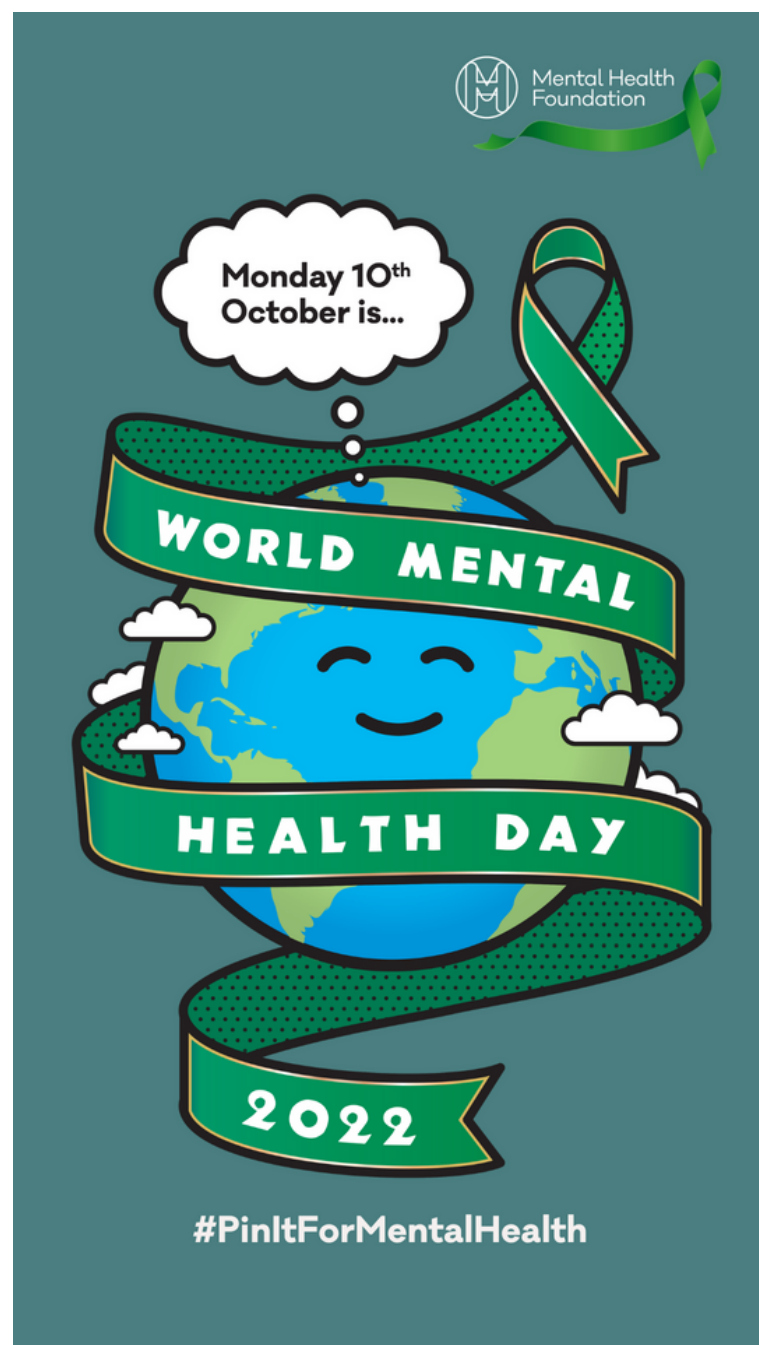


On 10th October each year the World Mental Health Organisation recognises World Mental Health Day in order to make mental health & wellbeing for all a global priority.

They strive to ensure that mental health is treated on a par with physical health. They believe we need to do as much as possible to prevent mental ill-health as individuals and as a society. They will continue to call on national and local government to prioritise reducing the risks and creating conditions needed for people to thrive.

World Mental Health Day is also a chance to talk about mental health, how to look after it, and how important it is to talk about things and get help if you are struggling.



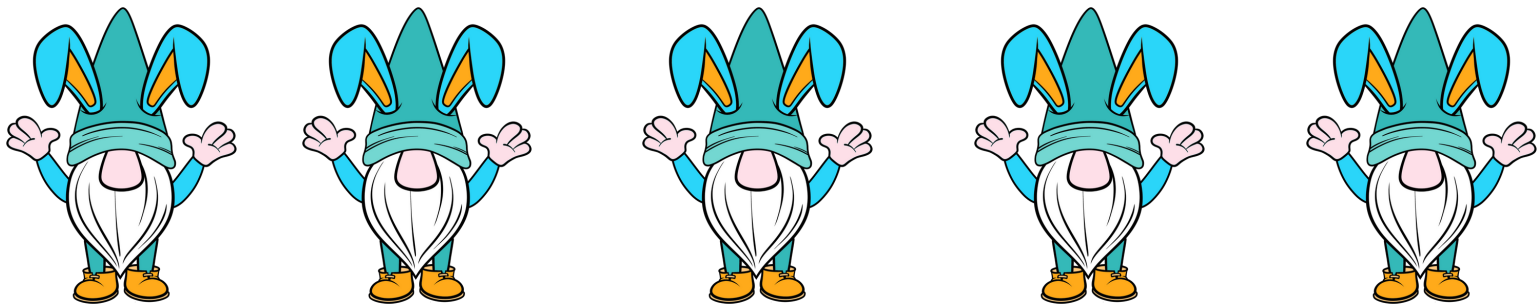
For more info visit the Mental Health Foundation website at: [World Mental Health Day | Mental Health Foundation](#)

Spotlight on - Discovery College, Wakefield

I have experienced how mental health can affect young people both personally and through friends and I think it is important that young people have a safe place where they can discuss their worries, learn new skills and make friends with others who may be going through similar experiences. The Discovery College is the perfect environment for this.

