



# Wellbeing Newsletter November 2023

## November 2023 Issue

Welcome to our November 2023 Wellbeing Newsletter!

This November...

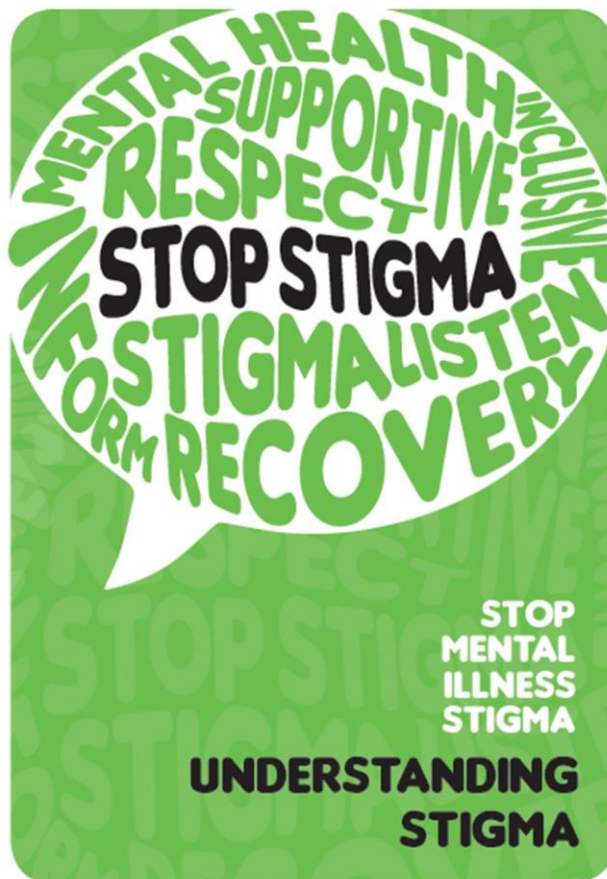
In today's fast-paced world, it's easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of daily life, often neglecting our most important asset: **our well-being**. The journey to a happier, healthier life begins with recognising the significance of well-being and making it a priority. Whether it's practicing mindfulness, nurturing positive relationships, or dedicating time to physical fitness, investing in our well-being not only enhances our quality of life but also boosts our resilience to face life's challenges.

So, take a moment to reflect on your well-being today. What small steps can you take to nourish your mind, body, and spirit? Remember, a commitment to well-being is a lifelong journey, and each step forward brings us closer to a more fulfilling and balanced life.

**Start now and reap the benefits of a well-lived life.**

Faith, Hope and Love.....

Tim Oladimeji



Having a mental health condition usually deeply impacts day-to-day living and can impact an individual's ability to relate to others. Some of the most common mental health conditions include anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, and eating disorders, but there are many others as well. If you have a

mental health condition it is so important to know you are NOT alone. It is also important to note recovery is possible from a mental health condition.

If you are struggling with your mental health or would just like to know a little more about mental health then please see links below.

[Mind](#)

[Mental Health Foundation](#)

[Shout](#)

[Samaritans](#)

**Text**  
**SHOUT**  
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**85258**

**shout**  
**85258** here for  
you 24/7



For better  
mental health

**"It's alright to  
ask for help"**



**116 123**



Connect



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*Spirituality*

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Light a virtual memorial candle online in memory of your loved ones [here](#).



**For Those Who Walked With Us**

**Jan Richardson**

For those  
who walked with us,  
this is a prayer.

For those  
who have gone ahead,  
this is a blessing.

For those  
who touched and tended us,  
who lingered with us  
while they lived,  
this is a thanksgiving.

For those  
who journey still with us  
in the shadows of awareness,  
in the crevices of memory,  
in the landscape of our dreams,  
this is a benediction.

Looking Ahead to ADVENT: try the online 'Pray as you Go' podcasts as a form of retreat for journeying through the Advent season as spiritual preparation for Christmas. Follow link [here](#).

Give







**Foodbank donations:** You are invited to bring any of the following items for our local foodbank. Donations can be dropped off at the Chaplaincy:



**Israeli-Palestine Conflict EMERGENCY APPEAL:** Support CAFOD who have worked for many years in both Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory with partners who are Christian, Jewish, Muslim and secular. Donations can be made [here](#).

