



STUDENT WELLBEING MATTERS

Ripley St Thomas CE Academy Student Wellbeing Newsletter



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The Power of Positivity

Positivity is all about being optimistic in your thoughts, attitude and actions. Positivity is maintaining your calmness, composure, hopefulness, enthusiasm, energy and love for life. When you have positive perspectives, you perceive things differently and that enables you to feel more positive. Positivity helps you to look ahead regardless of your current situation. First three steps to success i.e., believe in yourself, set goals and take action, are greatly influenced by positivity. The secret of success is focus and positivity helps you to stay focused on whatever you do in life. When you are focused, you will achieve your goals.

Positivity helps you to stay motivated during hard times. The journey of success begins with a positive mindset. Positive thinking helps you to develop a growth mindset. You develop a "can do" attitude only when you have positive thoughts. Only positive thoughts are not enough, you must take action in the right direction with discipline. Positive thinking supports you to move ahead.

Resilience is the key to success in life. It empowers you to keep going even if it means taking baby steps. Giving up is not an option for a positive person. Positivity affects your determination never to give up until you make it. Positivity helps to build your resilience.

As we look forward to a well earned half term break, we would like to wish our year 11 and year 13 pupils the best of luck in their future endeavours.

For the rest of us in school, we have the final summer term to look forward to, filled with lots of exciting sporting events and activities for everyone to get involved in. Until then, we hope that you enjoy the latest edition of the newsletter, filled with lots of great advice and tips to help improve your mental health and wellbeing.

And That's OK...



DottyLolly in Reading & creative writing
May 23rd 2021, 6:26 pm



AND THAT'S OK...

A girl she says to herself as she looks in the mirror, a girl she says

Am I a girl she says but I'm not a boy so what am I?

A girl she says as she cuts off her hair, a girl she says

A boy she questions trying to make her voice sound deep, a boy she says

Nor girl or boy am I even existing she says?

Am I, am I?

Is this stuff all in my head?

Not girl or a boy they know who they are now and it's not no choice

No girl nor boy a human they are so beautiful and filled with joy

Alive and existing perfectly fine just with no gender it isn't no sin

As they look in the mirror and see the perfect picture of who they have always been

So not a girl nor the boy there's non binary now and life is so full with joy

Not a girl they say

Not a boy they say

As they walk away from the mirror finally knowing who they are

Not girl or boy they say and that's ok...



[CLICK HERE TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT ABOUT KOOH](#)

PANIC ATTACKS

WHAT IS A PANIC ATTACK?

A panic attack is a sudden and intense feeling of fear and anxiety. It can happen quite suddenly and feel overwhelming or scary. When you are having a panic attack, your body can react in different ways. You might:

- feel out of breath, start breathing really quickly or find it harder to breathe
- feel light-headed, like you might faint
- find lights a lot brighter and more intense
- experience your heart beating really fast
- sweat more than usual
- feel shaky
- have wobbly legs
- have pains in your chest
- be teary, or feel like you can't stop crying
- feel stuck, like you can't move
- have stomach cramps
- feel sick

You might feel a few of these symptoms at the same time or have a different reaction. Everyone experiences panic attacks differently and your feelings are valid. During a panic attack, you might also feel like you can't control what's happening to your body, or feel out of touch with what's going on around you. You might feel scared that your body is in danger or feel like you're having a heart attack. Although this can feel very frightening, it's important to know that a panic attack won't cause you any harm. Even if you don't feel it during an attack, try to remember you are in control and the feeling will pass.

WHY MIGHT I HAVE A PANIC ATTACK?

A panic attack can happen at any time or place, and because it can happen quite quickly, it might feel unexpected. Because a panic attack is an intense feeling of fear and anxiety, it often happens if you are feeling very anxious about something happening in your life, or you have experienced something difficult or stressful. This might be:

- a difficult situation at home that is making you anxious
- a frightening experience like abuse, or neglect
- feeling stressed about things like exams, work, friendships or relationships
- if you have lost a friend or family member
- if you are being bullied
- anxiety around school, college or university

There are many reasons why you might feel anxious and have a panic attack. Everyone has different experiences and that's okay. Sometimes, it might feel like there is no clear reason why you are having a panic attack. What's important is to try and understand what you might be feeling anxious or stressed about, and what types of situations or places can cause you to have panic attacks.

