

Introduction

Welcome to the October edition of Bristol Mind's Mental Health and Wellbeing newsletter. This month there are two significant dates.

OCD awareness week is between October 11th and 17th and aims to raise awareness of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, which affects the lives of over three-quarters of a million people directly in the UK, and many more people who are indirectly affected - such as family members.

OCD receives little attention in the media, or is **characterised in popular culture as quirky habits** or extreme cleanliness - as opposed to the serious **anxiety-related condition** it is, where a person can experience frequent intrusive and unwelcome obsessional thoughts, or feel compelled to carry out repetitive tasks or rituals to try to prevent some harm or other event.

Every individual's experience of OCD is different, but to give an example: many years ago, I met a young man in prison who became convinced after every interaction with anyone that he had spat in the person's face - he felt a constant compulsion to check with everyone that he hadn't done so. His sleep, meals, and all aspects of his life were severely affected by this. In this particular case, one of the healthcare staff was trained in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, the most widely used treatment for OCD, and was able to use this to help him.

Secondly, **October 10th is World Mental Health Day** - which is perhaps a more significant day this year than ever before. The impact of COVID-19 has been global, with rising levels of anxiety, loneliness, isolation, and emotional distress across the world - as people struggle to manage the effects of lockdowns, unemployment, bereavement, social distancing, and the widespread uncertainty about the future.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, it was acknowledged that the **number of people affected by mental health problems was rising globally**, and that there was a growing need to prioritise support within healthcare systems. The pandemic has exacerbated many of the existing factors, and this is why the theme for this year's World Mental Health Day is a call for action: "**Mental Health for All - Greater Investment - Greater Access**", highlighting the need for greater investment in the mental health of all.

This is an investment of money, time, innovation, and commitment; an investment for **people of all ages, throughout the world**, so that we may begin to see a decline in future years in the numbers of people whose lives are severely impacted by poor mental health.

Tom Hore, Director



Inside this issue



Don't carry the burden - talk about your mental health



Introduction

1

World Mental Health Day 2020

3

Updates from Bristol Mind

4

Mentally Healthy Universities

5

Guest Article: Easton Cowgirls

6

Fundraising Update

7

Recipes

8

Green & Growing

8

Wesport

9

Stay in Touch

10

World Mental Health Day

Saturday 10th October 2020



This year has been a difficult one for us all. The months of lockdown and loss have had a **devastating impact on our collective mental health**.

According to a survey of over 15,000 people from the national mental health charity Mind, more than half of adults (50%), and over two-thirds of young people (68%) felt that **their mental health had worsened during lockdown**. Many have developed new mental health problems as a result of the pandemic and, for some, existing mental health issues have gotten worse.

At Bristol Mind, **we have seen a rise in our frontline services**: our MindLine helpline has seen a **50% increase in calls** since lockdown, with a **10% increase in callers talking about isolation and loneliness**. In August, **30% of our callers were concerned about the impact of COVID-19**.

People we are supporting in other ways shared their concerns and worries:

- 17% of people referenced COVID-19
- 32% of people expressed feelings of anxiety
- 36% of people talked about loneliness or isolation

What are we doing to help?

In accordance with social distancing and changing policy, our offices remain closed - so none of our drop-ins, groups, or face-to-face appointments are taking place. However, **we are continuing to provide as comprehensive a service as possible** through telephone, email, and video conferencing.

During the pandemic, we have taken great efforts to adapt and create new ways of supporting people who are **greater in number and in greater need**. We have:

- Developed a new free YouTube channel, with helpful content for people - such as tips for [managing panic attacks](#), [supporting people with suicidal thoughts](#), and [mindfulness sessions](#).
- Expanded both of our MindLine Helplines.
- Developed remote operations for our Counselling and Advocacy services.
- Created a [new counselling service](#) for people who are isolated and shielding.
- Created a new counselling service for refugees.