## Take Notice

# Let's take action to be Happier and Kinder, Together



### Action for Happiness Calendar 2023

New Ways November! This month we're encouraging you to try something new!

Take a look at the calendar below and see how you can do things to make the month joyful.

*'Just try new things. Don't be afraid, step out of your comfort zone and soar'. – Michelle Obama*

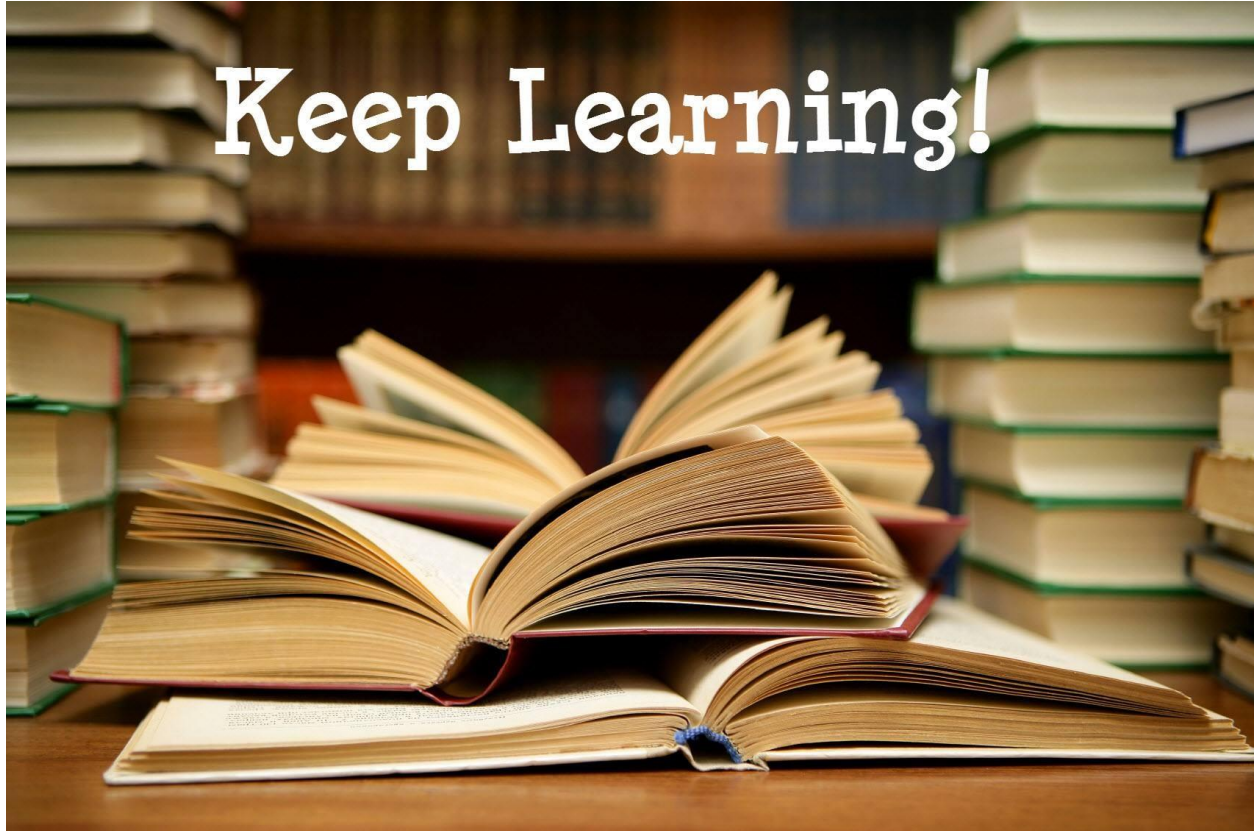
**New Ways November 2023**

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY					
 1. Make a list of new things you want to do this month.	 2. Respond to a difficult situation in a different way.	 3. Get outside and observe the changes in nature around you.	 4. Sign up to join a new course, activity or online community.	 5. Change your normal routine today and notice how you feel!	 6. Try out a new way of being physically active.	 7. Be creative. Cook, draw, write, paint, make or inspire.	 8. Plan a new activity or idea you want to try out this week.	 9. When you feel you can't do something, add the word "yet".	 10. Be curious. Learn about a new topic or an inspiring idea.	 11. Choose a different route and see what you notice on the way.	 12. Find out something new about someone you care about.
 13. Do something playful outdoors – walk, run, explore, relax.	 14. Find a new way to help or support a cause you care about.	 15. Build on new ideas by thinking "Yes, and what if..."	 16. Look at life through someone else's eyes and see their perspective.	 17. Try a new way to practice self-care and be kind to yourself.	 18. Connect with someone from a different generation.	 19. Broaden your perspective: read a different paper, magazine or site.					
 20. Make a meal using a recipe or ingredient you've not tried before.	 21. Learn a new skill from a friend or share one of yours with them.	 22. Find a new way to tell someone you appreciate them.	 23. Set aside a regular time to pursue an activity you love.	 24. Share with a friend something helpful you learned recently.	 25. Use one of your strengths in a new or creative way.	 26. Try out a different radio station or new TV show.					
 27. Join a friend doing their hobby and find out why they love it.	 28. Discover your artistic side. Design a friendly greeting card.	 29. Enjoy new music today. Play, sing, dance or listen.	 30. Look for new reasons to be hopeful, even in tough times.	 31. Share with a friend something helpful you learned recently.	 32. Use one of your strengths in a new or creative way.	 33. Try out a different radio station or new TV show.					

**ACTION FOR HAPPINESS** Happier · Kinder · Together

A row of three icons: a bicycle, a hand holding a sign, and a hand holding a sign.

## Keep Learning



A different perspective on happiness in the world's most contented nation from *Lucy Pearson*, and regardless of its natural advantage she identified an attitude she says found lacking in the UK.

