learning to live with such adversity, we are not told that the darkness came to an end because Pharaoh's heart is hardened, his resolve is to make do with the plague rather than battle with the huge systemic change which would have been needed to adapt the way society works, changing his reliance on slave labour, his way of life, and the structure of his society with its underclass.

I hate the theology of this episode of Torah, with a God that sends plagues as punishments. It isn't the behaviour of an all-loving God. However, I feel the plagues can act as a powerful back drop, reminding us, should we have the gift of five minutes of respite to need the reminder, that the world is hard and that we live feeling like we are constantly being tested, but that we cannot turn a blind eye, allow it to continue, ignore it, harden our heart to it and keep going as the Egyptians did. Rather, we have to remember the promises life once held, what we thought we could achieve, where we came from and

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

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where we were heading, and work together as a community to overcome the challenges we are facing.

As I walked out of my office after a late night, I came down the stairs to the shul foyer where a guest from our winter shelter had chosen to sleep. Though a little draughty, he had decided it was more private than to be with the other guests in the main hall. As I made my way out of the shul to my home and family I bid him a cheery “goodnight” and “sleep well”, and gave a little wave as the door slammed shut.

Then I stopped in the car park, frozen with disbelief at my own words. Surely this can never feel normal? Surely I cannot let this feel ok? There shouldn't have to be 15 people asleep in the shul, let alone one in the foyer. We cannot get used to this. We have to campaign for proper solutions. That patting ourselves on the back for having a winter shelter, rather than being angered by the lunacy of a developed country in the 21st century having people for whom this is their only option in life, is the reality of what it means to harden our hearts.

Yet I fear our hearts are being hardened to so many realities, not least to those that concern the voices of the quietest, or the voices that, because of a perceived stigma, have been silenced. Perhaps that's why Jami have given us this Shabbat. Not simply so the words “mental health” are spoken from the bimah, but because they are all too aware of the heart hardening which has occurred in the world of mental illness.

They know that we cannot simply accept the presence of mental illness as a common reality in our lives. Our hearts are hardened, meaning that we accept the fact that CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) is so overstretched that kids are left on waiting lists. Meanwhile, the symptoms that are blighting their lives and stopping them living to their own potential only get worse. Our hearts are hardened, meaning we accept the prescription for anti-depressants without insisting it comes with talking therapies too – because there simply aren't the practitioners or the funding available. Our hearts are hardened, meaning we watch people struggling to care for their partners while both become more and more isolated, as the dementia of one makes leaving the house for both of them, let alone socialising, so difficult.

The list is endless. We are experiencing issues around mental health and all its challenges like we are the plague of cancer, but we are not insisting that the same structures, diagnostics, treatments and research exist. We are still in the dark over mental health.

Let's be part of shining that light, by demanding change, whilst supporting and strengthening each other.

לִי יִקָּם פְּרָעָה לַיְלָה, הוּא וְכָל-עַבְדָּיו וְכָל-מִצְרַיִם, וְתֵהִי צָעָקָה גְדֹלָה, בְּמִצְרַיִם: כִּי-אֵין בֵּית, אֲשֶׁר אֵין-נָשָׁם מֵת

30 And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

It takes Pharaoh to lose his own son, for every Egyptian household to experience the loss of a child, before they stop turning a blind eye, hardening their hearts and accepting the plague as a way of maintaining the status quo. Mental illness has already cost society at large and our own community too many of our sons and daughters. We need to recognise that our own hearts have become hardened to the reality that exists. We need to insist that more money is spent, more resources made available, more treatment given; that no taboo silences us, but rather, that we all speak out before any more lives are lost.

THE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SHABBAT

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SERMON / UNITED

United Sermon by Rabbi Zvi Portnoy, Associate Rabbi of Hendon United Synagogue.

Two Jews were standing and talking on a Moscow street. One of them did not have official papers permitting him to be in Moscow at the time. When a police officer approached them to verify their documents, the Jew with the documents told his friend not to worry and then proceeded to run from the officer. The officer began to chase him. When he finally caught up, the officer asked him to show his documents, which he did. The officer asked him, "Why did you run away from me when you have the right documents?" "My doctor told me to run one mile each day," responded the Jew. "But why didn't you stop when you saw me running after you," asked the officer. "I thought your doctor told you the same," said the Jew.

