

Issue 4

Reconnection

WELCOME!

Weekly



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Welcome to Issue #4 of Reconnection Weekly!

Thank you so much for getting involved in the production of Reconnection Weekly! We have had lots of positive feedback on last weeks issue which is great. We are here to offer you support during this uncertain time and bring you ideas to uplift you and help support your emotional wellbeing during lockdown!

Issue #4 is the second of a two-part series dedicated to increasing our wellbeing whilst staying safe at home. This week you can read our tips for working from home, how to start a happiness journal, and practice a 'yoga for sleep' routine. If you have ideas for wellbeing that you would like to contribute, or find something you'd like us to cover next week get in touch!

fate whispered to the warrior "you cannot understand the storm and the warrior whispered back " I am the storm "

We are working together with our readers to offer useful resources, self-care ideas and interesting practical ideas to try out whilst at

home. Please get involved by sharing with us the things that help to keep you feeling well and what you've been doing during lockdown. If you would like to get involved with our Paws for Thought project get in touch. Don't forget to check out our <u>Recovery Service Facebook</u> <u>page</u> for regular updates and ideas.

We are here for one another. Let's stay connected!



If you would like to get involved, please send your ideas, suggestions and photos to any of the following –

Tracy.Thompson@cgl.org.uk Bex.Poyser@cgl.org.uk Emma.William@cgl.org.uk Gracie.Rosemin@cgl.org.uk Reconnection Weekly is sent out on a

Thursday and we ask that contributions are sent in no later than the Monday in order to be featured in that weeks newsletter. Thank you!

WORKING FROM HOME

The things that help me whilst working from home:

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Creating a designated work space that is free from distractions as much as possible. I have my desk set up looking out the window. Scheduling my days into 1-2 hour blocks. I plan my day when I wake up and decide the order in which to get through my to-do list! I plan self-care activities to help me wind down after work, such as practicing yoga,

down after work, such as practicing yoga, having a bath or watching a film. I listen to motivation and concentration playlists, you can find them on Spotify and YouTube.

When I feel like I'm getting distracted, I do one or two Sun salutations or have a onesong dance party to get my body moving and refocus.

- Grace

I am finding that completing a short breathing exercise at the end of the day (via my Fitbit) is helpful and refocuses me before bed. I sometimes complete it during the day.

I am also 'boxing' my day which includes opening a blank page document and writing a brief plan for the day in order of importance. It's not long but gives me a sense of accomplishment as the day progresses as well as keeping me focused. It's really helpful for me to see the list diminish throughout the day.

I also make sure I walk around the garden and focus my attention on the birds singing or I watch a bug walking, it just takes me away from the workload briefly.

I also have a daft 20 minute chat with a colleague in the middle of the day whilst having a cuppa.

- Rebecca

Have a designated work space. Next to a window if possible!

- Write a brief plan for the day ahead
- Try to maintain regular hours
- Try to create a routine
- Schedule breaks
- Keep in contact with colleagues
- Ask for help when you need it
- Make sure you get some fresh air by going outside
- Make time to unwind and relax!

For parents with kids

www.metro.co.uk/workingfromhome

Self-care and working from home www.calmmoment.com/wellbeing

Making a calm meditation space www.calmmoment.com/meditation

ISSUE

CHILDREN WORKING ΑT Номе WITH

So here we are in the middle of April, when the schools all closed earlier on in March, I had grand ideas of turning a room in my home into a classroom, where my children would learn from mine and my partners infinite wisdom and life lessons, we would do wild life walks, and do art in the woods near our home. I had

lovely ideas of doing Joe Wicks PE in the morning before work and ending the day with family board games. Fast forward nearly month I have developed high blood

rust forward nearly month i nave developed might blood pressure and an eye twitch which makes me look a bit dotty and slightly scares my children, from trying to

maintain this intense balancing act.