By knowing your triggers, you can start to think about what you can do in those situations to cope, or talk to someone about how you can deal with those feelings in that situation or place. Sometimes, we might find it easier to avoid a situation or place that makes us anxious. It's very understandable that we would want to do this, but in the long term, avoiding situations can make the anxiety feel bigger. The goal is not to find a way to always avoid situations that make us anxious, but to learn to cope with how we are feeling in those situations.

The first step to doing this is to talk to someone you trust, like a friend, family member, teacher or GP. They can help you understand what you are experiencing and help you find the support you need.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE HAVING A PANIC ATTACK

During a panic attack, you may feel like you are losing control, but there are things you can do to feel back in control, or feel 'grounded' again.

Concentrate on your breathing

Focus on breathing in slowly, then breathing out slowly. It can be helpful to count when you're breathing to focus your mind. You can start small at first, like counting to three as you breathe in and counting to three as you breathe out. When you begin to calm down, you can increase how long you hold each breath to five seconds or seven seconds.

There are lots of different breathing techniques that you can try. You can use apps like Headspace and Calm to practise breathing exercises, or have a look online and see what works best for you.

Find a safe space

If a situation is making you feel panicked, try and find a space where you can take a moment to breathe and calm your thoughts. If you can't physically go to a safe space, try visualising yourself somewhere where you feel calm, like on a favourite holiday.

Focus on your senses and surroundings

When you are having a panic attack, you can feel out of touch with things around you. One way you can feel back in touch with your surroundings is by picking out five things you can see, hear, taste, touch, or smell. This is called a grounding exercise. You can pick a couple for each sense, or focus on one sense, like finding five things that you can see. This can help you feel connected with your surroundings and in control.

AFTER YOU'VE HAD A PANIC ATTACK

Once you feel your breath returning to normal, you start to feel more in control of your body and your thoughts start to calm down, you might feel drained and tired from the panic attack. It can be a good idea to take some time out to look after yourself and rest if you are able to. If you are not sure what to do to relax, here are some things that might help:

- **Breathing exercises** – a simple breathing exercise can have a calming effect and help you to relax
- Use a self-soothe box. A self-soothe box contains things that make you feel relaxed. You can put some of your favourite things in there to focus your mind.
- **Listen to some of your favourite** music or watch your favourite TV show. This can help you switch off from your anxious thoughts and help you to calm down.
- **Drinking some water** can help if you were breathing quickly, felt out of breath or were crying a lot during your panic attack, as your throat might feel dry or you may feel dehydrated.

Everyone has a different way of looking after themselves, so find something that works for you.

[Click here for more tips and advice on how to look after yourself.](#)



HOW TO COPE WITH PANIC ATTACKS

When you have had a panic attack, you might worry about if - or when - you are next going to have one. This can make everyday tasks like going to school, leaving the house or meeting up with friends much more difficult. But remember, you are not alone and there is support available to help you get through this. If you are worried about when you are next going to have a panic attack, here are some things that can help you cope.

Speak to someone you trust. If you are feeling anxious or worried that you might have a panic attack, talk to friends or family. They can help you take your mind off what is making you feel panicked and support you to find the help you need. If you are struggling to say how you are feeling, you can always write your thoughts down or put them in notes on your phone if you are planning to speak to a teacher or your GP.

If you are worried about having a panic attack at school, college, or university, speak to a teacher or a member of staff. They can work with you to help you with things like finding a safe space to take some time out if you are feeling anxious or panicked.

If you feel like you're struggling to cope with everyday tasks, speak to your GP. They can listen to how you are feeling and suggest different types of treatments to help you tackle your panic attacks. [Click here to find out more about therapy or counselling.](#)

HOW TO HELP SOMEONE WHO IS HAVING A PANIC ATTACK

If you have a friend or family member who is having a panic attack, here are some tips from our Activists on how you can help them get through it.


