

COVID-19 Government Update

We can all help control the virus if we all stay alert. This means you must:

- stay at home as much as possible
- work from home if you can
- limit contact with other people
- keep your distance if you go out (2 metres apart where possible)
- wash your hands regularly

Do not leave home if you or anyone in your household has symptoms.

Anyone in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland experiencing a new, continuous cough, high temperature or a loss of or change in your normal sense of smell or taste can book a test by visiting www.nhs.uk/coronavirus.

Those unable to access the internet can call 119 in England and Wales or 0300 303 2713 in Scotland and Northern Ireland to book a test.

**STAY
ALERT** 

**CONTROL
THE VIRUS**

 **SAVE
LIVES**

Check out #TogetherLeeds on
Twitter for some positive stories!

Nominated for Leeds Compassionate City Awards—"Community Organisation or Charity of the Year 2019"

Updates from LIP Members—Over to You!

Stephen Hart—Lockdown can open a reflective space

Stephen is the lead facilitator for Leeds Mindfulness, Wellbeing & Spirituality Centre <https://mindfulness-spirituality-leeds.co.uk> and is the organiser for the annual Kirkstall Abbey Mindfulness Festival in October. He is also a member of LIP's Visible adult survivor community and leads meditation, mindfulness and positive emotion enhancement in the third sector.

I don't know about you but Lockdown has brought a number of challenges – but also opportunities. While there is a great deal of suffering and loss, people can also enter a space of reflection, and even meditation, mindfulness and spiritual expressions of wanting to connect with something deeper and more meaningful in their lives. I was watching the news last Sunday and there were reports that on-line religious and spiritual services were being very well attended – right across the religious spectrum.

Now you don't have to be religious or spiritual to find a reflective space. You might have more a self-help or psychological growth perspective or you might just want, or need, to be quiet. In a reflective space you might just want to be with your thoughts, feelings and emotions. You might want a space where these can have some “air” – let our thoughts “breathe” – watching them come into being and watch them dissipate like clouds that pass through sky. Or you might want to see them as like waves in water – the water being the depths of our being however we conceive that. Alternatively, you might want space to think and just to be aware of what you are thinking.

A reflective space might also be a space for self-nurturing and expressing loving kindness towards ourselves. The following is a loving kindness and self nurturing meditation which you're invited to practise.

First find a quiet or quieter space. Your garden ? Or bedroom ? If necessary hang a “don't disturb” sign on your door. Maybe have a chat with your family that you need some reflective space or ask them to join in.

Lie down or sit comfortably with a straight back chair. Let yourself relax. Gently breathe through any areas of tension and be open to any pockets of relaxation or wellbeing in the body. Let your face soften feeling the air around your face. Let your scalp relax. Let your shoulders fall away from the head. Let your belly be natural; letting the breath also be natural; just easing your awareness into watching the naturalness of the breath.

Then focus on the heart centre – the centre of the chest and just be with whatever you are feeling – not judging it or trying to change it nor analysing or “controlling” any aspect of your practise. Be natural not chasing thoughts or pushing them away. Stay with this for a couple of minutes.

Then imagine a beautiful flower radiating and opening at the heart centre – your favourite flower. I usually see a yellow vibrant rose. As this flower opens and blooms, you begin to wish yourself loving kindness, using the phrases “May I be well”, “May I be happy”, “May I be safe”, “May I find fulfilment” or whatever phrases you want to use that express self-nurturing and loving kindness. You breathe in and then say the phrase and then breathe out and repeat the process. You express the phrases quietly in your heart space.

Then imagine the light from the flower radiating throughout the entire body easing areas of discomfort and delighting in any pockets of wellbeing. It's like if you find any difficulties you ease them with awareness, acceptance, patience and loving kindness. Stay with any part of the practise for as long as you need to. Above all listen to and respect your heart's intelligence and innate qualities. Then to end, slowly open your eyes if they were closed and spend a few moments just looking at the room around you and slowly re-engage with your next activity.

I'll conclude by saying that the heartspace is a vital resource in processing difficulties and finding deeper capacities inside us that bring change, direction and emotional intelligence. Thank you for reading this.

Cakes by Joy!

Our lovely member Joy has been baking cakes for her children! See below some of her delicious creations.



Keeping busy with Liza!

Liza has been keeping busy by doing all sorts of things like creating art, writing poems, dyeing t-shirts, and teaching her dog basic BSL!



Twix



Association of Blind Asians—Online Classes

Since March, Association of Blind Asians have started online classes to support mental and physical health during this tough time.