The Discovery College is open to those aged 16 – 25. The courses are free so anyone can join without worrying about costs. Hopefully, this makes it more accessible and will encourage more young people to begin their recovery journey.

As a young person myself, I have been involved in the decision making on various aspects of college life and, while being on the editorial panel I have given feedback on course plans such as the anxiety and depression courses. I am also facilitating a craft workshop myself making Christmas gnomes in November and December.



Being a part of something that I believe will be an important part of the mental health community is a real honour and I enjoy working alongside kind and caring people who hope for the same end results I do.

Becca, Discovery College Volunteer

*For more info visit: About Us - Wakefield Recovery and Wellbeing College
(wakefieldrecoverycollege.nhs.uk)*

My journey to better mental health

To mark World Mental Health Day, I would like to reflect on my own journey. For me things took a turn for the worse when I left a job that I loved. Things in the workplace had become difficult, and I felt leaving was my only option. I then found anxiety and depression took hold, making my daily life a struggle.

In my mid fifties I began to self harm. I could not explain to my closest family why I felt I needed to do this, and although they found this time worrying they gave me the best support they could. After several months of help from the mental health team, the Recovery College was mentioned to me.

I don't quite know how I enrolled but I have never looked back. I have undertaken many courses to help me to learn how best to manage my mental health, including managing anxiety, wellness planning, medication and me and also lots of fabulous creative courses.

Being creative has helped so much in managing my mental health. At home I do lots of drawing, weaving, and textiles and I get completely absorbed in my work. This helps alleviate anxious thoughts and low mood. I also find that breathing exercises (also learnt on another RWC course) help soothe me in difficult times.

The college has helped me to find my own coping mechanisms, which I think is very important. Staff and volunteers are both welcoming and knowledgeable, and once through the door the kettle is on and the welcome is genuine.

Jayne, Friend of the RWC

Let's Get Physical

Go Fish!

Watch out for
more courses in
the Spring!



After attending one of our beginners 'Go Fish' courses delivered by our partners, Eden Forest, and subsequently joining the latest intermediate course, we asked one of our learners, Mark, about his experience. This is what he had to say....

"I initially became aware of Eden Forest through CLEAR who had previously supported me with my mental health. To be honest I thought it was going to be a bit of a wishy-washy type of place but turns out I was wrong - it wasn't wishy-washy at all and I started to help out volunteering. I then learnt about the Go Fish Beginners course and thought I'd really like to give that a go and so I enrolled with the RWC. I'd not fished since I was 14 but knowing the site at Magdale Dam – and the people who were coaching made it easy for me to go along to that first session.

I've found that fishing has really helped with my own wellbeing, as well as getting me more active. I think some people believe that fishing is really boring and you just sit about doing nothing but it's not like that. You have to walk around the lake, study the water and see where the fish are, regularly check your equipment and keep putting bait on the line.

It's quite scientific, you don't just throw your line in and sit still. But more than that, it requires lots of concentration which helps takes your mind off your troubles, it's relaxing and quite a mindful practice; it puts me at ease. It also helps that the people there are a great bunch and a good laugh. They have their own issues but that helps me feel understood; I definitely consider them friends.

I must say thanks to Eden Forest, they have helped me so much and continue to do so; I am starting my Level I Coaching in Fishing in the near future which I'm looking forward to. I would really recommend the Go Fish! course and while fishing might not be everyone's cup of tea – it's certainly mine!"

The Bottom Line

I'm sure many will agree that we are currently experiencing what some describe as 'unprecedented' levels of fuel and food poverty across the country. Sadly, food banks have become the new 'normal' and more and more of us are forced to make cutbacks on already stretched finances. It should be noted that food banks are there to help. There has often been stigma attached to this form of aid but access to food is a basic human right and there is no shame in turning to them. I say this from first-hand experience. There are numerous charitable organisations and help centres available including Citizens Advice for those of us who are struggling to manage at this difficult time.

Whilst these facts are reality, what is just as important is our health and wellbeing; both mental and physical. The pandemic seems to have prompted a sharp decline in physical activity and less inclination towards people engaging in social and health related activities. To recover from this will likely take great self-motivation and perseverance which is easier said than done when you are just focused on putting one foot in front of the other every day. Whatever you need to do to keep yourself well, aim to do so in a way which is manageable for you!

We are all looking for 'efficiency' savings across the board, keeping homes warm and trying to keep money in our pockets. However, keeping yourself well and healthy both in physical and psychological terms is equally important. Most of us have had to start doing things differently and that can be scary but we have always adapted to the changing nature of national and global affairs in times gone by. Therefore, we must remain steadfast to help keep ourselves, our families and others safe and well. So, as I learn to adapt and focus on the steps I need to take to keep myself well, I hope the same for you too.

Daniel, Friend of the Recovery College



Stay up to date, follow us on our socials



Where are you?

We've noticed that less of our lovely learners are booking and turning up for our courses and workshops this term.

We miss you!

We understand these are challenging times, and we believe it may be more important than ever for each of us to try to prioritise our own wellbeing if we possibly can.

So we've arranged a long list of super courses (enclosed, or available on our website), all of them offering something that may help to lift the gloom a little and providing tools for staying as well as possible.

But very few of you are attending the courses we've run this month... We'd love to hear from you about why you're not feeling able to take advantage of the College at the moment?

What are the barriers you're facing to getting involved?

Are online courses or face to face ones easier to engage in during these times?

Are we offering the right courses for you?

Please get in touch and let us know!



We would LOVE your contributions in future newsletters. Please get in touch if you have anything you'd like to share - a book review, a favourite recipe or your own personal experience of the College. We we want to celebrate YOU!!

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