

# SUNDERLAND MIND

DECEMBER 2020 · ISSUE 04



## A Christmas Message from Mind



I think we can agree that 2020 hasn't turned out to be the year we'd all hoped it would be; instead it has become one of the most difficult years for us all. Whether you are a student trying to keep up with your education, a parent dealing with working from home and home schooling or a business trying to survive one of the toughest economic crises we have faced (and everyone in-between), we have all had our challenges to overcome. Christmas is not going to be any different, with this years' being one of toughest Christmases for everyone.

Christmas can be the most wonderful time of the year for some, while for others it can be a time of sadness, stress and anxiety. According to research carried out by Mind, 1 in 10 of us feel unable to cope during the festive period. Many people stated loneliness as a major factor in how low they felt, as well as the added pressure often felt by all of us around this time of year.

After a year of everyone feeling the struggles and stress of everyday life, we are reaching out and asking you to check on each other over this festive period. We may not all be able to meet up and see our loved ones but we can still connect with one another. There are lots of ways to check on our friends and family. These can include, sending out Christmas cards, recording a Christmas carol, setting up video calls or phone calls. Even sending a simple message can send some festive cheer.

Whatever you are doing over the Christmas season we hope you all have a wonderful time, stay safe and look after each other. Sunderland Mind will close on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December and return on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January. Until then, we all wish you a very Merry Christmas and the best New Year. We look forward to seeing you again in 2021.

# OUR TOP TIPS FOR POSITIVE WELLBEING AT CHRISTMAS

This year has been one like no other, so all of our staff at Sunderland Mind would love to support you this year by sharing our personal top tips for good wellbeing at Christmas time. As we have such a diverse team at Sunderland Mind we hope at least one of these tips will help you this Christmas.

Remember that it's not about the gifts its about the memories as they last a lot longer!

**Jenae Shaw**

Keep active! Getting outside into nature and moving is really good for both physical and mental health.

**Erin Russell**

Be kind to yourself, make some time for self care and do what makes your soul happy. It's even more important at Christmas!

**Emily Blyth**

My advice is to plan the month, so you can watch the cost, and what is manageable don't force yourself to spend what you cannot afford as in reality it's only a couple of days.

Also, look after your own mental health as Christmas is a time of struggle for many around bereavements, family break ups and finances.

**Jean Walker**

My top tip would be to go for a mindful walk, notice the sights and sounds in your environment and at this time of year all the Christmas lights.

**Deborah Baldwin**

Don't Isolate yourself, especially if you live alone. Phone a family member or friend and make contact with them, even if its briefly.

**Brain Porter**

Don't feel alone, talk to someone and take time for yourself

**Dorothy Gardiner**

# GETTING TO KNOW US

This Month we would like to introduce you to two members of our counselling team.

## Brian Porter

*Senior Counsellor*

Within my Role at Sunderland Mind, I enjoy using my skills, training, resources and experience to facilitate for people with Mental health issues to help themselves to hopefully become well again.

I spend my free time watching sport/movies, listening to music, spending time with my daughter and going for Walks.

I don't have a specific thing I do or practise for my own self-care, it tends to be a combination of the hobbies and interests I enjoy. When I was younger I used to exercise, especially via playing football, but as I've gotten older and slowed down with the natural regressions of being an organic human being, my interest has waned and it is no longer the priority it once was.



## Charlotte Harrison

*Counsellor*

I love my job and really do see it as a vocation, I am very passionate about helping and supporting people. My role as a counsellor at Sunderland Mind I specifically enjoy the variety of client work that we are able to work with, there is no one counselling specific type or client type. This for me fits not only my integrative professional role but also myself personally, as I believe one box does not fit all and everyone deserves the right to access support.

My free time is mainly spent with my six year old son and my dog, we are a very outdoor family and love nothing more than new little adventures. Currently my son is into ice skating and this takes up a lot of our spare time, which we both really get to enjoy as I get to throw on my skates as well. However, my six year old, I am not ashamed to say, outskates me regularly.