Association of Blind Asian's staff is continuing to deliver online activity classes and chair-based exercise sessions on Zoom with the help of our tutors.

The sessions take place every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm and are open to the people who are disabled, elderly, isolated and lonely.

Please ask anyone interested to contact for registration on
Fareen Hasan - fareenh@abaleeds.org.uk / 0787 816 5431
Jaya Bahl - jayab@abaleeds.org.uk / 0741 351 3123

Baking with Heather

Our Finance and Projects Officer, Heather, has been baking at home!





Paul Abraham—Loneliness fuelled by lockdown

Sticking to the government guidelines regarding self-isolation and social distancing is paramount, however staying at home with limited or no human contact can have a significant impact on our mental well-being especially the feeling of loneliness.

It was reported in 2018 by the Office of National Statistics that there were 5% of adults in England who reported feeling lonely “often” or “always” and that number was increasing each year, so the current situation will show an even bigger percentage of people trying to cope with feeling lonely and isolated during this “lockdown”

Social-isolation stops our day-to-day interactions with fellow human beings, such as going to the newsagent, shopping, meeting friends for a coffee or going for a gym session. Many people rely on such connections to maintain good mental health as it's both stimulating and something to look forward to.

So how can we cope during this testing period in our lives?

Staying in contact either by social media or telephone is important as it's a connection with people going through the same frustrating scenario. Making or receiving a phone call from someone you've not spoken to for a while provides a perfect opportunity for a good “catch-up” and the chance to hear the latest gossip!

If you're on Facebook or Instagram then you can make contact with friends and relatives through that and could even form your own groups of like-minded people to specifically discuss hobbies, music or your favourite television programme or sports team.

Keeping physical healthy can help boost your mood and ease loneliness too, so it is important to eat as well as you can and do some exercise however gentle it may be. Exercise doesn't have to be a heart-pounding, gut busting routine it can be just a very easy stretching routine or includes some Yoga or Pilates techniques, please make sure before you start any exercise programme to consult your GP or health professional to make sure it's safe for you to start exercising. After you have done your training routine you could then make a healthy meal or eat some fruit. Eating your meal or fruit can be made even more uplifting if you do it in a mindfulness way, where you take time to smell, feel and taste each portion, by fully experiencing each portion you will enjoy it more and also help your digestive system by taking your time to taste, chew and swallow each mouthful.

P.T.O.

Loneliness fuelled by lockdown—continued

Consider re-connecting with a favourite hobby or pastime that you've neglected recently. It could be in the form of art, trying to learn a musical instrument or language or just getting the opportunity to read those books you've bought from the charity shops but have never got round to sitting down and reading. Now's your chance!

Loneliness is a terrible feeling when things are "normal" but in this never before experienced situation it makes things even harder and lonelier. If you are struggling then please check out local community groups or charities for advice. Remember, seeking help isn't a show of weakness; it's a show of strength as you've recognised you need some "outside" help or advice. We will all need a helping hand at some point during this surreal period in our lives.

Paul Abraham—Lockdown emergency box

The longer the country remains in lockdown it is inevitable that we are all going to have days where our mental health will struggle and we'll have some "down" days. One way to prepare for the worst days is to create your own "emergency box". On New Year's Eve 2014 I was five minutes from taking my own life and it was my "emergency box" which resulted in me still being here now and allowed me to help and advise other people who are struggling and suffering from mental health issues.

Remember the box is personal and individual to you so can contain anything that brings a smile to your face and gives you happy and inspiring feelings. This could be favourite photographs of family and friends, a favourite CD or DVD, a list of motivating quotes, a bottle of your favourite tippie or an expensive box of chocolates. A small bottle of aromatherapy oil, which when smelt triggers a wonderful memory of someone or somewhere special can also be included.

Keep the box safe and only use it when you really need a big lift. After you have used it then replenish it with other favourite things in case you need to go to it again in the future.

Thank you to our members for their brilliant contribution!
To be included in the next newsletter, email your ideas to
Heather.Deal@leedsinvolvement.org.uk

What have LIP been doing?

LIP's Friday Social



Every Friday at 2pm you can join LIP's Zoom Social event for a catch-up with other LIP members and staff—share what you've been doing and how you're coping with lockdown! Sometimes we will have speakers such as Leeds Cancer Awareness Project to share important information with you.