When I was invited to take part in a masterclass in happiness on the shores of [Finnish Lakeland](#), a few of my friends expressed their surprise. But, Lucy, said one, you're one of the happiest people I know. What are you hoping to learn from the Finns? I suppose she had a point. I've always been one of those annoying, glass-half-full people – not the most obvious choice for a four-day trip designed to teach me why Finnish people are consistently rated the happiest in the world. But, ever the optimist, I gladly accepted.

We Britons have about 60 words for happiness: blissfulness, ecstasy, pleasure, delight ... The list is as varied as it is surprising, given that we only just scraped into the top 20 happiest countries in the world this year. Finns, who have been [named the happiest nation](#) for the sixth year running, are either *onnellinen* or *iloinen*. The latter roughly translates as joyful or glad: you might be *iloinen* that you're heading off on holiday. *Onnellinen*, on the other hand, speaks to the notion of being content with your life, rather than describing a fleeting feeling.

In the decade since the first [World Happiness Report](#) was released in 2012, four countries have held the top position: Denmark, Switzerland, Norway and now Finland. It's based on an evaluation called the [Cantril ladder](#), in which respondents are asked to assess the overall happiness of their current lives on a scale of one to 10. The report looks at several factors that could influence a population's happiness, including generosity, freedom and trust.

For the fourth year running, the UK has slipped down the global happiness rankings, dropping two places to number 19. I suppose it's not entirely surprising, given the cost of living, Partygate and the political minefield that is Brexit. Even more worryingly, however, the 2022 global Oracle happiness report for the UK specifically found that [nearly half of Britons](#) (49%) have not felt true happiness in two years. We're currently behind the US, Israel, New Zealand and Luxembourg, but mercifully ahead of the likes of Afghanistan and Lebanon – currently the two least happy countries in the world. This persistent decline in British contentment is concerning.

To find out what we miserable Britons can learn from the Finns, I went to Lake Saimaa – a three-and-a-half-hour drive from Helsinki. It is a resort designed around taking things slowly. Each villa has its own sauna, set in a fragrant pine forest; the smells, the music and the materials have all been designed to appeal to the senses and help guests relax. As many friends rightly pointed out, how could anyone *not* be happy here?

'As many friends rightly pointed out, how could anyone *not* be happy here?'