Trying to work with children around, who quite frankly couldn't give a flying fart if I was on my third skype call of the morning and lord knows where the day more of the morning and are beyond waiting for their oth snack of the day. And lord knows where that dog monop-oly piece went from family games night, it's probably been thrown in tantrum into the eve of the craft corner been thrown in tantrum into the eye of the craft corner which is starting to resemble the bogof stand at the

So.... what do you do when trying to balance being a patient and present parent? If your children are anything like mine your little people have also developed into like mine, your little people have also developed into hobbits who have diversion that the benefits who have diversion that the benefits who have diversion that the benefits have a set of the benefits who have diversion that the benefits who have diversion that the benefits and works.

hobbits who have given you the honourable title of snack maker/activity coordinator/finder of lost things. From this moment give yourself a break, take a moment

(hide in the toilet if you need to) and just breathe. Messes can be un-messed later, spellings and maths will still be there tomorrow and frankly so will Joe Wicks.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN Номе A T

Survival of working from home with children 101

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.....

Pack snacks and lunch - As silly as this sounds, I fell foul to this with in our first week. Not remembering that my children appear to eat every half hour, they were eating on my schedule which was not entirely fair given I am adult who sustains myself mostly on tea and biscuits. I started making a snack box and lunch for them, they can get it themselves but once their lunch and snack box is gone, its DONE 'TILL TEATIME!

Don't expect your children to follow your lesson plan - Just because you did a wonderful colour coded timetable burst-ing with all the best ideas Pinterest had, do not expect your children to be in the mood for it. With all the will in the world we all have days where frankly we cannot be bothered.

Scrap the idea of a perfect lesson plan - As above! tone it down a bit instead of doing 7-8 jam packed hours, and who has time for this when also trying to work? Try much smaller manageable blocks which are age appropriate for your kiddos, and where they can perhaps do some independent learning.

RECONNECTION WEEKLY

Keep the boundaries - We are still keeping a routine at home, the same one that we have for school. Just be-cause were on lockdown doesn't mean you should all be in your pj bottoms at 2pm on a Monday afternoon, remember children are used to regular routine and tend to do well knowing what comes next.

April

Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19

20 21 22 23 24 25 26

27 28 29 30

Keep an eye on the screen time - It's very easy to let a tablet or the tv become a baby sitter and I have also been very guilty of this, but realising you have worked all morning and your children are on to season 3 of Peppa pig can be very unsettling for all involved. Not only this but I do notice my own children being short tempered and agitated after too much screen time.

Shopping List

March

2 9

Turke

Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su

13 23 24 25 26 27 28 29

4 5 6 7 8

Crank Mik Stuff Sugar Sugar Pump Corn Corn Carro

10 11 12 13 14 15 12 16 17 18 19 20 21 22



Get out the house for a bit -This self-explanatory even if it's just in the garden for a spell, let them spend some energy and take five for yourself too! Blocks of time that work for you and them - Don't even think about trying to do some maths at 5pm when you know full well your children are ratty and tired and you too are also tired and ratty, maybe try 20 -30 minute blocks when you know they are going to engage in whatever you're doing. Recruit help- In our house were working opposites: I do the mornings and my partner does the afternoons, we swap as required depending on what's in the diary. If you find yourself unable to recruit help in your house, maybe ask a friend or relative to do a bit of learning via WhatsApp or Skype.

LoveYous

Utilise naps and chill time -Good grief I miss that time when my children napped! These days they are quite happy to have a little chill out on the sofa, so utilise this time to have five minutes, have a hot cup of tea and then crack on.

Do what you can - Despite having two adults in our household that have experience of teaching people, neither of us were quite set up for teaching our children, so do what you can, quit giving yourself a hard time!



ISSUE 4

SELF CARE SUGGESTIONS & TIPS

Pampering self-care Ideas

- Put on a face, hand or hair mask (or all three!)
- Have a bubble bath
- Light a candle
- Eat my favourite chocolate
- Put on hand cream
- Diffuse essential oils
- Paint nails
- Take a 20 minute nap
- Snuggle up in a blanket & listen to an album
- Have a film or documentary night
- Make a hot water bottle
- · Have a shower and put on clean comfy PJ's

Uplifting self-care ideas

- Call or video chat with a friend
- Read jokes online and laugh out loud
- Spend some time outside
- Go for a walk
- Send a card or letter to a loved one
- Get lost in a good book, read through positive affirmations or quotes
- Dance to your favourite music
- Spend some time cuddling with your pet and relaxing

Practical self-care Ideas

- Ask for help when I need it
- Drink a glass of water
- Cross something off my to-do list
- Take a social media break
- Do the laundry before the pile gets overwhelming
- Declutter my favourite space
- Go to bed when I feel tired
- Stop and take 3 deep breaths
- Make a pot of fresh coffee



"Today is filled with blessings and I open my heart to receive them."