- **Stay with the person.** If you can, stay with the person during their panic attack. Just by you being there, you can help them to calm down and remind them that help is available. It is okay if you are finding it overwhelming. You can find another friend, family member or teacher they trust to support your friend and you.
- **Talk to them and encourage them.** You can chat to the person about how they are feeling or anything that they like, such as favourite Netflix shows or their hobbies. This can distract them from their anxious thoughts, helping them to feel calm and to slow down their breathing. They might find it difficult to talk and might want to focus on their breath - that's okay and it's important to respect their boundaries and how they are feeling.
- **Check in with your friend.** Even though your friend may no longer be panicking, they can still feel anxious or on edge afterwards. You can check in with them to see how they are feeling. This will remind them that they are not alone and you are there for them.
- **Talk about how you can support them.** If your friend feels comfortable to, you can suggest talking about how you can support them in the future. This can be things like helping them find a safe space or finding breathing exercises that can help in the moment. This will help them feel better about coping with panic attacks.

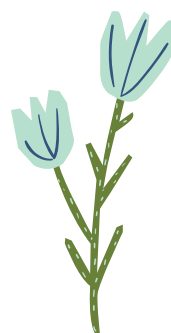




What to Tell Myself When I'm Feeling Anxious



1. This feeling won't last forever.
2. Thoughts and emotions aren't facts.
3. I can feel anxious and still handle this.
4. My **bravery** is stronger than my fear.
5. I am safe right now.
6. Anxiety is reminding me to **slow down my breathing.**
7. I've survived other tough times before, and I will be resilient this time, too.
8. This feeling is a normal reaction. I will use my coping tools to respond with thoughtfulness and self-compassion. 
9. I don't have to figure this all out right now; I will **trust** the process.
10. **Thank you anxiety** for always trying to look out for me, but it's okay now; **I got this.**





STUDENT NEWS

One way to help your wellbeing is to look for ways to celebrate or to focus on the positives. With so many Ripley pupils achieving wonderful things both in and out of school, we are thrilled to share so many positive and inspiring stories from our school community.



If you have any good news stories to share, please contact us at wellbeingmatters@ripley.lancs.sch.uk



George M (Year 10)

Congratulations to George M on winning the U18 Youth Alliance Football League with Fleetwood Town Academy. This is a fantastic achievement by George, who plays in centre midfield and has been at Fleetwood Town Academy since year 7 and plays against boys up to three years older than him.

Well done George!



Lancashire Schools' Athletics Championships

Good luck to the following pupils who have a fantastic opportunity to compete at the Lancashire Schools' Athletics Championship at Stanley Park in Blackpool on June 12:

Year 9

Esther W, Scott F, Milo R,
Libby W, Madison T

Year 10

George M, Tom M, Dylan L,
Harriet M-P, Lucy H

Year 11

Niamh F, Ethan H, Jake S



Ripley Farm Club

Our first Y7 Farm Clubbers since lockdown have been busy renovating Miss Atkinson's pond, providing some much needed TLC!



After doing the same with our Shetlands they all received their well-earned Farm Club rosettes - then off to the Heights to check out the big ponies and alpacas!

There will be another Y7 group after half term!



STUDENT FEATURE

Jess P, Year 12

This week's inspirational student feature is about Year 12 Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) Youth council member Jess and her fantastic involvement with national organisation. Thank you for sharing Jess!



giving
nature
a home

If you are involved in a project in or out of school and would like to share it, we'd love to feature it. Please get in contact at wellbeingmatters@ripley.lancs.sch.uk

What is the RSPB Youth Council?

The youth council is a group of 10 young adults aging from 13-18 who have interests in protecting the world that we live in as well as an appreciation for our planet. The RSPB created the YC in order to incorporate more youth opinions in their decisions as well as to encourage and help us take meaningful action in promoting change.

[Click here to find out more about the RSPB Youth Council](#)



What does it involve?

The YC meets up 4 times a year at RSPB reserves across the UK where we will discuss projects and plans that we want to achieve or that the RSPB want to achieve. We're frequently asked to give our opinions of plans the RSPB develop so that they reach a wider audience and are more inclusive. Additionally, we're also given the opportunity to get involved in projects that either the RSPB is involved in or where other charities have asked to involve us.

