



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Northamptonshire Action for Happiness Helpful Hints & Tips for Keeping Physically and Mentally Well – Week Five

Hello All

Hopefully you are all well, and managing to Keep Calm, Stay Wise and Be Kind. I spent a wonderful sunny Easter weekend gardening. I am very lucky to have outside space at this difficult time and gardening is one way which in which I get into 'flow'.

'Flow' (also referred to as 'being in the zone') is a state of being totally absorbed in what we are doing. It often involves being oblivious to the outside world and discovering that time has simply passed us by! Research has shown that being in a flow state is closely connected with learning and creativity and with improved wellbeing. Vanessa King, architect of the GREAT DREAM offers the following suggestions for getting into the flow zone:

- Get out of your comfort zone and actively try things out
- Get curious and flex your focus 'muscle' - perhaps by practicing mindfulness
- Create the context for flow - set aside a regular time for your hobbies or interests, turn off your mobile and avoid multi-tasking!
- Know what you're working towards

(See Vanessa King's Book: **Ten Keys to Happier Living** for further information)

Please send us examples of when you've been in 'flow' and the effect it has on you.

I also made a five-minute video of the great 'Action for Happiness' work going on here in Northamptonshire. We'd planned to screen the video at the seaside town of Bournemouth during its first Happiness Conference but like many other events it has been postponed. Developing the video encouraged me to learn a whole new skill set and I'm really proud of what Northamptonshire has achieved as we strive to promote wellbeing locally. Watch this space for my debut video!

A quick reminder to follow us **@A4HNorthants** on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and don't forget the Happiness pledge: -

"I will try to more happiness and less unhappiness in the world around me"

Take the pledge at: bit.ly/A4HNorthants

Following on from Dr Mike Scanlan's short video on **Character Strengths** last week a member of our editorial group offered the following comments and links to resources:

Knowing and actively using our signature 'Character Strengths' is a great way to promote our emotional wellbeing and resilience. You can discover more about Character Strengths from this link: <https://www.happify.com/hd/character-strengths-infographic/>

Do you know your signature character strengths? You may like to complete the short questionnaire on the VIA website <https://www.viacharacter.org> to discover your strengths profile. Actively tapping into your signature Character Strengths across the day can really make a difference to the way you view the day ... and life in general!

For some fun from 'across the pond' - whether you are a child or adult, check out this lovely set of resources on Character Strengths from GoZen:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dcCAJ4VujO6tBfcbY91rzPKhYo9MT8ve/view>

I am also happy to share the second link to the short films that Mike has kindly prepared. This one is around the Drop Anchor Meditation <https://youtu.be/E1OuxoD8Tj8>

And here is one final link for the week: With Care Homes and the elderly worryingly being in news this week, I have just found a great resource on how young people can help people with dementia during the Covid-19 crisis. With schools, colleges, universities and youth groups being closed, the Alzheimer's Society are asking teachers, youth leaders, parents/guardians and young people to take this opportunity to learn and take action in order to support people affected by dementia. Do check it out and share it with others.

https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-04/Activities-and-Actions-Pack_01.04.20.pdf

Remember:

Keep Calm, Stay Wise, Be Kind.

Best wishes

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