- Grace

RECONNECTION WEEKLY

POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS



Positive affirmations are phrases or mantras we repeat to ourselves. They specifically describe a personal goal in the present tense so that when we repeat them, the subconscious mind taps in and the affirmation goes from 'wishful thinking' to reality.

Affirmations open our mind to positivity and make us more receptive to the idea of change. They can give us motivation when things are difficult and help to counteract our 'inner critic,' that voice inside us that tells us we're not good enough or can't achieve our goals. Affirmations are proven in helping with stress, anxiety and threats to our sense of self. They work on the basis of neuroplasticity-our brains have the ability to reorganise rewire our neural pathways. Changing and our neuroplasticity allows the brain to delete pathways that are no longer useful or serve us, therefore when we practice positive affirmations, we can change our thinking. This in turn changes our beliefs, emotions, actions and behaviours.

Below are a list of ideas for personal affirmations. Try these or adapt them to make them more personal:

- 1. Identify your goal and how you want to feel. Be specific. *i.e.* 'I want to feel happier in myself.'
- 2. Form your affirmation in the present tense, this changes our frame of mind from 'wishful thinking' to our present reality. *i.e.* 'I feel happy in myself' as opposed to 'I will feel happy in myself.'
- 3. Use positive language to frame your affirmation. Make it short and clear so it's easy to remember and repeat. *i.e.* 'I am worthy of happiness', as opposed to 'I don't want to be unhappy with myself anymore.'

SETTING POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS

I have faith in myself.

SSUE

I choose hope over fear. I believe in my skills and abilities. I am connected. I have faith in myself. I am who I want to be. I inspire others. I choose what I become. My love knows no limits. I choose hope over fear. I am enough. I am committed. My mind and body are strong. I am focused.



Repeat your affirmation to yourself at least once daily. Take a minute out to mindfully repeat your mantra whilst taking some deep breaths. Set a daily reminder on your phone to read it. Write the affirmations on post-it notes and stick in places you will see, such as next to your bathroom mirror or on the inside of the front door.

Get in touch and tell us about your positive affirmations!

JOURNAL HAPPINESS

Creating a Happiness Journal

Allowing yourself a few minutes each day to reflect on your hopes, dreams, goals and what you're grateful for can make a huge impression on how happy and content we feel with our lives. A happiness journal allows us space to contemplate our thoughts and emotions and understand ourselves better. By writing our goals and dreams down, we can focus on what we want to accomplish, and by committing to our goals they become more achievable.

<u>Tips for starting a journal.</u>

You might prefer to write in a specific notebook, or on your phone or computer. Whichever option you decide, it's most important that you feel comfortable and able to express vourself!

Choose a time to write, maybe first thing in the morning or before you go to bed at night. Creating a ritual for journaling will help you to make a habit of it. You could light a candle or sit down with some tea. If it feels overwhelming to write every day, you could start with one or two days a week and build up to a daily practice.

Journaling is a great way to reflect on your day. When doing this, be mindful that you are not focusing only on the negative things. Allow yourself the space to vent if you need to, but also bring perspective by recognising small positive events of the day too.

If you feel stuck on what to write about, think about what you are grateful for. Gratitude cultivates an appreciation for what we have and this allows us to feel content in our lives. You can also use your journal to capture your daydreams. If you have an idea that comes to mind, jot it down. Remember that a few sentences are enough to benefit your wellbeing, and it doesn't have to be 'perfect.' You don't have to write pages and pages unless you want to! The classic phrase "Quality over quantity" is a helpful reminder. Your journal is just for you; it doesn't have to be profound, just honest.