How and why did you get involved?

During my first few years at Ripley I developed an interest in climate change which led to me reading around the subject where I came across the opportunity to join the RSPB YC. I felt like joining the YC would enable me to make a greater impact so that I could help protect both the world that we live in and the people that we share it with. The effects of both climate change and the nature crisis will be devastating globally and will definitely affect humans therefore it's our responsibility to take action to make the changes that we need in order to reduce the danger that these threats pose.

What does your role involve?

As a part of the YC we're expected to attend meetings 4 times a year as well as short ones every month but we also get involved in other things too. More recently there's been a huge push to link up more youth "change-makers" so we've met up with the Chester Zoo YC and some of us attended the Youth Change-Makers convention where hundreds of young people from across the world who want to make a difference met up on zoom (hosted by the WWF). We get involved in several other projects that we are interested in such as writing articles for Wingbeat. I personally enjoy doing campaigning, media work and also getting involved in small projects.

RSPB Youth Council



HAPPINESS
can
be
FOUND
EVEN IN THE
DARKEST
OF TIMES
IF ONE ONLY
REMEMBERS
TO  TURN
the
LIGHT



My Road To Recovery

When I first opened up about my mental health issues to my parents, the first emotion I felt after telling them was regret, because of how they reacted. They didn't belittle it, they didn't mindlessly yell at me, they didn't punish me. Instead, they got me professional help and did everything they could to keep me safe... this is what scared me so much.

Self harming had been a comforting safe space in my head. It was all I knew. it was something I was familiar with, and something I had full control over. And, sickeningly enough, it was something I felt good at. When this was exposed to what felt like the entire world, I felt so vulnerable, as if I were a small beetle beneath a rock which someone had lifted to inspect me, or a naked, shaved animal. It felt like I had been stripped of my safe space, it was all I knew. it was all I had to distract me from my academic decline, poor body image and self hatred. If I didn't self harm, I had nothing.

Recovering seemed terrifying to me for two years after getting professional help. After my counselling sessions I asked myself, "why isn't this working?!" when the whole time, it was me who wasn't working. I wasn't trying to recover, I wasn't trying to heal... because I was content exactly where I was in this self destructive head space which led me to believe I was safe here. I wasn't prepared to willingly leave it, I wasn't prepared to fight the one thing that made me feel safe. I expected someone else to do it all for me, or for it to just randomly happen one day.

I had to reassess who I was, who I wanted to be, and what I deserved. I had to forgive myself for a lot of things my self destructive mission had caused me to do to myself and others, and I had to actively decide to recover. However, recovering isn't a snap of the fingers decision. It doesn't mean being completely happy, or free from your struggles. It means doing something different, feeling uncomfortable, and doing it again. And again, and again until you no longer feel uncomfortable doing it, to break bad habits. Recovering is not fun or easy, but it shouldn't be that way. If it was so fun to recover, we wouldn't have let ourselves fall into the pit in the first place.

Sadly, mental wellness doesn't fall into our laps, neither does physical wellness. We have to actively try to be well. Even the small things, like meditating for 5 minutes in an evening, or listening to happy music instead of sad music, even though you're sad, is an active attempt at pulling yourself out of the dark pit, when all you want to do is wallow with your demons.

That is not to say we ever choose to be depressed or anxious; but it is a trap we fall into and can grow comfortable with, and willingly stay in instead of seeking a way out. Recovery is not familiar, and it does not feel safe, but the temporary discomfort is something that we must be brave and push through in order to heal.

I haven't self harmed for nearly a year. I plan to never do it again. I have a hobby, I am communicating with people, and I listen to music that makes me feel GOOD! Turns out I like happy music much more than I thought. I like who I am without self harm, and I do not miss it, or need it. My personality goes far beyond self harm, it does not define me. My favourite affirmation is "Sit with the discomfort, and do it again." It really reminds me that recovery is not easy or linear, but that is exactly how it should be. We should not fear growth. Staying in the same place is what we should fear and is what harms us. Growth is beautiful, and we should all be actively seeking to grow more, always. Just wanted to say that. I hope it wasn't too depressing in the middle, I was feeling very reflective and retrospective. Take care of your selves. ♥

Mental Wealth

Your mental WEALTH is our priority. We want it to be your priority too. Please please please look after yourself. We want you firing on all cylinders. Your family and friends do too!