My favourite form of self care, when I do get those moments to myself, would be reading. I love a book, a physical paperback book. I also always enjoy my walks out with my dog and to switch off on an evening with a film, good or bad I do not mind.



**DOWNLOAD**  
the new and  
improved  
Step Up App



Sunderland  
City Council

# MONTHLY TOPIC

## Step Up Sunderland!

Step Up Sunderland is a new and improved app that Sunderland City Council are encouraging us all, who live and work in the city, to download and use in our daily lives, from schools to workplaces, nursing homes to sports clubs, and from families to individuals. The app really has something for everyone!

Step Up is a great way to see how active you are, giving you the chance to monitor your activity levels. It also offers ways to increase your physical activity by adding friends and creating your own walking teams.

You can download the app from the Google Play and Apple App stores, or you can visit <https://www.stepupsunderland.com/> to manually create an account and log your steps. More info can be found here: [www.stepupsunderland.com/faq](https://www.stepupsunderland.com/faq)

You can gain access to exclusive rewards and discounts just for taking part. It's fun and free so why not sign up today?

Walking is easy, free and great way to become more active, lose weight and become healthier. Best of all, you can take it at your own pace, on your own, with friends or with your favourite canine.

### 5 positives impacts walking has on your mental wellbeing:

1. Reduces stress
2. Helps to reduce anxiety
3. Can ease depression in some people
4. Reduces brain fog
5. Boosts creativity

A number of staff at Sunderland Mind have already signed up for Step Up Sunderland. Why not join us by downloading the app and joining team Sunderland Mind! Lets work together to climb that leader board while improving our mental wellbeing.

Don't forget to share you selfies and photos from your walks using #walkforsunderlandmind and tagging us on our social media @MindSunderland ([Facebook](#)) or @SunderlandMind ([Instagram](#) + [Twitter](#)).

Molly from our Junior group sent us this photo from one of her favourite places to walk, Backhouse Park. Molly downloaded the app as she loves going on walks and taking photographs. We can't wait for you to start sharing your photos with us!



# DECEMBER AWARENESS DAYS

## National Grief Awareness Week - 2-8 December 2020

### 2020 Theme: Let's Bravely Bust the Taboo

The loss of a loved one can be life shattering, especially through these current times. Whether you have had to face restrictions, or they have passed directly from Covid-19, it is important that you make space to grieve and understand how unique that experience is. This week we are encouraging you to bravely bust the taboo of grief by sharing your story. Many have not been able to do this, often feeling alone and isolated during these times. By sharing your story you are offering hope to those struggling and encouraging individuals to share emotions many find difficult to open up about. What is your story?

Make sure to use #NGAW2020 and #ShareYourStory if you share your experiences on social media!



## Human Rights Day - 10th December 2020

### 2020 Theme: Recover Better: Stand up for Human Rights

Human Rights Day is observed every year on 10 December. This year's Human Rights Day theme relates to the COVID-19 pandemic and focuses on the need to build back better by ensuring Human Rights are central to recovery efforts.

10 December is an opportunity to reaffirm the importance of human rights in re-building the world we want, the need for global solidarity as well as our interconnectedness and shared humanity.

Under UN Human Rights' generic call to action "Stand Up for Human rights", the aim is to engage the general public, partners and the UN family to bolster transformative action and showcase practical and inspirational examples that can contribute to recovering better and fostering more resilient and just societies.

More information about Human rights Day can be found at <https://www.un.org/en/observances/human-rights-day>



# Thank You to All of our Volunteers



## International Volunteer Day 5th December 2020

### 2020 Theme: Together We Can Through Volunteering

Over the last months, as the COVID-19 pandemic has ravaged across the world, volunteers have been at the forefront of medical, community and societal responses. Headlines in the world's media have paid credit to volunteers for all kinds of work, from helping to provide medical care, to doing shopping for vulnerable neighbours, or checking up on elderly people living alone.