The fifty-two chapters of the biblical book of Jeremiah from which today's Haftorah are taken are some of the most poignant and heart-wrenching in the entire Hebrew Bible, depicting the sunset of the Jewish people in their homeland and the destruction of the First Temple and Jerusalem in the hands of Babylonia in the year 586 BCE.

Jeremiah witnessed first-hand, the massacre of hundreds of thousands of Jews and the exiling of his nation, documented by the prophet in the book of Jeremiah and in his second book, Eicha, Lamentations, which we read on the 9th of Av. This was the first time in history when the Jewish people lost their independence and were expelled from their Land. At the time, it seemed this was the end. Gloom and despair yet, what is unique about Jeremiah is that, unlike many other prophets and leaders, we know much about his personal emotions and experiences. The two biblical books authored, Jeremiah and Lamentations, dedicate significant space to his own inner turmoil. What we discover is how deeply Jeremiah suffered. He experienced constant rejection by the people he loved and reached out to. He lived alone, he was poor, ridiculed, and mocked. Jeremiah was beaten, tortured, and escaped death at a hairbreadth. The king and priests even placed him in a cistern of quicksand, to die a slow, agonising death. As a result, the prophet wrestled with great loneliness, feelings of defeat, and profound despair. In his own words:

"O Lord, You enticed me, and I was enticed; You overpowered me and prevailed. I have become a laughing-stock; everyone mocks me... Cursed be the day I was born! May the day my mother bore me not be blessed! Cursed be the man who brought my father the news, made him very glad, saying, 'A child is born to you—a son!'... Why was I not killed in the womb? My mother should have been my grave? I should have remained eternally pregnant inside of her! Why did I ever come out of the womb to see trouble and sorrow and to end my days in shame?"

How did Jeremiah—one of the greatest prophets in Jewish history—manage to handle this sense of despair and isolation? How did he deal with the disappointment, abandonment, and agony? The opening chapter of the book of Jeremiah depicting the moving first encounter between the prophet Jeremiah and G-d, provides an awe inspiring answer.

"And the word of G-d was upon me (Jeremiah), saying: 'When I had not yet formed you in the belly, I already recognized you; and when you had not yet come forth from the womb, I sanctified you; a

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prophet to the nations I have made you.' "And I said, 'Aha! My Lord, G-d, behold! - I know not how to speak, for I am but a child. G-d said to me, 'Do not say 'I am but a child,' rather to wherever I send you shall you go, and whatever I command you shall you speak. Fear not before them, for I am with you... See I have appointed you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms, to uproot and to smash and to destroy and to raze; to build and to plant..."

The message is simple and profound. Yes, Jeremiah, you will face much inner and outer turmoil. But know this: Your infinite Divine power is always more potent than all the darkness inside of you, and all around you. I recognised you, I conceived you, I chose you, I loved you. I knew your strengths, your light, your courage, your wisdom, your holiness—before you were born, and before you were even formed. Your soul is a piece of mine. Before you faced any darkness, I knew how much infinite light you possess, as your light if part of Mine. The greatest and deepest fear and sense of despair that takes us over is because we allow the inner voices of gloom, depression and melancholy to overtake us to our core. They become our life. They redefine us, we forget the truth: I may be dealing with some scary thoughts inside of me; I may be confronting some nasty outer forces, but my Divine soul, my sacred core, precedes all else. At my core I am Divine. And it is embedded in my essence, and thus I can prevail over all else. This is what saves Jeremiah—and it can help us all too. Throughout all of his turmoil, he never doubts for a moment that G-d is with him, G-d has sent Him, and as dark as the situation is, He contains all the resources needed to bring light into the situation. He is not a victim; he was sent into this very space. Even in silence Jeremiah's greatest resource was the unwavering confidence that even in the silence G-d is present and working through him.

In May 1940, Adolf Hitler and his Nazi war machine were sweeping across the European continent. The future of the free world hung in the balance. In its darkest hour, as Great Britain was about to be attacked by Germany, the English chose Winston Churchill (1874-1965) as its Prime Minister. His weapons were his pen, his voice and his words. "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat," he told the House of Commons in his first speech as Prime Minister. Things quickly turned from bad to worse. France collapsed, Belgium surrendered, and a quarter of a million British soldiers barely managed to escape from Dunkirk.

