Welcome to the new, fortnightly, Ripley staff Wellbeing Matters newsletter where we will be sharing lots of positive ideas and information to help support everyone’s mental wellbeing and health, particularly during these challenging and difficult times.

We’d love to hear and share your ideas, tips and suggestions which you can email to wellbeingmatters@ripley.lancs.sch.uk

Mental wellbeing is about feeling good and functioning well and is important to all of us. It is important for our physical health too, and it can help us to achieve the goals we set for ourselves. Having good mental wellbeing does not mean that you will never experience feelings or situations that you find difficult, but it does mean that you feel you have the resilience to cope when times are tougher than usual.

...we share some ideas on how to help improve your wellbeing during lockdown, including The 8 dimensions of wellbeing, Some Good News, Tops Tips for Winter Wellbeing, along with a delicious winter recipe from Sue Exton. There is also some excellent practical advice on managing online workload from Andy Korab, a reflective reminder from Nikki Mann and a lucky prize winner of a mixed fruit and veg box which has been generously donated by The Veg Box Company. Finally, there is the Action for Happiness January 2021 Calendar with lots of inspiring ideas for daily actions to help make yourself and others happier.

If you would like to get involved or contribute to future editions, please drop us a line at wellbeingmatters@ripley.lancs.sch.uk
Maintaining an optimal level of wellness is absolutely crucial to live a higher quality life. Wellness matters because everything we do and every emotion we feel relates to our well-being. In turn, our well-being directly affects our actions and emotions. It’s an ongoing circle. Therefore, it is important for everyone to achieve optimal wellness in order to subdue stress, reduce the risk of illness and ensure positive interactions.

The 8 dimensions of wellness

1. Occupational wellness

Occupational wellness is about enjoying your occupational endeavors and appreciating your contributions. This dimension of wellness encourages personal satisfaction and enrichment in one’s life through work.

2. Emotional wellness

Emotional wellness relates to understanding your feelings and coping effectively with stress. It is important to pay attention to self-care, relaxation, stress reduction and the development of inner resources so you can learn and grow from experiences.

3. Spiritual wellness

Spiritual wellness allows you to develop a set of values that help you seek meaning and purpose. Spirituality can be represented in many ways, for example, through relaxation or religion. But being spiritually well means knowing which resources to use to cope with issues that come up in everyday life.

4. Environmental wellness

Environmental wellness encourages you to respect the delicate balance between the environment and yourself. Respect for other living things in our environment is just as necessary as respect for the physical environment itself.
The 8 dimensions of wellness

5. Financial wellness
Financial Wellness involves the process of learning how to successfully manage financial expenses. Money plays a critical role in our lives and not having enough of it impacts health as well as academic performance. Financial stress is repeatedly found to be a common source of stress, anxiety.

6. Physical wellness
Physical wellness relates to maintaining a healthy body and seeking care when needed. Physical health is attained through exercise, eating well, getting enough sleep and paying attention to the signs of illness and getting help when needed.

7. Social wellness
Social wellness helps you perform social roles effectively and comfortably, and create a support network. This dimension of wellness allows you to not only develop encouraging relationships with peers, but also intimate relationships with romantic partner.

8. Intellectual wellness
Intellectual wellness involves having an open mind when you encounter new ideas and continuing to expand your knowledge. It encourages active participation in scholastic, cultural and community activities.
One way to help your wellbeing is to look for ways to celebrate or to focus on the positives. Taking inspiration from John Krasinski's (star of Jack Ryan and The Quiet Place) YouTube channel 'Some Good News', we hope to shine light on some happy news from the Ripley community and elsewhere.

Please get in touch if you have some good news to share.

Ripley News

Congratulations to Freya P (Year 7) on a fantastic effort for her PE task, running 10k for the Maggie Fleming animal hospice and raising over £500 in the process.

And elsewhere...
A nurse in Stoke said she was "lost for words" after school pupils clubbed together to buy pizza for staff at their local critical care unit. Many people on Twitter have said they would follow the example.