Here are 10 tips on how to **SHINE** at work and home...

1. Eat, Move & Sleep.



The first base of mental health is to look after your physical wellbeing. Treat yourself to a healthy breakfast and don't forget your 5-a-day. Take regular exercise. Join a gym, cycle, jog, stretch, do yoga, take the stairs, go for a walk at lunchtime... do whatever it takes to keep your body moving. Ban all laptops, phones and TVs from your bedroom and get your full 8 hours.

2. Socialise.



With actual real people. Human beings are social creatures. Your happiness is strongly linked with friendship and family so spend more time with real people and less time with social media ones.

3. Choose to be Positive.

Your attitude travels with you so upgrade to enthusiasm and can-do. Not unbridled 'Woohoo, don't you just LOVE Mondays' (that might be a step too far!) but tackle each day with an air of optimism and enthusiasm. Positivity doesn't mean problems disappear but it does make them a whole lot easier to deal with.

4. Be Grateful.



Gratitude is like fertilizer for happiness. Marvel at what you have got rather than grumbling about what you haven't. If in doubt, write a list of 10 things you really appreciate but take for granted.

5. Play to Your Strengths.



Work out what your strengths are and find opportunities to bring them to the fore.

6. Be Kind.



Kindness is a super-power. Catch people doing things well and tell them. Do random acts of kindness. Doing a good deed for someone else is a sure fire way to make them, and YOU, feel amazing.

7. Get Organised.



Modern life is fast and hectic. Cut your multi-tasking. Get focused by prioritising what needs doing, then single task through your list.

8. Work Sensible Hours.



Forget work/life balance and install a life/work balance instead. We want you to be happy. We want you to have a brilliant life. Work productively. Give your all. Then go home and give your all there too.

9. Be Your Own Bestie.



You know that shrill voice in your head - the shouter one that tells you what an idiot you are - everyone has it. Human thinking is biased towards negativity so learn to dispute your thinking. Catch yourself doing things well. Change the narrative. You are amazing. Tell yourself that, because it's true.

It's perfectly okay not to feel okay. If you're feeling physically and/or emotionally low, talk to someone. Grab some time with one of the managers. We'll find a way of helping you **SHINE** again.

10. ASK for Help.

#Fact:



The average lifespan is 9000 weeks. We want you to live it fully. Life is a short and precious gift, don't send it back unwrapped.



www.artofbrilliance.co.uk

Joyful June 2021

MONDAY

TUESDAY

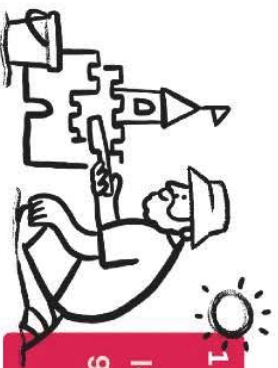
WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY



1 Decide to look for what's good every day this month

2 Say positive things in your conversations with others

3 Re-frame a worry and try to find a helpful way to think about it

4 Take a photo of something that brings you joy and share it

5 Think of 3 things you're grateful for and write them down

6 Get out into green space and feel the joy that nature brings

7 Do something healthy which makes you feel good

8 Find joy in music: sing, play, dance, listen or share

9 Ask a friend what made them happy recently

10 Bring joy to others by doing something kind for them

11 Eat good food that makes you happy and really savour it

12 Write a gratitude letter to thank someone

13 Take a light-hearted approach. Choose to see the funny side

14 Share a happy memory with someone who means a lot to you

15 Look for something to be thankful for where you least expect it

16 Speak to others in a warm and friendly way

17 Take time to notice things that you find beautiful

18 Look for something good in a difficult situation

19 Get outside and find the joy in being active

20 Rediscover and enjoy a fun childhood activity

21 Send a positive note to a friend who needs encouragement

22 Watch something funny and enjoy how it feels to laugh

23 Create a playlist of uplifting songs to listen to

24 Bring to mind a favourite memory you feel grateful for

25 Show your appreciation to people who are helping others

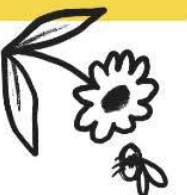
26 Make time to do something playful, just for the fun of it

