



Guiseley School

How are You?

I hope your week has treated you kindly and you've managed to get some sleep, we all need it! Not just sleep, but plenty of rest and relaxation where you can. This may seem contradictory but this week I'm looking at our daily hour of exercise. Before you close this immediately, give me a chance to explain. I recently learnt that forgoing my daily hour for housework or work, thinking there was so many more important things to be getting on with, led me to feeling ten times more stressed, irritable and isolated than I was to start with. Our daily walk, run, cycle, skip, walking on stilts... whatever is your choice and fits in your life is most definitely under the umbrella of Self-Care!



Self-Care: Movement!

The word exercise used to (and if I'm honest sometimes still does) fill me with dread. I am not sporty; I consider my fitness level resting nicely in the low average range...and it's quite happy there. However, I have made some changes recently that have been great in letting me dip my toe in getting fitter without the result of thinking I need to go to the nearest A and E immediately afterwards.

This week, rather than looking at exercise we are going to be looking at **movement**, sounds less horrendous doesn't it? I want you to look closely at your hour a day, how you're using it, if you're using it, what it helps with and more importantly how you can have fun with it.

Move for a minimum of twenty minutes every day. Now think about your movement every day. I know I spend at least 30 minutes a day

tidying, cleaning, picking up after the young people in my house whilst following them around telling them they should be doing it themselves. So that absolutely classes as movement. Seriously test it out and see how many steps you do a day WITHOUT leaving the house, you'll be shocked, and feel the need to tell everyone in your household just how much time you spend on your feet.

Move for your mental health -Yes! Yes! Yes! Housework can leave me exhausted but I wouldn't say it relieves my stress levels much but getting out of the house does. This is the crucial time for us to be getting out in the fresh air. We're not talking about weight loss here or gaining a washboard stomach (I've had four children, that's never going to happen) but getting out there and getting rid



of the excess energy we've all got burning up is the key. We all know why we need to be doing this but we're human and feeling hemmed in creates anxiety, stress and much more. We need to be able to expel those feelings somewhere and your daily walk is the perfect place to calm down and de-stress.

Keep it varied – For the first five weeks I did the same exact walk with my one year old in his pram. Some of it was on a main road and some of it was pretty, but the long and short of it was I got bored!! My boredom quickly turned to irritation and I stopped looking forward to it and it wasn't doing its job of relaxing me anymore. So, what I did was instead of turning right one day onto the road I always did...I turned left. That simple. I then discovered a whole new route that I didn't even know was there and it renewed my energy and enthusiasm for my daily walk all over again. So, use this time to find paths you never even knew existed! It doesn't have to be picture perfect it just needs to be different.

Book it in - My partner and myself have a new routine of checking what the next day is going to look like. This involves work schedules but also when either of us are getting out of the house and when that's going to work. For those of you who are single parents, ask yourself when it will suit you and your children best in the day and try and stick to it. My walk breaks up my day and without it, I'd

feel like all I do is stare at a computer screen all day or do housework and that is no good for me physically or mentally.

Use what you already have – We already have our outside time once a day so utilise that to the maximum. I choose to walk, but if you have a bike, cycle. Mix it up. For inside or garden time you can really utilise what we already have at home.

I am a late starter at the age of 38 but six months ago I finally braved a local yoga group. I have zero balance and a fear of exercise classes, but I went, and it was the best thing I could have done. When all classes closed, I knew I had a book of yoga poses but I was sceptical I could fathom what to do without a teacher, but do you know what? I'm doing ok! I don't own a yoga mat or any of the gear, I use a towel, that's all I needed to give it a go. What about you? What do you have at home already? Skipping rope? weights gathering dust? Exercise DVDS pushed to the back of the cupboard? Go on...I dare you.

Note how it feels - do this before and after your choice of exercise. I do it myself and it does actively encourage me to keep going. When I clock that I'm often stressed, tired and feeling old before my hourly walk, I notice when I get back, I feel calmer, more energetic and slightly younger! That feeling gets addictive. Do it for yourself and see how it feels.