Meeting ID:
872 7897 0807
Meeting Password:
829242

People in Action have created some very helpful Zoom tutorials, which you can access here: <http://peopleinaction.org.uk/uncategorized/2020/zoom-tutorials/>

You can join our meeting here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87278970807?pwd=R0hlUHdsallFaXBycG0xZmtwMG1mQT09>

Acts 435—...giving to anyone who has need

Our Involvement Coordinator, Alison, is an advocate for Acts 435. If you or someone you know is living in poverty, get in touch with Alison and we will see if and how we can help you.

**ACTS
435**

DIRECT GIVING TO SPECIFIC NEEDS OF PEOPLE IN UK POVERTY



A local church or charity appoints a representative called "The Advocate".



The Advocate posts requests for help on the Acts 435 website on behalf of local people in need.



Acts 435 donors read the applicants' stories and give through the website.



The Advocate contacts the applicant to give them the item so desperately needed.

What have we been doing?

Getting Digital!



100% Digital Leeds takes a furthest first approach – the most likely people to be digitally-excluded are those who have other challenges and factors making it more difficult for them to engage, such as disability, learning difficulties, poverty, homelessness, addiction, language barriers, long-term health conditions, social isolation, memory problems etc.

Leeds is a diverse and compassionate city with a fantastic 3rd sector full of charities and voluntary organisations doing amazing work to give support to those who need it. 100% Digital Leeds works with these organisations to help embed digital into what they already do, building their capacity to support the people they work with.

LIP have been working with 100% Digital Leeds to provide technology to some of our members. At the moment, we are working with Amazon Alexas and distributing these amongst our membership—if you are interested in receiving one of these get in touch with Sam Altan at LIP and we will endeavour to provide technology to you in a safe and timely fashion.

Leeds DEAForum / Barnsley Deaf Community

If you are a member of the Deaf community and would like to chat to our workers Maka Camm or Khalid Ashraf—whether it is socially or you have an information or referral request, you can contact us and we will make an appointment with them for you. You are not alone!

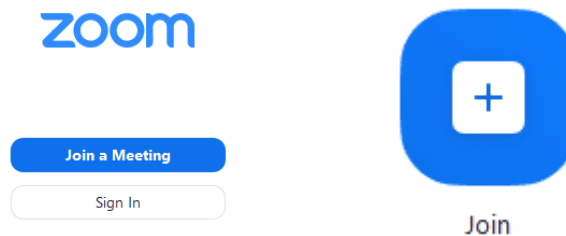
It is with great sadness that we must share two recent losses to the Deaf community. Leeds DEAForum member, Diane Colville, and BSL Interpreter, Alan Haythornthwaite, have passed away. Both will be missed greatly by the Deaf and hearing communities alike! Our thoughts are with their families at this time.



Join our Barnsley Deaf Community Facebook Group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/772161439549200/>) and Leeds DEAForum Facebook Group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1526263744204768/>) for regular updates!

Using Zoom—Online Meetings

1. Visit www.zoom.us.
2. Join a meeting using one of the following.
 - Click “Join a meeting” if you want to join without signing in.
 - Sign in to Zoom then click “Join”.



3. Enter the meeting ID number and your display name.

- If you're signed in, change your name if you don't want your default name to appear.
- If you're not signed in, enter a display name.

Join a Meeting

Meeting ID or Personal Link Name

Grant MacLaren

☐ Do not connect to audio

☐ Turn off my video

4. Select if you would like to connect audio and/or video and click Join.

Visible Project

The Visible Reference Group, for survivors of childhood sexual abuse, have put together a newsletter full of information and stories! If you are interested in being involved with this group or would like to view a copy of the newsletter please get in touch with Alison.

Together We Can

Together We Can have started hosting virtual meetings—the next meeting will be Monday 29th June at 1:30pm. Here is the meeting link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8171578113?pwd=c29QS1dDdnNhYWZQUk1pOHM3Z3Fhdz09> and here is the Meeting ID: 817 157 8113 and Password: 526989. We hope you can make it!

Throughout Mental Health Awareness Week we have collated Together We Can Kindness Stories which is full of positive stories from our members. If you would like a copy of this please get in touch and we will arrange this for you!

What have we been doing?



Better Lives Board

The Better Lives Board is Healthy living, social care and Age Friendly services working together to make Leeds the best city for health and wellbeing. On behalf of Leeds City Council, LIP facilitate the Better Lives Board Service Users and Carers group, where you can share your experiences direct with LCC commissioners and shape their policies. The group will be meeting virtually every month to ensure any issues around COVID-19 are shared direct with senior staff at the local authority. If you are interested, get in touch with us and we will provide more information!