Even as the war news moved from dangerous to desperate to disastrous, Churchill never wavered. In speech after speech, he infused the British with the spirit to fight on against Hitler's monstrous tyranny. He is the man who saved the free world—and we owe him an unparalleled debt of gratitude. Yet, throughout much of his life, Churchill was prone to periods of acute depression, which he called "the black dog." He told his daughter, "I have achieved a great deal to achieve nothing in the end." He told a friend that "he prays every day for death." He told his doctor, Lord Moran, that he kept himself from standing close to a train platform or overlooking the side of a ship because he might be tempted to take his own life.

Why are the greatest people often haunted by a sense of failure and deep melancholy? Noted examples are Churchill, Abraham Lincoln, Beethoven, and Tolstoy. Perhaps, it is their depth that makes them far more sensitive to all that is going on inside of them and around them. They feel deeply what other people overlook. Perhaps, all greatness is counterbalanced by the ability to descend into the abyss, as the Talmud puts it, "whoever is greater than his friend, his destructive inclination is also greater." Perhaps, the greater you are, the more you realise what can and must be achieved and you feel how inadequate your performance is. But it is not only the greats. Many of us

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struggle often with profound feelings of despair, depression, doubt, and despondency. Some of us know full well the unbearable agony of mental illness and clinical depression—something that few grasp, unless they experience it or are educated about it. But even so many of us who are generally healthy, must deal with moments of gloom and dejection.

G-d's message to Jeremiah is a message to every soul. "When I had not yet formed you in the belly, I already recognized you." Let not your truest identity shrink in insecurity in the face of adversity. Your Divine essence is the most innate part of your existence and it is infinitely powerful, beautiful, wholesome and sacred. Before you were even formed in the belly, "I recognised you." You are Mine. I have chosen you; you were conceived in my mind in love. You are a piece of G-d, a fragment of infinity, a Divine spark. G-d continues: "And when you had not yet come forth from the womb, I sanctified you."

G-d says to the Jeremiah in each of us: Your soul must remember how powerful it is. You are a child of G-d. Your playing small does not serve the world. We are all meant to shine. We were born to make manifest the glory of G-d that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others. Churchill's metaphor of the Black Dog is powerful. The dog may follow you, the dog may bark, the dog may crawl into bed with you. But the dog is not you. Your depression, your thoughts of despair, are not you. You are Divine. Never ever doubt that G-d has conceived you in love, put you here, and has given you all the resources to fulfil your amazing mission. You are His messenger, and as such, contain infinite power and strength. Even as you confront all types of obstacles, inside or outside, you were sent into that space, given all the tools needed to serve as G-d's prophet wherever you are and in whatever circumstances you find yourself. Be not afraid of greatness. And if, at times, you feel like running away, you should not feel bad about it. So did the greatest. To feel fear is fine. To give way to it, is not. For G-d has faith in us even if, at times, even the best lack faith in themselves.

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YOGA, PILATES, MINDFULNESS AND MENTAL HEALTH

The modern world is fast paced and highly stressful. Many people are unable to switch off, resulting in anxiety which can exhaust us and keep us awake at night.

Pilates and Yoga are great forms of exercise which, when practiced regularly, can counteract stress and rebalance mind and body. The relaxed and steady progress of either of these classes is the direct antithesis to our fast paced lives and allows us to focus on ourselves, focusing on movement in the moment rather than worrying about the day, the past or the future, the original Mindfulness. This removes us from, even temporarily, what is happening or may be happening in our lives.

Precision is required in the practice of both Yoga and Pilates and gaining this requires a focus which can only be achieved by mental control.

Stress and anxiety both affect the brain and further impact on the body through our nerve endings and central nervous system. Yoga and Pilates routines can alleviate symptoms and be tailored to offer us a chance to restore, rebalance, relax, realign and reboot our minds and bodies. It's almost like recharging our bodies as we do with our electronic devices!

This exercise also helps with sleeping better and managing daily lives.