It is great to see the caring nature of young people both at Ripley and across the country.

Birthday Corner

Happy Birthday to:

Chris Hale
(who hits a half century this week!)

and

Louise Whitehouse

Hope you both have a great day!
TOP TIPS FOR WINTER WELLBEING

GET OUTSIDE OFTEN

It’s easy to avoid going outside in winter. But staying inside for days on end, with nothing but artificial warmth and sniffing companions for company, is why most people get sick over winter. Choose a day when the sky is blue and clear or it’s not raining. Dress warmly, and step out and feel that winter sunshine. Admire how beautiful and clean your world looks when there is snow on the ground. You’ll feel much better for it.

KEEP UP THE EXERCISE

We know that it can be harder to stay motivated when it’s cold outside and the days are shorter. Find something that fits in with your life. Buy something appropriate to wear and schedule in workouts as you would an appointment. Download a mobile app such as Map My Fitness to chart your fitness. Make the most of a beautiful sunny winter’s day, dress warmly, and run in the cold.

MAKE THE MOST OF WINTER FRUIT & VEG

Eating during winter doesn’t have to be boring and vitamin deficient. Keep carbohydrate-laden foods such as white bread and pasta to a minimum and fill your plate with dark leafy greens and winter squash. These fruits and vegetables are laden with nutrients, antioxidants and fibre which increase your energy and help keep that winter-weight at bay. They may help reduce your risk of cancer too.
TOP TIPS FOR WINTER WELLBEING

WATCH YOUR VITAMIN D LEVELS

Our immune system and our mood rely on vitamin D. Because vitamin D is made in our bodies after exposure to the sun, it is not uncommon for people to become vitamin D deficient during the winter months. Vitamin D also helps ensure that our bodies absorb and retain calcium and phosphorus for building bone.

PROTECT YOUR SKIN FROM INSIDE OUT AND OUTSIDE IN

Cold, dry air quickly sucks moisture from our skin. Combine that with a blasting of hot air from central heating and some nice scratchy winter fabric and your skin can end up being one dry, itchy, scaly mess. Keep moisture locked into your skin with a heavy, oil-based moisturizer. Drink plenty of water and consider using a humidifier to help add moisture to the air.

TRY TO KEEP A REGULAR SLEEP SCHEDULE

Our sleep-wake cycle is regulated by the hormone melatonin, which is released in response to light. Exposing yourself to too much light at night - such as that emitted from computer screens, TV screens or electronic devices decreases sleep quality and quantity. Get up and go to bed at the same time of day regardless of the season. Restrict computer use and TV watching at night.
Looking after your wellbeing while working online

If you’re anything like me, your online life is currently outweighing your offline life and the line between your social time and work is blurring. As time goes on, this may have an adverse effect on our wellbeing, both physically and mentally. I would like to offer the following advice to help ensure we all remain happy and well while working online during these strange times. If some of them work for you – fantastic.

- Andy Korab

Physical Wellbeing

- Take regular breaks from your device. Stretch your legs and go and make a cup of tea or healthy snack.

- Go outside for at least 15mins and get some fresh air. This could be going for a walk or simply spending some time in the garden.

- Be aware of your posture while working at your computer. Your chair should be supporting your back.

- Make sure your screen is level with your eyes. Use a pile of books or angle your screen to prevent neck strain.

- If you are using a laptop, I recommend using a mouse to help prevent RSI. I find this also helps navigate around the screen during a live lesson.

- We can sometimes get immersed in our online work and lose track of time. Ensure you schedule regular breaks.

- Ensure you stay hydrated and drink plenty of water.


Mental Wellbeing

- Schedule your live lessons at least a week in advance so you’re not worrying about them. I find the repeat function in Teams is perfect for this. Use the help website I shared to troubleshoot any problems.