PVG Digitalisation Sub-Group

The engagement leads in the NHS, LCC and voluntary sector continue to meet to discuss various matters as to the response to COVID-19 ensuring that the most vulnerable have appropriate support and are not excluded in Leeds. Healthwatch Leeds CEO Hannah Davies chairs this and the other groups ensuring that city leaders are made aware of the progress and learnings that need to be undertaken to protect the most vulnerable.

Social Care Community Forum for Race Equality

We will be holding our first virtual Community Forum meeting on Wednesday 17th June at 2pm on Zoom. Our main focus will be the effects of COVID-19 on BAME communities.

Register your attendance here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/social-care-community-forum-for-race-equality-tickets-106918177146>

Leeds Involving People Board Meeting

LIP's Board have regular discussions regarding the direction of LIP and how we are going to work under COVID-19 restrictions. We are constantly adapting and are pleased with alternative ways of working to include people, however we are very conscious that online working does not work for everyone and that this needs to be addressed. We are reviewing our Return to Office procedure as well as looking at different premises—let us know if there is anywhere you would like to see us based!

ASC Emergency Duty Team

For anyone in Leeds suffering a mental health crisis the first port of call would be third sector support via Mindwell Leeds. However, where it appears an individual cannot be supported via this route they can be referred to the Mental Health Single Point of Access on 0300 300 1485. This is an NHS service available 24/7 and is the route to a crisis mental health assessment and any secondary-level care. If someone is believed to be at immediate risk of harm, the police should be phoned on 999 – if police officers are concerned on seeing the person, they will liaise with mental health services via a dedicated number. It is only when mental health services have exhausted attempts at supporting a person and believe that compulsory hospital admission is required that they will refer them to daytime Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) services or Emergency Duty Team for a Mental Health Act assessment. The Adult Emergency Duty Team operates between 5pm and 8am weekdays and continuously over weekends and bank holidays. The EDT is generally staffed by an Approved Mental Health Professional, who is responsible for undertaking urgent Mental Health Act assessments and responding to social care emergencies which cannot wait until the next working day.

Examples of social care emergencies which cannot wait until the next working day include:

- Some non-availability (e.g. due to hospital admission) of somebody who provides a high level of care for a person, such that the individual can't be kept safe or their basic needs cannot be met and subsequently that person would require an emergency residential placement or emergency home care.
- Sudden and dramatic increase in a person's needs (found not to be due to an acute medical need) to the extent that an immediate increase in their commissioned care and support is needed.

The EDT can be contacted on 0113 3780644 or via edt.ss@leeds.gov.uk

The Equipment and Telecare Service User Group

Our next meeting of The Equipment and Telecare Service User Group will be held on Zoom on 16th June at 11am. Our main focus will be the availability of equipment throughout lockdown and digital inclusion.

Here is the meeting link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8171578113?wd=c29QS1dDdnNhYWZQUk1pOHM3Z3Fhdz09> and here is the Meeting ID: 817 157 8113 Password: 526989.

Thank You For Reading

Top tips

YOUR DOORSTEP YOUR DECISION

If you feel pressured,
ask the person to leave.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY ARE BEST

Support from
trusted friends, family or
neighbours is ideal. Be vigilant
for strangers offering services at the
door that may want to take
advantage.

NO SNAP DECISIONS

Take time to talk to someone
you trust before you make any
decisions.

DO THE CHECKS

You can check ID badges and
contact associations to check
membership registrations yourself.
Call the telephone number of the
organisation, obtain this number
yourself, not from the person at the
door.

APRIL 2020

Thank you for reading the latest LIP newsletter—we give thanks to our partners for their ongoing support on behalf of the LIP Board!



Leeds
CITY COUNCIL



Leeds
Clinical Commissioning Group



Digital



“Advonet”
Providing Independent Advocacy



Leeds and York Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS



**SOUTH YORKSHIRE
POLICE**



Barnsley Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust



**South Yorkshire
Fire & Rescue**
WORKING FOR A SAFER SOUTH YORKSHIRE



BARNSELEY
Metropolitan Borough Council



**Women's Counselling
and Therapy Service**



Barnsley College
Together We Achieve



**West Yorkshire
Combined
Authority**



Leeds Recovery College



Stay in touch!

Telephone: 0113 237 4508

Mobile: 0734 082 7109

Address: First Floor, Unit 8, Gemini Business Park, Sheepscar Way, LS7 3JB

Website: www.leedsinvolvement.org.uk

Email: info@leedsinvolvement.org.uk

Twitter: @InvolvingYou

Facebook: [facebook.com/LIP2020](https://www.facebook.com/LIP2020)

JustGiving: <https://www.justgiving.com/leedsip>