

Our Well-Being Newsletter

Newsletter for pupils, parents & staff
Issue 11 – December 2021

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Welcome to our December Well-Being Newsletter!

Autumn has now made way for winter. The days are colder, the nights are longer and Covid-19 restrictions are still upon us but... not long to go now before many get to spread some good tidings and joy celebrating Christmas. It is about time with community, family, food-sharing, gift-giving and overall merry festivities. It is important to hold onto the meaning of Christmas all the more if you cannot mark it in the way you might have in the past. It can be challenging and emotional but accepting the reality can help to plan and concentrate on what is possible and to balance safety and celebration. Ensuring that your loved ones are protected as much as possible from coronavirus may be the greatest gift you can give this year.

Christmas can however be difficult for anyone, at any point in their life. You might be struggling this year for the first time or you may have found Christmas difficult in the past, and you are dreading it again this year. Or you might find some parts of Christmas enjoyable, but other parts stressful, feel lonely or left out. Page 3 details organisations which offer support during the Christmas season and beyond.



Coronavirus and our well-being

Coronavirus has been affecting all our lives, and rules and regulations keep changing all the time, which can feel really hard to deal with, especially if one is already vulnerable, whether physically or emotionally. Coronavirus has induced a considerable level of fear, worry and concern in most of us and among certain groups in particular, such as older adults, care providers and people with underlying health conditions. Those of us living with mental health problems are facing extra challenges too. Many of us have struggled with our mental health during this ongoing pandemic. However, there are tips we can try to help ourselves cope:

- . Looking after our well-being: This does not just include sleeping enough, and what we eat and drink, but also being active, creative, and kind to others – and ourselves. If something helps you feel good, make time to do it.
- . Trying to stick to a routine, keeping in touch with friends and avoiding talking to people who stress us out.
- . If you are a young person, you should be careful about who you are connecting with, and not joining any private groups or chats without your parent's or carer's permission.
- . Despite Covid-19 restrictions, it is still possible to talk to professionals about our mental health, like GPs, psychologists, counsellors, etc.

Remember that it is always ok to ask for help for your emotional health just as it is for your physical health. You are not wasting anyone's time, whether you are having ongoing treatment or seeking support for the first time.

5 steps to mindfully deal with difficult emotions



1. Turn towards your emotions with acceptance: become aware of the emotion and identify where you sense it in your body.
2. Identify and label the emotion: to stay mindful, say to yourself "This is anger" or "This is anxiety".
3. Accept your emotions: Acknowledge and accept that it is there.
4. Realize the short time frame of the emotion: even if the emotion feels overwhelming, remember that it will pass.
5. Ask yourself: "what triggered me? Why do I feel this way?"
6. Let go of the need to control your emotions: be open to the outcome of your emotions and what unfolds.

Dealing with loss

While grieving a loss is an inevitable part of life, there are ways to help you cope with the pain, come to terms with your grief, and eventually, find a way to pick up the pieces and move on with your life:

1. Acknowledge your pain.
2. Accept that grief can trigger many different and unexpected emotions.
3. Understand that your grieving process will be unique to you.
4. Seek out face-to-face support from people who care about you and/or professionals.
5. Support yourself emotionally by taking care of yourself physically.
6. Recognize the difference between grief and depression.



<https://www.cruse.org.uk/>



Bereavement support
for children

Chaplain's Corner



Prayer for the Bereaved

God of love and mercy,
embrace all those
whose hearts today
overflow with grief,
unanswered questions
and such a sense of loss.
Grant them space
to express their tears.
Hold them close
through the coming days.

Further organisations which offer emotional support, including on Christmas Day and New Year's Day:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/christmas-and-mental-health/useful-contacts/>



Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year!