The [COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan by the WHO](#) identifies community volunteers as key stakeholders for risk communication and community engagement. This indicates the valuable and great effort the WHO believes volunteers are doing during COVID-19.

This year's IVD campaign thanks volunteers worldwide and also sheds light on the difficulties and needs of volunteers during the pandemic. Showing the impact of volunteers in their communities during this crisis, we will reach to all corners of the globe with the message "Together We Can Through Volunteering."



Sunderland Mind has been in operation for over 40 years. We run a variety of wellbeing programmes, support groups and a range of activities. We could never have achieved all of our accomplishments without the hard work and dedication from our volunteers.

Volunteers play an integral role within our organisation from our management committee to group support and help sharing the positive message around mental health. This year we were proud to welcome our newest volunteers that included two members from our young people's groups.

We are currently working on some new and exciting roles and hope to welcome a host of new volunteers in the new year. Until then we would like to say a huge thank you to all of our volunteers for everything you do for us. We wish you all a very merry Christmas and look forward to working with you next year



# DECEMBER TIMETABLE

## **Tuesday**

1:00pm - 3:00pm - Christmas Crafts

## **Wednesday**

18-25's Group - 17:00 - 18:30 -

[victoria.austin@sunderlandmind.co.uk](mailto:victoria.austin@sunderlandmind.co.uk)

Drama Group (7-18) - 17:00 - 18:30 -

[jenaе.shaw@sunderlandmind.co.uk](mailto:jенае.shaw@sunderlandmind.co.uk)

## **Thursday**

1:00pm - 3:00pm - Christmas Crafts

1:00pm - 3:00pm - Keeping On: Loss Through Suicide -

[keepingon@sunderlandmind.co.uk](mailto:keepingon@sunderlandmind.co.uk)

4:30pm - 6:00pm - Junior Group (7-11) -

[leigh.ann@sunderlandmind.co.uk](mailto:leigh.ann@sunderlandmind.co.uk)

4:30pm - 6:00pm - Senior Group (11-18) -

[leigh.ann@sunderlandmind.co.uk](mailto:leigh.ann@sunderlandmind.co.uk)

Please bare in mind that we are only allowing a limited number of people per group/session and you must book a place before attending. You can do this by emailing the relevant email above or contacting us on 0191 565 7218 and 07984595542.

# SUPPORT INFORMATION

If you have been affected by any of the topics in this newsletter, there's lots of places you can reach out to for support. The best place to start is by talking to someone you trust. This could be a friend, family member or carer. It could even be a professional, sometimes it's easier to talk to someone who doesn't know you directly.

**Sunderland Mind** – 0191 565 7218 – 07984595542 –  
admin@sunderlandmind.co.uk – www.sunderlandmind.co.uk

**WASP** – 07984595624 – youngpeople@sunderlandmind.co.uk

**Mind A to Z Mental Health** – www.mind.org.uk/information-support/a-z-mental-health/

**GP** – Call your GP and tell them how you, or the person, is feeling. They may be able to offer support or notify an agency who can.

**CPN** – If you have a Community Psychiatric Nurse you could contact them and tell them how you are feeling.

**NHS Direct** – 111 has psychiatric nurses on the switchboard who can offer advice – www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

**Samaritans** – 116 123 this is a free confidential helpline if you feel you need to talk – www.samaritans.org

**Sunderland City Council** – Adult Services on 0191 520 5552.

**Sunderland Initial Response Team (IRT)** – The service is available 24 hours, 7 days a week, throughout the year and can be contacted on 0303 123 1145. The Initial Response Team provides practical advice, emotional support from qualified nursing staff and when appropriate, routing to the right service.

Merry Christmas and a  
Happy New Year from all  
executive board  
members, staff and  
volunteers at  
Sunderland Mind



## GET INVOLVED

We would love to hear from you so if you have anything you would like to include in next month's issue please contact me on [jenae.shaw@sunderlandmind.co.uk](mailto:jenae.shaw@sunderlandmind.co.uk)



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