

CHESTERFIELD & NORTH DERBYSHIRE TINNITUS SUPPORT GROUP



34 Glumangate, Chesterfield, S40 1TX

Tel: 01246 380415

Email: mail@tinnitussupport.org.uk

Website: www.tinnitussupport.org.uk

Newsletter

Edited by Audrey Carlin

April/May 2019

OUR NEXT MEETING SOUP & SOCIAL ON WEDNESDAY 15TH MAY 2019 AT THE BADGER, BROCKWELL LANE CHESTERFIELD, 11AM – 1PM

SPEAKER: Sue Pacey

Our speaker is Sue Pacey who lives locally. Highly recommended as a vibrant and interesting speaker, Sue was a midwife for 45 years and has written 5 novels, she is also a bee keeper so her talk incorporates bees, books and babies. **Please book for this meeting – see Booking Form enclosed.**

Come to the Poetry Buzz! **Message from Sarah**

We have now completed three of the ten Poetry Buzz sessions that have been funded by the Postcode Community Trust. Numbers attending are growing but it would be really good to see some new faces. It doesn't matter if you've never had a go at writing poetry before, we are just a group of amateurs seeking a way to forget our troubles and get creative. Our

activities are very easy and the group is welcoming. One newcomer commented last time that there was a lovely atmosphere. To give you an idea of what our poetry sessions are like, here's a summary of what we got up to in March, with a couple of examples of our poems.



Sarah running the Poetry Buzz

Our theme for March was "Green", inspired by all of the new buds and shoots in the garden. We all had a cup of tea and a biscuit on arrival and settled ourselves in. We then got into a greenish mood by thinking about a good memory associated with the colour. As prompts to help jog memories, we had some leaf shaped pieces of paper with various shades of green written on the front.



These included emerald, moss, avocado and bottle. After sharing our memories and some poems that had already been written on the subject, we all did an acrostic poem. This is a really simple way of getting your thoughts down about a certain subject, where each of the letters in a word is used to start a sentence.

After sharing our acrostics, we had another tea break and a general chat. We then spent some time thinking up a 4-line green themed poem to write on the back of our paper leaf. No-one had any problems thinking what to write as we had all shared plenty of good ideas.

One member of the group decided to write another acrostic dedicated to her lawn!

Lush and green
Always nice to see
Worms and soil
Now let's grow!

Here's another poem written by a group member:

As winter gives way to spring
And shoots emerge from the soil
The fields that lay so long bare
Give way to a bed of green.

If you think you would like to have a go then come along to our next session at Loundsley Green Community Centre on **Wednesday 22nd May from 1.30 pm to 4.00 pm.**

Sarah

POETRY PHARMACY

In our March newsletter I wrote about "Dispensing poetry on prescription..." The "poetry pharmacy" run from the back of a 1970s ambulance by the poet, Deborah Alma, in Shropshire. When one of our members read our



newsletter, she contacted us to say she had seen the ambulance at the Barnaby



Festival in Macclesfield and had called in to take a look at the poetry pharmacy. Jean had a 'poetry prescription' from Deborah Alma. Thank you Jean for sharing your photographs with us.

THE 5 WAYS TO WELLBEING

Health and Wellbeing is important when learning to manage your tinnitus and evidence suggests there are 5 Ways to Wellbeing, which is why we encourage a healthy lifestyle as part of our holistic approach within our group.



The 5 Ways to Wellbeing are:

- **Connect** – connect with the people around you. **Our Soup & Social meeting at The Badger and Coffee and Chat meetings at Monkey Park** provide the perfect environment for connecting with others in a relaxed atmosphere.
- **Be active** – Our "Wellbeing Walks" provide the perfect way of being active (but not energetic) and enjoying the beautiful countryside. Coming soon "Move it or Lose it".

- **Keep learning** – learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and a new confidence. **Our Poetry Buzz provides something new to enjoy in the company of others in a relaxed and happy environment.**
- **Give to others** – even the smallest act can count, whether it's a smile, a thank you or a kind word. **Chatting to others at meetings, helping to relieve the isolation that people feel when experiencing tinnitus, is a perfect way of giving support to each other.**
- **Be mindful** – be more aware of the present moment, including your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you. Some people call this awareness "mindfulness". It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges. **As well as our Mindfulness-based techniques for managing tinnitus, our Poetry Buzz and Walking for Health also encourage mindfulness awareness.** If you haven't got our mindfulness-based techniques for managing tinnitus and would like them, please let us know. They come in a small presentation pack and there are 16 individual techniques for you to try. If you give them a try, you may feel happier, more positive and able to get the most from life.

We are meant to Move

Message from Joanne

Our bodies are designed to move; a lack of activity affects strength, flexibility and general fitness. This, coupled with the fact that strength, flexibility and general fitness naturally declines with age can mean many people stop being active.

As we age, physiological functions of the body decline and the risk of disease increases. Low activity levels further this decline. Muscle mass declines with

age. This can lead to a reduction in strength capacity from 1 – 3.5% per year from the age of 50 years to 80 years respectively (Seene 2013)

Movement becomes more difficult due to loss of muscle mass and strength and painful due to loss of cartilage in the joints. We can end up creating a vicious circle, the less we move the more difficult and painful movement becomes.