Light in The Lockdown!

I'm sticking to the theme of this week and keeping the focus on your daily outing and ways we can spread a little joy.

So, I'm talking window displays first. The bigger the better. I have seen a few in my local area and they're just fantastic! Not only does it show every key worker that walks past you're thinking of them it also gives you all something creative to do together. Give it a go with your children if you have a spare hour. Also, if you have already done so would you please send me a photograph through info@guiseleyschool.org.uk and I can use them for this section every week. If your child doesn't want me to put their name on it I won't, but if you do make sure to let me know who created it.

Another lovely reason to dress up your window is that lots of young children are going out on their walk and playing 'isolation bingo'! It's such a lovely idea and I saw a little boy of around five when I was out on my walk crossing things off with great excitement and it really was the sweetest thing. The key item that seems to be on most children's lists is a rainbow so that would be a tick immediately if they saw yours. Also, anything bright outside of your home or again the window as they are often looking for separate colours of the rainbow. Another good one is any sort of

flag or a garden ornament, something attention grabbing may just be on a little one's list and it would make their day!

Together or alone – either is good for you. Most of my walks are with the toddler but I've managed to drag my year 7 daughter and year 10 son out on a few and I've loved it. Alone time is also great, if you can get it, as it gives you the freedom to walk at your own pace, listen to music, podcasts, an audiobook or a mindfulness app and just be you for a little while. This is personally on my wish list for next week!

Smile – now bare with me. On the first few times I went on a walk, people naturally avoided walking near to each other and it felt a little strange. However, as we have all got used to this situation smiling is back! If someone moves across the path for me, I smile and say thank you, nine times out of ten they smile back. Everyone is starting to say hello to each other as they pass which wouldn't necessarily occur in 'normal' times and this is a genuinely lovely thing to come out of all this. People are friendlier, we're all trying to give each other space and be considerate and it really is lovely. Next time you're out and you pass someone smile... it keeps the human connection going and we really need that right now.





Spotlight on: Exercise for the mind

I am focusing this week's spotlight on things we can be doing at home to assist ourselves to not only keep active but learn to give our minds a chance to calm down and de-stress when our hour a day either can't happen or needs a little adding to it to achieve that zen feeling. Ok I may be pushing the boat out here I've only ever read about that zen feeling and pretty sure it's a myth to all parents, but we can do stuff to get us closer to it. Below are listed some apps and websites that are fantastic and worth checking out. I have also sent the students of Guiseley some information on similar things.

I'm dropping in a couple of links that give you a great overview of some exercise forums online for those of you that are struggling to get out or self-isolating or for those of you that simply can't get enough!

This link takes you directly to the NHS website which offers simple ten-minute workouts, recommendations and much more. It really is worth a look:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/gym-free-exercises/>

A great overview is a video from the This Morning team who had one of their reporters test out all the best ones, so we don't have to! It includes everything from Yoga to Belly Dancing!

<https://www.itv.com/thismorning/home-garden/in-lockdown-the-best-online-workouts>

Now onto calming the mind and body. If you are already a Yogi or whether you're a beginner like me, this article gives details on the best six out there. I am going to give one a try this week, wish me luck!

<https://www.glamourmagazine.co.uk/article/best-yoga-apps>

I found a huge resource linking to mental health apps. Now this includes things like managing your mood, anxiety, stress, feeling low and mindfulness. Most of these apps are free and have all been approved by the NHS:

<https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/category/mental-health/>

Lastly, one that is fantastic is Headspace. Its heavily focused on mindfulness and how it is used to overcome anxiety, sleep issues, stress and so much more. Well worth a download and they are now including a specialist free programme, called 'weathering the storm', during this time:

<https://www.headspace.com/covid-19>

I hope you find some of these helpful and rain or shine, try and get out there.