Yoga and Pilates also focus on specific breathing techniques. These can be used for relaxation and to aid meditation and holistic wellbeing. Regular practice incorporated into our schedule can be used for coping mechanisms for potentially stressful situations.

When anxiety hits, stress chemicals flood the body and cause physical symptoms which can cause further anxiety and panic. Using the relaxation and breathing techniques, body control and mindfulness learnt in Yoga and Pilates can also help manage depression and improve general health.

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BODY SCANNING RELAXATION AND BREATH

- Sit in a comfortable, upright posture and remove shoes if you wish
- Let yourself settle, wiggle your bottom to find your sitting bone, drop your shoulders, be aware of your spine, try to find a lifted yet relaxed and easy position for your back
- Breathe naturally
- Calm your mind and notice your body sensations, feel the weight of your body in your seat and the contact of your feet on the ground
- Turn your attention inwards and lower your gaze (eyes can be open or closed) as you breath naturally through your nose feel open to the energy within and around you, especially above your head
- As you INHALE bring your focus down to the area between and behind your eyebrows and draw the energy forward to the '3rd' eye
- Press your tongue against the roof of your mouth behind your front teeth - now let the energy sink down to your throat and on to your heart
- Breathe in a little deeper here
- Now move that inhaled breath further down your body to just below your navel, allow your breath to naturally become subtler
- When you feel the energy is stable in your navel area, use your mind to take you down to your lower body and to the base of your spine
- Now complete this body scanning by EXHALING and travelling up the back of your body, vertebrae by vertebrae to where the ribs meet the spine and then up to the back of your head, the top of your head and even above your head
- Begin another cycle
- Breathe IN as the energy moves DOWN the front of the body, breathe OUT as the energy moves UP the back of the body
- REPEAT AS MANY TIMES AS COMFORTABLE

Taking a class can help with social anxieties and improve confidence too.

Speak to Tracy Jacobs, Jami's Fitness Coordinator for more information and advice at Tracy.jacobs@jamiuk.org



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USEFUL RESOURCES LIST



Campaign Against Living Miserably

Telephone: 0808 802 5858

www.thecalmzone.net

What they offer:

Support to men in the UK of any age who are down or in crisis and need to talk or find information and support.

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Telephone: 020 8458 2223

www.jamiuk.org

What they offer:

Practical and emotional support for everyone affected by a mental health problem, the person with the diagnosis, friend, relative or employer.

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Jewish Helpline

Telephone: 0800 652 9249

www.jewishhelpline.org

What they offer:

Helpline support from trained volunteers for those who are feeling lonely, anxious, depressed or suicidal.



Jewish Marriage Council

SENSITIVE SUPPORT FOR JEWISH PEOPLE

Jewish Marriage Council

Telephone: 020 8203 6311

www.jmc-uk.org

What they offer:

Support for Jewish individuals, couples and families to include a counselling service, various advice services, courses, workshops and support groups.

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J E W I S H W O M E N ' S A I D

Jewish Women's Aid

Telephone:

Domestic Abuse helpline 0808 801 0500

Sexual Violence support line 0808 801 0656

www.jwa.org.uk

What they offer:

Support for Jewish women and children affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence.



Nightline Association

www.nightline.ac.uk

What they offer:

A confidential student listening service which is open at night and run by students for students.

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Papyrus

Telephone: 0800 068 4141 (HOPELINEUK)

www.papyrus-uk.org

What they offer:

Confidential support and advice to young people struggling with thoughts of suicide and anyone worried about a young person through their helpline, HOPELINEUK.



Raphael

Telephone: 0800 234 6236

www.raphaeljewishcounselling.org

What they offer:

A well-established counselling service at the forefront of its field, whose broad-based services are available to individuals and couples in London, the Home Counties and the Redbridge area.

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relate
the relationship people

Relate

Telephone: 0300 003 0396

www.relate.org.uk

What they offer:

Relationship Counselling for individuals, couples and families.

SAMARITANS

Samaritans

Telephone: 116 123

www.samaritans.org

What they offer:

A helpline where you can talk to them any time you like, in your own way, and off the record, about whatever is getting to you.

For information with regard to further resources available, please go to

<https://jamiuk.org/get-support/resources/> or

<https://jamiuk.org/campus/resources/> for Campus help and resources