The effects of inactivity

FABS

Flexibility | Aerobic | Balance | Strength



Inactivity can affect our heart, which can lead to problems such as hypertension, stroke and thrombosis. It can also affect our mental health. There has been a lot of research into the positive effects of mental health with exercise. Inactivity can mean it is difficult to be socially active such as getting out and meeting friends resulting in further decline of mental health. Exercise can also mean that we can continue to undertake basic daily activities such as getting in and out of a car, off the bus, opening jars and bottles.

Barriers

Age and ill-health are not the only barriers to getting active. Other factors such as fear, embarrassment, negative experiences, misconceptions and access to a supportive exercise programme can all lead to being less active.

It's never too late to exercise

However, as the old maxim goes "It is never too late to learn" or in this case, take up exercise. Research has shown that regular exercise and physical

activity will result in these gains, significantly reducing the risk of disease in older adults and even improving the quality of life.

Physical activity and exercise increase body temperature and blood flow. Muscle becomes more elastic during activity due to the increase in temperature which over time becomes a permanent change resulting in better flexibility and range of movement. Exercising can also improve independence, is a way of socialising, lifts mood and increases energy. Exercise ticks four of the ten Action on Happiness pointers

- Taking care of your body
- Relating and connecting with people
- Learning new things or visiting new places
- Creating goals – being able to walk further or get out more

MOVE IT OR LOSE IT!

Move It or Lose it was founded in 2010 by award-winning exercise instructor, Julie Robinson, who has dedicated her career to motivating thousands of people to keep active in later life. Her company has now grown Nationally with a Network of Instructors delivering exercise classes to thousands of older people every week.



Move it or Lose it – FABS programme was designed in partnership with the Centre for Healthy Ageing Research at

the University of Birmingham. It comprises the key components older adults need to keep fit. FABS stands for Flexibility, Aerobic, Balance and Strength. Exercises are put to music for fun and motivation.

Joanne

Joanne has recently become one of the Network of Instructors, having undertaken a theory course, followed by two days in Leeds of practical training and course planning as well as delivering a programme of exercise which she developed as part of her assessment.

Apart from testing out the sessions on me, Joanne recently delivered a Move It or Lose It session at an asbestos conference in Birmingham for about fifty people and they thoroughly enjoyed it. She has now been asked to go to the asbestos group in Manchester to do the same later in the year.

For our group, we have planned a session for our meeting on the 17th July at The Badger so look forward to you joining us. You will have fun as well as doing something positive for your health and wellbeing. Further details in the next newsletter.

REPORT FROM MARCH MEETING HERBAL REMEDIES

Our speaker, Frances Burton, a Medical Herbalist said there are herbal medicines that can help with sleep, anxiety, digestion, infection, immune system, mental health, joints, hormones, skin and heart. She said that Herbalists see herbal medicine as complementary, not alternative. However, she encourages patients to tell their GP if they are taking herbal

medicine and would, of course, encourage patients to continue taking medicines prescribed to them by their GP.

Medical Herbalists are trained to be aware of drug/herb interactions and to make up herbal prescriptions accordingly as well as being trained to recognise “red flags” and encourage patients to go to their GP.

Medical Herbalists work alongside GPs



and other health practitioners and are increasingly accepted as providing medical intervention alongside other medication and treatment, often in chronic health conditions.



Tasting pieces of Liquorice stick

Frances uses the whole plant as it's the mixture of things in the plant that makes it effective.

In general, there is herbal support for:

- Adrenal Stress

- Nervous system and nerve support
- Circulation
- Liver support
- Gut support

Thirty-six members attended the meeting and Frances' talk was interspersed with questions as our members were very interested in the subject, especially in what would be helpful for tinnitus – and **Ginkgo Biloba** was questioned.

I remember there had been a study into Ginkgo Biloba some years

ago with **no evidence** that it was effective. However, I checked on the BTA's online information about Ginkgo Biloba which stated:-

“The limited evidence does not demonstrate that Ginkgo Biloba is effective for tinnitus when this is the primary complaint”

BTA opinion on this treatment:

Although independent evidence is limited, what there is does not show that Ginkgo Biloba is effective for tinnitus. The potential side effects may cause serious harm. We would suggest you talk to your GP before taking any new medication or supplement.

Would the BTA support further studies into this treatment? NO

Verdict: Efficacy: Does this treatment work?

The BTA answer: *Evidence of no effect.*

Verdict: Safety. Is this treatment harmful?

The BTA answer: EVIDENCE OF HARM.

You can download this information from the BTA website.

Frances makes up tinctures which is appropriate for the person. However, before doing so she would do a consultation to get to know everything about the person.

- What is happening in their life, their body and their diet.

A diagnosis is built up with the consultation and sometimes she also needs a urine test (for diabetes or infection) and would ask if the person has had a blood test. If they have had some tests at their GP she would ask for the person to take their results along to the consultation. She is able to do a 'Clinical' diagnosis through the conversation and information.