Happiness Journal

TODAY I AM GRATEFUL FOR

TODAY MY POSITIVE AFFIRMATION IS.

I SMILLED TODAY BECAUSE ...

Modbirg 195631910 MUNDFULNESS DE GO OUTSIDE ACT OF KINDNESS SELF CARE



HAPPINESS JOURNAL

Ideas and prompts for morning journaling:

My purpose for today is... Today I am grateful for...(whom and what?) Today will be good because... Today I will achieve... Today I can help myself and others by... Today my positive affirmation is... Today I will tick off my to-do list... Today I will reflect on...

Ideas and prompts for evening journaling:

Challenges I faced today... Achievements I made today... One sentence that describes today is... One positive experience I had today was... I smiled today because... I felt connected today because... I felt energised today because... 3 things that brought a smile to face today were...

Prompts for creative journaling:

Who inspires you in life and why? What motivates you in life and why? What is the biggest influence to your happiness and why? What are your creature comforts? Why do they help you to feel good? What are your three most frequent thoughts? How do they affect how you feel? What is the best piece you've ever been given? How did it change your perspective? What if you had a superpower? What would you want it to be and why? If you could live anywhere in the world, where would you choose and why?

You can even include daily positive habit trackers in your journal, such as mindful movement, mindfulness and conscious acts of kindness. You can also use your journal to track your mood, maybe on a scale from 1-10 or with doodles.

Read this great article here: <u>www.becomingminimalist.com</u> to learn more about the benefits of journaling!

RECONNECTION WEEKLY

YOGA FOR SLEEP



This yoga practice is designed to help you prepare for relaxation and sleep. Often difficulties with sleep are a response to the sympathetic nervous system, our "flight or flight" response being active. This practice consists of reclined, inverted and forward folding poses to lower blood pressure, body temperature and activate the parasympathetic nervous system, known as the "rest and digest" response.

You will need a mat or thick blanket to lay on, 2 or 3 thick cushions/pillows and a blanket to keep warm. Make sure you have enough layers on and socks before you start to keep warm during the practice. You can also cover the body with a blanket in the poses. If comfortable you can keep your eyes closed during the practice and covered with an eye pillow/towel. If not allow the gaze to become soft and slightly out of focus in a dimly lit/dark room.

The poses can be done together as a full practice, or one at a time. It is important to move slowly and gently to activate "rest and digest," breathe deeply for 10-30 breaths in each pose and honour your body where it is at right now. If you feel any pain back off from the pose and focus on your breath.

1. Supported child's pose. Come to a kneeling position, with your knees at the outside edges of the mat and your big toes touching together (you can fold up your blanket to cushion behind the backs of the knees if this is uncomfortable. Place your cushions underneath your hips and body, lay your chest down to rest on them. You can take your hands to meet your heels or stack the fists one on top of the other to create a resting place for your head, keeping the neck long. Come up slowly to release out of the pose.







2. Supported forward fold pose. Start sitting with legs extended out in front of you. Place a cushion under the knees to release tension in the hamstrings. Stack cushions on top of your legs and rest your chest down, lengthening the back of the neck. Gently extend arms alongside the legs, turning the palms up to face the ceiling. Slowly lift your chest up to release out of the pose.

YOGA FOR SLEEP

3. Banana pose. Lye down on your back, reaching your arms behind you. Slowly start to move both legs towards the right lower edge of your mat crossing your left ankle over the right, and gently take the left hand to the right wrist and move towards the right top edge of your mat. Slowly return to your neutral position and repeat on the left side. Roll onto your right side to release out of the pose.

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5. Reclined butterfly pose. Laying on the back, bring the feet together flat on the mat and let the knees fall open to the sides. Place cushions underneath the outer thighs to support the hips and rest hands on the belly. Place hands around the outside of knees and gently bring legs back together. Roll onto your right side and gently push yourself up to seating. 4. Supported heart opening pose. Place cushion/s underneath the shoulder blades and either a cushion or folded blanket underneath the head. Extend the legs long away from the body, or bend the knees placing the feet flat and allow the knees to rest together. Extend the arms to lay alongside the body and turn the palms up towards the ceiling. Roll onto your right side to remove the pillow.