Mental health problems can affect anyone, any day of the year, but World Mental Health Day is a great time to show your support for better mental health and commit to looking after your own wellbeing. Bristol Mind will be raising awareness and showing our support on October 10th - please join us by sharing our awareness posts on social media. You can find us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

[Back to the top](#)



#takefifteenwmind #wmind2020
Information Service: 0117 980 0370



Take fifteen minutes this
World Mental Health Day
to check in with your own
mental wellbeing



World Mental Health Day:
10 October 2020

Updates from Bristol Mind



Registered Charity #1085171
Registered Company #04124744

Counselling

for individuals
shielding due to
the pandemic

From Sept-Dec 2020, Bristol Mind is providing a specific free counselling service to individuals shielding as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

If you are shielding and feeling stressed, anxious, isolated or in need of support with your mental health, please do contact us.

We are primarily looking to provide this service to those in the Bristol wards/areas stated below, and those identified as higher risk, such as BAME residents and older individuals:

Avonmouth	Filwood	Lawrence Hill	Southmead
Barton Hill	Hartcliffe & Withywood	Lawrence Weston	St Paul's
East Hillfields	Knowle West	Lockleaze	Whitchurch Park

If you are interested in this service, please contact counselling@bristolmind.org.uk for a registration form. For this service we are accepting either self-referrals, referrals from family members, or referrals from agencies.

Please note that our general 'Meeting Minds' counselling service is not free but is low cost, and is self-referral only

Recruiting now:

Chief Executive Role

Bristol Mind is the local Mind charity for South Gloucestershire, Bristol, and North Somerset. It works to **improve wellbeing** to **prevent mental health problems** in this region.

We are seeking an inspirational candidate to lead **the organisation** and **improve the lives of people living with mental ill health**. If you are interested in the role of Bristol Mind's Chief Executive, please see our website for further details and to download an Application Pack:

<http://www.bristolmind.org.uk/work-with-us-chief-executive-full-time/>



Mentally Healthy Universities

Charlotte Randomly
Mentally Healthy Universities Project Coordinator



This October many people will be starting, or returning to, studies at university. Student mental health has been a key focus for Bristol Mind for some time. We know that **1 in 5 students have a diagnosed mental health problem**, and that more than 1 in 3 students have said that they had a serious mental health problem for which they felt they needed professional help (Insight Network, 2020). Research also shows that **students are less happy and more anxious than non-students**, including other young people (Mental Health Taskforce, 2016). With the current COVID-19 crisis and the multiple challenges that this has brought for people everywhere, it's perhaps **never been a tougher time to be in higher education** - and therefore never a more important time to support students and university staff.

At Bristol Mind we will be supporting undergraduate students and staff at the University of Bristol through the **Mentally Healthy Universities Programme**. The project aims to equip staff and students with the tools to manage their mental health, build resilience, and reduce stigma. This is a pilot initiative funded by Goldman Sachs Gives, which enables nine local minds and partner universities to deliver a series of new **workshops, courses, and trainings** to students and staff.

Working closely with our colleagues at national Mind, who have designed the programme, we are entering into our second year of the project after contributing to **a successful first year of delivery, research, and evaluation**.

Of those who participated in the first year of the project:

- Over 85% of students had a better understanding of mental health problems and wellbeing after attending our "introduction to managing your mental health at university" course.
- Over 90% of students who took part said they were more confident looking after their mental health, and 100% said they would recommend the course to a friend.
- Over 90% of university staff who attended the Staff Mental Health Champions training said they would recommend the opportunity to their colleagues.

Don't carry the
burden - talk about
your mental health



We are very proud to be part of this project, which is set to have a tangible impact on the HE culture and environment **to create good mental health for all**.

To find out more, please email the Mentally Healthy Universities Project Coordinator, Charlotte Randomly: CharlotteR@bristolmind.org.uk

If you are a current University of Bristol undergraduate, you can also register for a workshop [here](#).

October's Guest Contributor: Easton Cowgirls

This month we caught up with Sensi from the Easton Cowgirls football team to hear more about their team and how they are involved in the Bristol Community.



“Easton Cowgirls are a womxn’s football club based in Easton, Bristol. We organise training and games to enable women of all ages (18+) and abilities to play football. We are a fun-loving and very inclusive team - we make sure that people who haven’t played before or haven’t played for some time feel comfortable when they join. There isn’t a lot of pressure being a part of the Easton Cowgirls!