In many ways, though, my admittedly luxurious stay revealed to me how the Finns approach happiness for everyone. There's no doubt they have got a lot of things right – their love of saunas, for one. Known for their [health benefits](#), saunas are fantastic for calming the mind. And with an estimated [3m saunas](#) for a population of just over 5.5 million, the Finns certainly integrate them into everyday life.

They also have an inclination for spending time in nature, which is something I can get behind. It doesn't have to be extravagant or expensive; [some studies](#) suggest that spending just 15 minutes among trees can lower blood pressure and improve physical and mental health. The accessibility of nature surely plays a part for the Finns: they have 41 [national parks](#), all of them free to enter, [647 rivers](#) and a shoreline that stretches over 1,100km, not even including the country's tens of thousands of islands. Our guide insisted that just getting out for a morning walk to grab a coffee can have beneficial health effects. But as I stood on a deserted stretch of island, inhaling the woody scent of a fire after a cup of soot pan coffee, surrounded by trees and the still waters of a lake, I wasn't entirely sure I would feel as serene on a morning walk to Gail's.

Of course, [Finland scores well](#) on indexes that are considered in global happiness tables: GDP, [equality](#), social support, healthy life expectancy, freedom, generosity, lack of corruption. The Finns face many of the same challenges we do, but their response has been underpinned by three key elements: equality, education and transparency. But more than this, there is an attitude among the Finns that I don't see in the kind of British people who always wonder why I'm so upbeat: a sense of being grateful for their lot. It's a notion echoed in the Finnish proverb, *onnellisuus on se paikka puuttuvaisuuden ja yltäkylläisyyden välillä*, which means "happiness is a place between too little and too much".

Perhaps my biggest takeaway from the trip is the Finnish focus on contentment over joy. On my second day in [Finland](#), I met Timo Auvinen, who leads guided walks around Lake Saimaa. What, I asked, did he think was the secret to his country's world-beating happiness? Laughing drily, he said that Finns have several sayings about their quest for happiness. They include, "the pessimist will never be disappointed" and "happiness always ends in tears", but also, "nothing is so bad that there's nothing good in it". He

noted that Finns' lower expectations leave far less room for disappointment, meaning that a more neutral feeling of contentment is – more often than not – well within reach.

All of which made me think the Finns may be on to something. Instead of striving to have it all, should we be trying to make the most of what we already have: hot coffee, acts of kindness to strangers, free parks, beautiful trees? I wonder if we're missing a trick by focusing on a never-ending search for happiness. That instead of striving for joy – our most highly coveted emotion – we should be satisfied with good old-fashioned contentment. And the occasional walk in a park.

Lucy Pearson is a freelance writer, book blogger and host of The Bondi Literary salon

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## More Updates



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### Updates from HR

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#### Staff Benefits

Please check the HR noticeboards in the Staff Rooms or the CTK Intranet for details of all staff benefits including the Evans Cycle Ride to Work scheme, season ticket loans and Benenden Health Care.


#### Places to go for Support and Advice

[Every Mind Matters](#) – NHS website offering expert advice and practical support on how to deal with your own wellbeing, how to support children’s wellbeing and dealing with the implications of coronavirus on your wellbeing.

[Talking Therapies](#) – Talking therapies are effective treatments that can aid common mental health problems like stress, anxiety and depression. These therapies can be accessed on the NHS and you can either be referred by your GP or you can refer yourself [here](#).

[Urgent Support](#) – If you find yourself in a difficult position and are feeling unable to cope or keep yourself safe, use the options available on urgent support to get support right away.

A range of support is available via DAS 24 Hour Counselling Helpline Service on 0117 934 0105 or through Benenden Health which can be accessed via their App or by phone on **0800 414 8247** (option 2). All calls are through self referral and are confidential.



**benenden health**

## Feel the benefits of private healthcare

Our services include:

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- Physiotherapy
- Mental Health Support
- Care Planning and Social Care Advice
- Cancer Support
- Benenden Health App and Wellbeing Hub

As a member of Benenden Health, you can enjoy the benefits of easy, accessible and affordable healthcare.

Some services have a six month qualifying period. Limits and exclusions apply. Please speak to HR for a copy of Benenden Health's Employee Booklet, which includes full details on every service.



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