6. Supported legs up the wall pose. Sit on the floor next to a wall and place a cushion under your seat. Slowly roll onto your back, taking the legs up to rest on the wall. Place the blanket underneath the head if needed. Rest your arms down by your sides, palms facing up. When you are ready to come out of the pose, slide the knees gently towards the chest and roll over onto your right side. Come to sit up before slowly standing and getting into bed. (You can also modify this pose to practice without the wall, with the legs up as if planting your feet on the ceiling.)







RECONNECTION WEEKLY

A LETTER TO MY FUTURE SELF

Writing to our future selves can help us to not only appreciate the little things in our present, but think about how we want to envision the future. It's a way to offer yourself a reflection on your present and future goals. I have been writing letters to myself for some years now, and in doing so they have helped me to look forward through some difficult times, and reading the letters back really allows me to appreciate how far I have come and acknowledge my progress.

How are you feeling about life right now? What would you like to change and why? What would you like to say to your future self, reading this in 1, 5 or even 10 years time? Decide before you start writing, when you would like to open the letter. This will help you in focusing on the goals you would like to set. When writing about your present self, use "I" and refer to your future self as "You." You could provide inspiration with a quote, poem or by asking a loved one for ideas.

Parcel up the present: start your letter with a warm greeting you might extend to an old friend. Ask how they are doing, what have they been up to? Explain what you are offering in your letter, perhaps encouragement, inspiration, dreams and hopes. Write about life as it is now, how old are you, where do you live and what fills your day? What are you grateful for? What is the biggest obstacle you have overcome in life and how did that breakthrough feel and affect you?

You can also reflect on any fears you have, personal or worldwide. What would you like to change or how would you like to grow moving forward?

Help the future you re-live some fond memories or positive moments, keep these memories alive by using all your senses to describe them.

Frame forward to the future: What are your hopes and fears for the future? What would you like to have achieved by the time that future you opens this letter? You can set some goals here, small or large. Maybe there are things you'd like to achieve, such as travel, learn a new skill, progress in your work, be in a relationship or have children. Perhaps you have goals for how you'd like to feel, what values do you consider most important to work on? Reflect on why these goals are momentous to you.

Acknowledge that life can be unpredictable in its twists and turns, and that maybe future you is headed for a twist. You can offer words of comfort and encouragement for your future self. Note your strengths now and remind your future self to use these attributes to keep them strong. What advice can you give to future you?

Ask future you questions such as, what have you been putting off, what makes you happy, what life lessons have you learned in this time, how have you changed and grown?

Once you have written your letter, place it in a sealed envelope and write on the front:

Your name

A letter to my future self, to be opened in (year) when I am (age)

Put the letter somewhere safe, and maybe set yourself a reminder to open the letter in the future. Whilst I find it more satisfying to open paper copies of my letters, you can use www.futureme.org to send yourself the letter.

Let us know how you get on!

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It only takes a glance to stereotype Take a look at yourself before your mouth pipes Problem stress and all things negative It does follow you but you don't let it live Embrace the fact that your day is going good Cos its not the same in every other in your hood When you next walk past a homeless person or a big issue seller Initiate a smile For it may make someone no longer for a second no longer fragile Come on earth people Go the extra mile Give them a smile Cos it will stay in their memory For a long loving while Amen

Unique Shofiq

POETRY

CORNER

A message to people in a poem to JUST SMILE at them Don't ignore them They feel they don't exist but if you smile at them they do, It's beautiful. The power of a smile.



www.mill-road.com/millroad-made-me-mill-roadsaved-me

We would love to hear any words of wisdom or tips

that you may have been

life.

handed down from family

members or given by any inspirational people in your

It could even be a passage

from a novel or quote from

Let us know so we can

be inspired each week!

someone famous.

WHAT'S THE BEST ADVICE YOU'VE EVER BEEN GIVEN?

The best advice I was ever given was when I came out of detox and I was struggling with the thought of never having a drink again! Going to a social occasion and not having a drink or being 'boring' was a cause of great stress and anxiety for me. I couldn't explain this to others because I was ashamed of being an alcoholic.