I started playing for the Cowgirls six years ago - I was moving back to Bristol after spending time in Oxford, and **I was looking for a casual social team.** The Cowgirls ticked all the boxes.”



“The Bristol Women’s Casual League has restored faith for some womxn who stopped playing football, or those who have just discovered the game.”

“The Cowgirls started a Bristol Women’s casual league with just two teams - the Cowgirls and the Lebeq Tavern. Now, over ten years later, there are ten teams in the league and two divisions. This has been an enormous achievement: **the Cowgirls have closed a gap for womxn who want to play casual football,** and offered the opportunity to be part of a community of womxn who enjoy football and like to be social too. For me, the best part of the Cowgirls is going on tours - which give us an opportunity to link up with other teams that are a part of the Anti-fascist network.

Groups like the Cowgirls are important in the community because we don’t just play football, we work within the community and hold fundraising events. For example, we did a group litter-pick around the Easton area; we also fundraise for the Eason Community Centre, and during the pandemic both the Easton Cowgirls and Cowboys have been volunteering with the Community Veg Box scheme. We can reflect what the community means to us when we are fundraising and volunteering. **The most important part of the Easton Cowgirls is to give back to our community.”**

“Sport and wellbeing are very important for both mental health and mental wealth. It gives a person the opportunity to offload and relax from life, whether that’s because work is stressful or you have a personal issue. Easton Cowgirls creates a supportive community by welcoming all from the very beginning. There isn’t a hierarchy - just a community spirit and a lot of laughter.

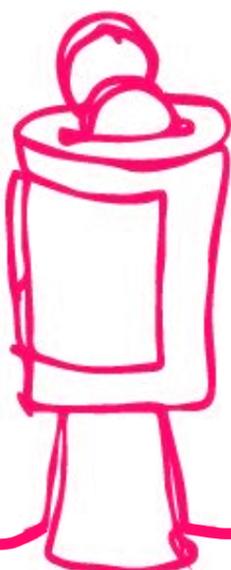
I believe the younger generation are starting to help some people normalise how they see mental health, and that it could affect anyone at any time. It’s important that the services that are available to people are easily accessible, and the conversation about mental health is open and free from judgement. Later this year, Bristol Mind will collaborate with the Cowgirls, hosting a stall for people watching and taking part in a game. This collaboration will create a space for everyone to open up and chat about their mental health.”

If you would like to join the Cowgirls or just come along to training, please visit the [website](#) or [Facebook page](#) and send them a message!

Fundraising Update

Fundraising events in 2021

Thinking about dusting off your running shoes for 2021? Why not fundraise for Bristol Mind! You can enter an event or organise your own. We'll support you along the way, ready to answer all your fundraising questions: whether you want social media tips, support setting up your online giving page, or you want to learn where your money goes. What's more, you'll get a copy of our handy fundraising guide, and a Bristol Mind t-shirt or vest to use on the day.



Getting Started:

- Fancy taking part in the [Bristol 10K](#) or [Bath Half](#)? Sign up soon as places are going quickly!
- Looking for ideas of things to enter, or organising your own virtual event? Check out our [guide](#)!
- If you want to learn more, take a look at our [website](#), or send us an email: fundraisingcoordinator@bristolmind.org.uk

Spicy root vegetable & lentil casserole

Ingredients

2tbsp sunflower or vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves of garlic, crushed
700g potatoes, peeled & diced thickly
4 carrots, thickly sliced
2 parsnips, thickly sliced
2tbsp curry paste
1 litre vegetable stock
100g red lentils
15g fresh coriander, roughly chopped
Low-fat yoghurt & naan, to serve

Method

1. Heat the oil in a large pan & cook onion and garlic over a medium heat until softened.
2. Add the root vegetables, turn up the heat & cook for 5-7 minutes, stirring regularly, until golden.
3. Stir in the curry paste, pour in the stock, and bring to the boil.
4. Reduce the heat, then add lentils. Cover and simmer for 15-20 minutes: lentils should be tender and the sauce should thicken.
5. Stir in coriander, then serve with yoghurt & naan bread.