27 Be kind to you. Do something that brings you joy

28 Notice how positive emotions are contagious between people

29 Share a friendly smile with people you see today

30 Make a list of the joys in your life (and keep adding to it)



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Happier · Kinder · Together

LOOK AFTER YOUR MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING



FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING

Connect



Strengthening relationships with others and feeling close to and valued by others, including at work, is critical to boosting wellbeing.

Be Active



Being physically active, including at work, improves physical health and can improve mood and wellbeing and decrease stress, depression and anxiety.

Take Notice



Paying more attention to the present moment, to thoughts and feelings and to the world around, boosts our wellbeing.

Keep Learning



Being curious and seeking out new experiences at work and in life more generally positively stimulates the brain.

Give



Carrying out acts of kindness, whether small or large, can increase happiness, life satisfaction and general sense of wellbeing

SUPPORT SERVICES



The Ross Centre,
Euston Road,
Morecambe
Tel: 01524 550650
Monday -Friday
09:00 - 17:00hrs



Lancashire Care Wellbeing & Mental Health Helpline

Tel: 0800 915 4640



Monday -Friday 19:00hrs - 23:00hrs
Saturday - Sunday 12:00hrs - 00:00hrs

Useful Websites



Anxiety UK - www.anxietyuk.org.uk
BBC Headroom - www.bbc.co.uk/headroom
CAMHS - camhs-resources.co.uk
Chasing the Stigma - www.chasingthestigma.co.uk
Childline Toolbox - <https://childline.org.uk/toolbox>
Every Mind Matters - www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters
Get Self Help - www.getselfhelp.co.uk
Healthy Young Minds - www.healthyyoungminds.co.uk



Kooth - www.kooth.com
Lancashire NHS Mental Health Crisis Line - www.lscft.nhs.uk/Crisis
MIND - <https://www.lancashiremind.org.uk/>
MindEd - www.minded.org.uk
No Panic - www.nopanic.org.uk
NSPCC - www.nspcc.org.uk
PAPYRUS - www.papyrus-uk.org

WHO TO CONTACT FOR ADVICE AND SUPPORT

THE WELLBEING & MENTAL HEALTH TEXTING SERVICE



NHS
Lancashire &
South Cumbria
NHS Foundation Trust

A confidential and anonymous service that aims to support Wellbeing and Mental Health by providing emotional support to those who may prefer to communicate via text.

Experiencing any of the following? 😞



Bullying



Parental conflict



Loneliness



Mental health problems



Sexuality challenges



Suicidal thoughts



Abuse



Self-image issues



Self-harm

We are here to help 😊❤️

Text **HELLO** to

07860 022846 📞 SOS



Scan Me!

APPS FOR YOUR PHONE



Mindshift



MindShift app is designed to help young adults cope with anxiety, by acting as a portable coach that guides you through challenging situations.

5 Minute Relaxation



Do you feel stressed and anxious? Do you crave a moment of peace and relaxation? This app will help you feel calmer and more relaxed in just 5 minutes.

STOPP



Help stop the vicious cycles of depression and anxiety, and other repetitive behaviours such as negative thinking, worry, drinking, smoking, gambling, aggression, self-harm etc.

Calm



Explore hundreds of meditations to help you relax. You'll receive an original Daily Calm along with new sleep stories, meditation and music programmes.

Headspace



HEADSPACE

Headspace is your guide to mindfulness for your everyday life. Learn meditation and mindfulness skills to help cope with sadness, anger, and adapting to change.

Calm Harm



Calm Harm provides tasks that help you resist or manage the urge to self harm. Add your own tasks too and it's completely private and password protected.