Garden Weeds

Dandelion

There are lots of vitamins – A, B, C, D, potassium, iron and copper in the leaf. It stimulates kidney – acts as a diuretic. Is a bitter – aids digestion.



The Root of the Dandelion stimulates liver function, gall

bladder and digestion. It is a mild laxative and Bitter – so stimulates digestion.

Here is a recipe from my James Wong book: ***To make Dandelion Flower Bath Oil:***

Pick enough fresh flowerheads to fill a small Kilner jar. Pour olive oil over to cover, pushing a knife around inside to get rid of any air pockets. Cover and leave on a sunny windowsill for 2 weeks, or until the flowers have lost their colour. Strain, then pour into a sterilised bottle. Soothes muscles and



joints. [I haven't tried it because it is a delicacy for our tortoise

(Harry Houdini), who loves it!]

Rosemary

This is from my James Wong book:

Rosemary is traditionally known as the 'herb of remembrance', and studies show there may be some truth in that claim. It contains compounds that relax the muscles of the digestive tract and can increase the effects of essential enzymes in the brain thus helping to improve concentration and memory. This stimulating plant can lighten mood and help overcome nervous exhaustion, anxiety and mild depression. Just smelling it can make you feel better.

FOR INSOMNIA (James Wong book) **Hops Pillow**

For a pillow about 32 x 23cm
4 handfuls Dried Hops Flowers
4 handfuls Dried Lavender Flowers

To dry the hops and lavender yourself, tie them in bunches and hang upside down in a well-ventilated space out of direct sunlight for 2 weeks.

Alternatively, place in a low oven (about 100 degrees C) for 30 minutes or so until dry and crispy. Strip the flowers off the larger or harder stalks.

Put equal handfuls of dried hops and lavender flowers into a cotton pillowcase and seal the end. Use the pillow under or beside your head to induce sleep.



Lemon Balm

Mentioned by Frances and the following information is from my James Wong book. Traditionally used to soothe nervous tension, relieve anxiety and promote good sleep.

The smell is an added bonus - crush a couple of leaves whenever you walk past to release the tangy lemon aroma.



THIS IS FOR USE IN THE BATH: To help calm anxiety and improve sleep

Make an infusion of Lemon Balm using 30 g fresh leaves, crushed, in 500 ml freshly boiled water. Leave, covered, for 10 minutes, then strain and pour into a bath taken before bed.

If you want to grow Lemon Balm in your garden:

It grows well in any site or soil
Prolifically self-seeding
Cut back hard after flowering to produce fresh crop of leaves
Attracts bees

Frances covered a lot of herbs within her talk and she also mentioned Fish Oils which can help with anxiety. She suggested Salmon or Mackerel 2 to 3 times a week as they are a good source of Omega 3.

For vegetarians – Linseed is rich in Omega 3 which helps with anxiety and stress. She suggested grinding the seed but for purposes of a laxative, do not grind. Also mentioned was vitamin B12 – for nerve nourishment.

Soothing Teas

If you don't want to grow the herbs, then you will find plenty in the herbalist shops such as Camomile tea. You can also contact Frances for advice.

MEMORY BOOSTER (From my James Wong book) ROSEMARY WINE

1 bottle good-quality (preferably organic) wine
5 sprigs fresh Rosemary



Bruise the rosemary and place in the bottle of wine. Re-cork and shake every day for 2 weeks.

Use: Drink occasionally (in moderation)

BEWARE IF YOU ARE ON MEDICATION – SEEK SPECIALIST ADVICE FROM YOUR GP.

Frances Burton can be contacted on 07791326212 or francesburton.burton@gmail.com

OUR WALK AT POOLSBROOK COUNTRY PARK

It was a lovely sunny afternoon for our walk at Poolsbrook Country Park and very enjoyable. We were given lots of attention by the resident geese who were very interested in us.



The walk was leisurely and we were able to take in the lovely scenery and enjoy chatting. Afterwards we went into the café where we enjoyed cake and a drink.

COME AND JOIN US FOR FUTURE WALKS

Look in the “Dates for your Diary”
for our next walk

WELLBEING WORKSHOPS

Our Wellbeing Workshops will commence in September – the dates are:

Workshop 1 – Wednesday 18th September



Workshop 2 – Wednesday 2nd October

Workshop 3 – Wednesday 16th October

Workshop 4 – Wednesday 23rd October

We will send out a booking form during the summer with details of the workshops which will incorporate:

- Promoting critical thinking
- Promoting understanding of tinnitus mechanisms
- Promoting peer support
- Targeted support for managing distress

MAY DAY – Monday 6th May 2019 in Chesterfield. The march starts from the Town Hall and sets off at 11am. Rally in New Square from 11.45. Music from 12.30pm. We have a stall opposite the Peacock tea rooms on New Square.

MEMORY MARKET – Thursday 23rd May 12 noon – 4pm at the Winding Wheel. Lots of stalls and information. We also have a stall at this event.