Mixed vegetable & almond biryani

Ingredients

1tbsp vegetable oil	3 green cardamom pods, lightly crushed
1 large onion, sliced thinly	1 vegetable stock cube
1tsp sea salt	300g mixed chopped vegetables
2 large cloves of garlic, finely chopped	300g basmati rice
1tsp ground cumin	50g flaked almonds
1tbsp ground coriander	10g fresh coriander, chopped
1tbsp garam masala	1/2 lemon, juice only



Method

1. Heat the oil over a medium heat in a large, heavy-bottomed, lidded saucepan. Fry the onions with the salt for 10 minutes - until soft and just starting to brown.
2. Add garlic and fry for 1 minute until aromatic, followed by cumin, ground coriander, garam masala, and cardamom. Fry for a further minute, then crumble in the stock cube.
3. Add the vegetables and rice, stirring until everything is well coated in the onion spice mixture.
4. Add 500ml water. Bring to the boil, then put on the lid and reduce the heat as low as possible; allow to steam for 15 minutes.
5. Remove the pan from the heat, allowing to rest with the lid on for a further 10 minutes.
6. While the rice is resting, toast the almonds in a small frying pan over medium heat, until golden.
7. Remove the lid from the rice and pick out the cardamom pods, then fluff with a fork.
8. Stir in almonds, coriander, and lemon juice. Serve!

Green and Growing - Broad Beans over winter!

Broad beans are fairly easy vegetables to grow over winter, ready for April/May next year - and they're very versatile for cooking. In October, the soil is still warm enough to plant the seeds directly in the ground or into pots. Soak the seeds overnight before planting.

Planting in the ground

- Sow seeds directly into beds in well-dug, manured soil
- Plant each seed in a 5cm deep hole, in single rows that are 45cm apart
- Keep the soil moist before the beans begin to sprout
- Water twice a day in spring, using supports to help the beans grow tall

Planting in pots

- Sow seeds 5in deep, with several to a pot; but make sure you don't overcrowd them.
- Allow 6in space between plants.
- Keep the soil moist before the beans begin to sprout
- Water twice a day in spring, using supports to help the beans grow tall



The **West of England Sport Trust (Wesport)** are pleased to be a sport and physical activity contributor to the Bristol Mind – Mental Health and Well-being Newsletter. www.wesport.org.uk/active-workplaces

Buddyathon: October Buddy Boost!

If you are struggling to find the motivation to stay active, then why not sign up for Buddyathon and, with the help of your buddy, have an active October? The mayathon app is free and super-simple. Use it to buddy-up with up to five friends, and support each other to do at least 26 minutes of physical activity a day. The #OctoberBuddyBoost challenge is about doing your daily 26 minutes for 26 days in a row.

- It can be any activity
- Helping you to become healthier and happier!
- And it's about buddies helping each other.



As the nights are drawing in and the weather turning for the worse, we need all the motivation we can get.

“It's great being able to connect with a buddy and keep each other motivated to exercise.”

— Survey respondent, May 2020

You can learn more about the app on [the mayathon website](#), and you can download the app from:

- [Apple App Store](#)
- [Google Play Store](#)



Return to Play Guidelines

We are conscious that government guidelines are changing regularly in relation to sports activity. If you are unsure whether the rule of six applies to your activity, please refer to the [Sport England website](#) for the latest information.

For more sport content, check out our article from our Guest Contributor this month, the Easton Cowgirls Football Team, on [page 6!](#)



About Bristol Mind

Bristol Mind is a mental health charity for people in Bristol and surrounding areas. We promote wellbeing and recovery through a range of services. We recognize that each individual is a resource for their own recovery: many of our staff, volunteers, and trustees have themselves experienced the impact of emotional and mental distress.

Although affiliated to Mind the national charity, Bristol Mind is an independently registered and funded charity. If you would like further information on any of the services offered by Bristol Mind, please don't hesitate to get in touch, using the contact details below.

The information provided in this newsletter is for guidance only. You should contact a doctor or health professional if you need urgent help or medical advice.

We'd love to hear your feedback on our newsletter, so please fill out our survey: <http://surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NKQN9HK>.

If you have any questions or would like to suggest an article, you can reach us at newsletter@bristolmind.org.uk.

bristolmind.org.uk

t: 0117 980 0370

e: admin@bristolmind.org.uk



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[Back to the top](#)