

**Wellbeing Pack 4**

**Assert Update**

**Cat’s Activity**
Cat will be sending 2 virtual activities out each month to replace the standard activity that would have normally been organised.

**Mindfulness Course**

‘Managing Stress and Building Resilience through a Mindfulness and Meditation’ - This programme is designed to introduce to Mindfulness practices and provide some understanding and tools to cope with stress. We will focus on the following topics:
- 6th April - Stress and Mindfulness, getting started with a practice.
- 13th April - Finding opportunities for Mindfulness in Everyday Life and for helping Sleep.
- 20th April - Mindfulness for Managing Thoughts
- 27th April - Mindfulness and Kindness towards Ourselves and Others

If you are unable to attend the session, Emerald is recording the course. Please email Julia on lifeskills@assertbh.org.uk if you would like copy.

**Assert’s Webinar Series**

There has been an impressive influx of new online resources for education and online course in the past few weeks, and then it dawned on us that we have a wide and varied source of knowledge within our own members! Assert wondered in any of our members would like to create a video about a subject they are interested in? All videos will need to be a maximum of 15 minutes long and will then be uploaded to our YouTube channel so that these videos can educate the other members of the Assert community. If you would like to know more or have a topic you would like to make a video about, please contact Jenna on jenna@assertbh.org.uk

**Active Club**

I will be sending out a different exercise video each week that we can do at home. I thought it would be nice if those of us who can, try to do it at the same time on a Friday afternoon at 3pm. Or whenever you can fit it into your week! This way, although well be doing it separately we can feel as though we are still doing it together! If you have any questions, please email jenna@assertbh.org.uk

**Benefits Caseworker**
Alex, our new Benefits Caseworker with Assert is now officially in post! She is now taking referrals for remote support. Although she does currently have a 3 week waiting list. Please contact her by email with any benefits questions or to arrange a remote appointment: benefits@assertbh.org.uk

**Telephone Support Sessions**
During this strange and unusual time we are currently living through, Assert have set up the opportunity to have a phone call or video chat with one of our volunteers. Calls will last up to 30 minutes and can be one offs or weekly. To book a chat or for more information please email Cat at activities@assertbh.org.uk

**Nature Documentary**

Seeing as we can't go out into the countryside for our usual wellbeing walk... why don't we bring nature to us!? Julia invites you to join her from the comfort of our own homes to watch the fascinating 'Empire of the Ants' the BBC documentary from David Attenborough (60 minutes). Then on Friday the 24th of April at 2:00 she will hold a 45-minute discussion session via Zoom where we can share what we've most enjoyed about the documentary, interesting facts we've learnt and decide which documentary we'll watch next! If you'd like to join the documentary discussion session, please email Julia asking for the ID meeting on lifeskills@assertbh.org.uk

<https://documentaryheaven.com/attenborough-empire-of-ants/>

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**5 Ways to Wellbeing**

The 5 Ways to Wellbeing were published over 10 years ago, you may have heard about them before or seen posters around Assert, Community Base or other spaces. These 5 ways of curating and maintaining a sense of wellbeing are as important as ever during this time where we all need to stay home and social-distance. Although it is near impossible to hide from the impact of what is happening, it is also important to focus on what we can do to take care of ourselves from home. The 5 Ways Framework also enables us to create structure within our days that we may have lost in recent weeks. Below I will list of recommendations and then discuss how you could adapt these ideas into your current day-to-day.

1. **Connect**

*Connect with the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.*

Current guidelines state that we must continue to self-isolate at home and only socialise with those we live with. This has had a huge upheaval on how we all connect with one another. To continue to connect of others during this time takes a little more imagination. Fortunately, we have technology and the internet to make virtual communication easier than ever before. There are new online platforms arising such as Google Hangout and Zoom so that people can socialise from home. We can also stay in touch with people via Skype, texting, Facebook and WhatsApp & online forums. Using the telephone once a day to call someone for a even a short catch-up can be extremely good for our wellbeing, and probably the person you call! Or when thinking of what to talk about seems too much, maybe a simple text that says “Thinking of you” to a loved one - cause many of us are feeling lonelier than usual now.

This change has of course altered and changed the activities that myself and the team organise at Assert. We are all working on how to adapt and improve how we provide our service to you remotely, so that the Assert community to remain connected.

1. **Be Active**

*Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and that suits your level of mobility and fitness.*

The current guidelines say that each person is entitled to go out each day for a walk, cycle or run. As mentioned in previous Wellbeing Packs, being able to look at the sea once a day or go to a green space such as your local park is beneficial for our wellbeing. When exercising outside there are the options of going for a stroll, maybe run (trying the Couch to 5k if you fancy a challenge!) or the hopping on one of the Brighton Bikes on a sunny day to get the blood moving.

Previous Wellbeing Packs have provided some ideas of different free online group workouts and exercise videos to choose from. I have also sent out a different exercise video as part of the Active Club for us all to do from our homes on a Friday afternoon (or when we can fit it into our week).

1. **Be curious**

*Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.*

While taking some time for yourself outside, taking a deep breath of fresh air and having a mindful moment outside can be positive for our minds and bodies. This can be called ‘mindfulness’, or simply setting aside some time in your day to reflect on how you are feeling. Sometimes this can feel quite scary, especially when everything around us at the moment can feel quite chaotic but harnessing this skill of looking inwards can create a sense of stability.

I have been joining in with the Julia’s Mindfulness & Meditation course with Emerald on a Monday evening. This week we learnt about being mindful during everyday experiences like walking, eating or showering. One way of doing this was to take the time when doing something to take note of; 5 things you can see, 4 things you can hear, 3 thing that you can sense, 2 things you can smell and 1 thing you can taste. This tool is applicable to lots of different situations. Tomorrow, when I am out for my daily walk, I am going to stop, take a deep breath, look at the sea, listening to the birds, feel gratitude and smell the fresh air.

1. **Keep learning**

*Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. As well as being fun, learning new things will make you more confident.*

Learning something new may seems a little out of reach right now. Some days feel like it is only possible to do the bare minimum. But we also propose practicing a skill we already possess. This can be a good way of shutting out the outside world and concentrating on something we enjoy. Feeling that we are developing in something can also give us a great sense of achievement. For example, I am a terrible cook. My housemate on the other hand works is a fantastic cook. Therefore, we are trying to use this time at home to practice (/for her to teach me). With more time to think about what to cook, and more time to read about what to do, I don’t feel as nervous or pressured as usual.

There are also lots of online recourses being made available through different academic or culture organisations. Many of these have listed in previous Wellbeing Packs. Assert has also continued organising learning opportunities for us. Cat has begun sending out fortnightly cultural activities for us to learn from, and this week Julia is starting a nature documentary discussion group. There is also the opportunity to educate and learn from one another with the new Webinar Series.

1. **Give**

*Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.*

There are still ways that we can help others while following the guidelines and self-isolating: acts of kindness can definitely go a long way. This can be in small deeds such as offering help & saying hello to a neighbour, making a cup of tea for someone you live with, thanking someone for their help, offering to share a skill with friend, or recommending a podcast or films to friends.

Assert is doing what it can to support our members, and I know many other organisations & charities are also working hard to create online spaces. New avenues of support are also being created for those of you who need assistance during this time. If you are in need, there are recourses to help you get food or prescriptions in your local area. Please contact a member of the Assert team and we put you in contact with service that can help. Alternatively, if you would like to offer your services in a particular area, please get in contact as well.

<https://neweconomics.org/2008/10/five-ways-to-wellbeing-the-postcards>