You cannot change the past, but you can determine your future. All you need to do is get your head on a pillow sober at the end of today. Tomorrow has not arrived yet.

You can do anything you want every day except pick up a drink.

2 years and counting x

-Naomi 🖌

THINGS TO DO!

Art & Creativity

- Colouring sheets, Online exhibitions collaborate with other people all over the world and stay connected!
 www.aspacebetween.co.uk/covid-19connect
- Grayson Perry starts his art club on channel 4 on 27th April!
 www.secretldn.com/grayson-perrysartclub
- Drawing from Lockdown <u>www.bbc.co.uk/drawings-from-lockdown</u>
- Social Distancing Festival <u>www.socialdistancingfestival.com</u>
- Berlins artists are turning their balconies into open-air galleries! www.timeout.com/berlin-artists
- Free Quentin Blake Rainbow e-cards! <u>www.itsnicethat.com/QuentinBlake</u>

Theatre

- Missing the theatre? A guide to plays you can watch online www.thetimes.co.uk/theatre
- Disney on Broadway! <u>www.whatsonstage.com/disney-broadway</u>

Nature

 The Power of Flowers <u>www.cpre.org.uk/powerofflowers</u>

Short Video

 Check out "Bloom" from Emily Johnstone on Vimeo

Nadine, depressed and alone, has been living her life in the dark. A gift from a friendly neighbour gives Nadine something to live for. With a new life, Nadine has a chance to pay it forward.

Bloom - Vimeo



Useful Links

(this list will be updated weekly)

There are now thousands of local community support groups across the country to help you during this time. Below is an up to date list to help you find your nearest one, simply type in you're postcode.

Mental wellbeing while staying at home

www.nhs.uk/stayingathometips

Good selection of things to do in isolation as well as good support group www.survivorsnetwork.org.uk

A very good all rounder from support to activities and virtual tours www.chatterpack.net

Stay at home guidance for households www.gov.uk/stayathome

If you have a vulnerable person living with you www.gov.uk/stayathome/vulnerable

Keep Your Head www.keepyourhead.com

Group for Men with mental health issues seeking mutual NON medical support www.menunite.org

Harm reduction strategies for alcohol dependence www.downyourdrink.org.uk

NA meetings online www.ukna.org

Can't make a meeting - no problem

www.smartrecovery.org.uk

Local volunteer hub information www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/your-community-needs-you

Support and wellbeing community for adults in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

www.quell.io

This service run by CPSLMIND is a free online support and wellbeing community offering Chat based counselling, online Peer support and an online community.

A free support service for those suffering mental distress Lifeline 0808 808 2121.

A very good resource for our older clients or anyone who is living with or has elderly relatives. Run in conjunction with Age UK it's a very informative website that has telephone forums, chat rooms and films. www.thesilverline.org.uk

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Adult support Samaritans -Call 116 123 www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help

Mind UK - UK Mental Health Charity with information and an online mutual support community www.mind.org.uk/

www.mind.org.uk/support-community

Refuge - 07787255821 National Domestic abuse support - 0800 2000247 Men's Advice Line - 0808 8010327 LGBT support - 0800 9995428

Young people support

www.kooth.com

www.youngminds.org.uk

If you need urgent help text YM to 85258

www.childline.org.uk/get-support

Chat Health Cambridgeshire (school nursing team) Text- 07480635443

Parenting/carers support

If you need some support looking after your child's mental health, you can call 'YoungMinds' at 0808 802 5544 between 9.30am and 4pm every week day.

You can also email YoungMinds on their website, out of hours and they will get back to you.

Family Action

Telephone: 0808 802 6666

Text message: 07537 404 282

www.family-action.org.uk/

The FamilyLine service supports people who are dealing with family pressures in a new and innovative way by using a network of volunteers from across the country to support family members over the age of 18 through telephone calls, email, web chat and text message.

Breaking Free Online is a free, evidence-based treatment support network for anyone struggling with substance addiction.

You can access the site at <u>www.breakingfreeonline.com</u> and sign up with your personal email and password, our CGL access code is *cambs11*.

Let us know what you think!