- Please ask for help if you are struggling with anything. I am only an email away and there are plenty of colleagues who will also help.

- Turn your work emails off on your phone (I prefer not to – this is a personal choice). You need your social time.

- Don’t reinvent the wheel. If you find something works for you online, stick to it.

- Don’t put pressure on yourself about live lessons. No lesson is perfect when done normally so don’t expect it to be perfect online.

- Social media (particularly Twitter) is full of educational debate and opinion. Take these conversations lightly as it’s very easy to be caught up in the ‘what ifs and maybes’.
With the short days and terrible weather, January and February are often dull and grey. But when it comes to produce, the winter months don’t have to be boring. There’s such a wide variety of seasonal produce meaning it is possible to inject some colour into your cooking. From hearty root vegetables to bright, sweet citrus fruit, winter produce offers a surprising range of flavours.

Earthy, root vegetables are in their prime at this time of year, particularly butternut squash, parsnips, beetroot and celeriac - perfect for those warming winter roasts. The winter season is also a fantastic moment for brassicas such as Brussels sprouts and kohlrabi, as well as other greens such as kale and the trusty leek. Pears, apples and quinces are your go-to fruit at this time of year, delicious for crumbles, tarts, jams or your fruit bowl!

An often underrated seasonal vegetable is the humble cabbage. Cabbages are large, round, leafy members of the brassica family. There are many varieties of cabbage and they’re harvested at different times throughout the year. Home-grown varieties include Savoy, January King, white, and red cabbages. Raw, cooked or preserved, cabbages play an important role in both Western and Eastern cuisines. They’re packed with vitamins, high in iron and potassium and low in calories.
Winter Vegetables

Why not try this Hairy Bikers recipe for Bubble and Squeak?

Ingredients
3 tbsp olive oil
2 leeks, washed, sliced
1.25kg /2lb 12oz potatoes, peeled, boiled, mashed and left to cool
750g/1lb 10oz spring cabbage, finely shredded, blanched (or leftover cooked cabbage or Brussels sprouts)
sea salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper

Method
1. Heat half of the olive oil in a frying pan and cook the leeks for 3-4 minutes, or until softened but not coloured.

2. Mix the leeks, mashed potato and cabbage together in a bowl. Season, to taste, with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

3. Heat the remaining olive oil in the frying pan. Place four 7.5cm/3in chefs’ ring into the pan and spoon the bubble and squeak into the rings, packing down gently. Cook until golden-brown on the bottom, turn the rings over carefully and cook on the other side. Remove from the pan and keep warm until ready to serve, carefully removing the chefs’ rings before serving. N.B. As an alternative to chefs’ rings, just use lightly floured palms to shape into patties.

We’d love to see your efforts, or any cooking you’re doing over lockdown. Email or Tweet us @RipleyFood
As part of our fortnightly staff wellbeing newsletter, The Veg Box Company in Preston are very generously donating a mixed box of fruit and veg, to a member of Ripley staff, selected by the random name generator.

We are extremely grateful for their kind offer which we hope you enjoy!

CONGRATULATIONS!

MATT WALLACE

For more information about fresh, locally sourced fruit and veg, delivered to your door, visit:

https://thevegboxcompany.co.uk/
When Jesus was asked to summarise the key commandments this was the second of two commands that he gave. It is often further shortened to simply “Love your neighbour” and we have certainly seen some amazing and inspiring examples of love shown to others in the last 12 months in our own or the wider community. Many of us have been and will be involved in such acts of service, kindness and making sacrifices for others. As we do so though, let’s not forget the second part of the command; it says to love others as you love yourself. To value others as you value yourself. To care for others as you care for yourself. Looking for ways to take care of and value ourselves is just as important as caring for and valuing others but it is an often overlooked action, especially in the midst of upheaval and change. So let’s make this week a time when we commit to a random act of kindness towards ourselves, whatever that may be, whatever we may need to be to look after our own wellbeing…guilt free!

Nikki Mann