

A stylized winter landscape illustration. The background is a deep blue night sky with white stars and a string of colorful lights (orange, blue, white) draped across the scene. Below the sky are rolling hills in shades of light blue and white, representing snow. Scattered across the hills are various buildings in shades of blue and white with orange roofs, and several evergreen trees. The overall style is flat and modern.

coorie in for

Winter

Edinburgh 2021

Tips for keeping well during
the winter period - craft,
recipes and support available

coorie

(definition)

from coor, a scots word
to nestle or snuggle



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About Coorie in for Winter

The winter months can be a wonderful time of celebration and a time to connect with the people around us. However, they can also bring up some difficult emotions, and the change of season can have an impact on our wellbeing.

That's why we're focusing this booklet on the Scottish concept of 'coorie' as a way to help us look after our mental health and wellbeing this winter.

Coorie is all about comfort, snuggling, looking after yourself and others. It's about embracing the benefits of the outdoors and being surrounded by nature.

This booklet focuses on the things we can all do to look after our mental health and wellbeing in our homes whilst also encouraging us to get outside and embrace the benefits of nature. It also includes a range of support and helpful contacts.

You can find information about mental health and support available all year round on iThrive Edinburgh. Please check this online space to keep up-to-date with support available during the winter for Edinburgh's citizens.

For information on mental health and wellbeing support outside of Edinburgh visit:

Eastspace for information about East Lothian:
www.eastspace.org.uk

Midspace for information about Midlothian:
www.midspace.co.uk

West Space for information about West Lothian:
www.westspace.org.uk

About Thrive Edinburgh

Thrive Edinburgh is the city's strategy for improving the mental health and wellbeing of all citizens in Edinburgh.



Thrive Edinburgh is underpinned by the values of kindness, respect and love. Through the Thrive Assembly, chaired by our Lord Provost, we have mobilised the city to ensure that mental health is everybody's business, infused through our collective efforts in housing, education, culture, health and justice. We are committed to listening and learning from each other, making the invisible visible, focusing on social networks, connectivity and relationships, creating a city where every individual realises their own potential.

You can learn more at www.edinburghthrive.com.

About Health in Mind

Health in Mind is a Scottish charity with your mental health at heart.



We are based in Edinburgh and have been promoting positive mental health and wellbeing since 1982. Our hopeful and caring approach supports and empowers each person to live the life they want to live.

You can find out more about Health in Mind and how we can support you at health-in-mind.org.uk.

This booklet has been produced in partnership by Thrive Edinburgh and Health in Mind. Many thanks to our colleagues across Edinburgh who have contributed to the booklet and shared their ideas and resources.



Your Winter Five Ways to Wellbeing

We're encouraged to eat at least five fruit and vegetables a day to take care of our physical health, but what about our mental health?

Research carried out by the New Economics Foundation found that there are five ways to wellbeing.

Connect, Be active, Take notice, Keep learning, Give

Here are some ideas for winter activities related to the five ways to wellbeing:

Connect

- Set up a group chat with friends and/or family to plan winter activities
- Write a card to someone you haven't spoken to in a while (see our Hello Postcard on page 11)
- Make a playlist for someone in your life and chat about it together

Get active

- Do stretches or gentle movement that works for you
- If you can, try and get outside every day - even for just 5 minutes
- Go for a walk to see winter decorations and lights in your local community

Take notice

- Take notice of the seasons changing and the effect it has on your surroundings
- Buy an amaryllis bulb and watch it grow throughout the winter months
- Take up a mindful indoor hobby like journaling or knitting

Keep learning

- Try out a new winter recipe (see Alan's sweet potato soup on page 9)
- Listen to a podcast or audiobook about a topic you don't know about
- Ask questions and learn from the people around you

Give

- Try and shop local when buying gifts during the festive period
- Donate or volunteer your time to a cause in your community
- Raise awareness of causes on social media by sharing posts about issues that are important to you

www.health-in-mind.org.uk



Keeping Well Over Winter

There are many different ways to keep well this wintertime. Here's some ideas that people have shared with us:

I like to get cosy on the couch and read one of my favourite books.

I make sure I leave the house every day – even if the weather is awful!

I make sure to call or send a message to the important people in my life. Just a wee message to check in with them or to say I'm thinking about them.

If I catch myself feeling low for a few days, I will reach out to someone close to me or try and find online resources to help boost my wellbeing.

I make sure to participate in activities I enjoy; going to gigs, walks with friends, playing games and watching bad Christmas films

I take the time for self-care such as having a long bath, making my favourite meal or taking some time to journal.

We'd love to hear what helps you to keep well during the winter. Share your ideas with us on social media using the hashtag **#CoorieInThisWinter**





Positive Steps to Wellbeing

During the winter months, when the days are shorter, and the weather is more unpredictable, we can catch ourselves not doing as much.

During this time, we can stop doing the activities that bring us joy, which can result in us feeling stressed, tired and down.

To help give you a boost, follow these four steps.

1. Make a list of the most important parts of your life

This can help you identify what your priorities are. It could include people you're close to, your responsibilities and hobbies you enjoy.

2. Identify short, medium and long-term activities

Now you have identified the essential parts of your life, next come up with activities you can do to look after these priorities. A good way of doing this is by organising the activities into short, medium and long-term goals. For example, I will go for a walk around the park tomorrow (short), and I will make sure I send a postcard to a friend next week (medium).

3. Create a schedule for your activities

For each activity, think about and write down: What day will you do it on; What time; Where; What tools you will need?

4. Refer back to your lists

Take the time to refer back to your list of priorities. This can help you reflect on whether your activities are meeting your own personal needs.

Journaling

Taking some time to journal can help relieve stress, give you time for reflection, and it can be fun to get creative.

Here are some prompts to get you started:

- List 10 things that make you smile
- Share gratitude for a person in your life who has shown you kindness
- Write down a time in the last year that you have overcome a challenging situation
- What do you want to achieve in 2022?
- What is holding you back from achieving your goals?
- What do you do to boost your wellbeing when you are feeling low or anxious?
- What do you like most about your personality?
- What aspects of your life are you most grateful for?
- How do you feel right now in this moment?
- What makes you laugh the most?

Alan's Sweet Potato Soup Recipe

From Alan, Edinburgh Citizen.

Ingredients

- 500g sweet potatoes, unpeeled and roughly chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 vegetable stock cubes
- vegetable oil
- a handful of coriander, roughly chopped
- half a tablespoon of brown sugar
- spices: salt, pepper, cinnamon, mild curry powder, cumin
- half a tin of coconut milk



Method

1. Put your chopped up sweet potatoes in a roasting tin. Drizzle vegetable oil over the top and sprinkle salt, pepper, cinnamon and mild curry powder. Let them roast at 200°C (gas mark 6) until slightly soft.
2. In a lidded pan, fry up in vegetable oil your onion until soft. While frying, add salt, pepper and brown sugar.
3. Add your roasted sweet potatoes to the pan, 1L of boiling water and stock cubes. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer for 20-30 minutes.
4. Add half a tin of coconut milk and leave on low heat for 5-10 minutes.
5. Blitz it all up with a hand blender until it is lovely and smooth.
6. Serve up with leftover coconut milk drizzled over the top and some chopped coriander.

Body Scrub

From Lauren, Edinburgh Citizen.

The winter months can be pretty tough, particularly with the darker days. My homemade sugar body scrub takes only 5 minutes to make and is really uplifting.

Ingredients

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- Approx ½ cup coconut oil
- The rind of 1 grapefruit
- 15 drops of grapefruit essential oil

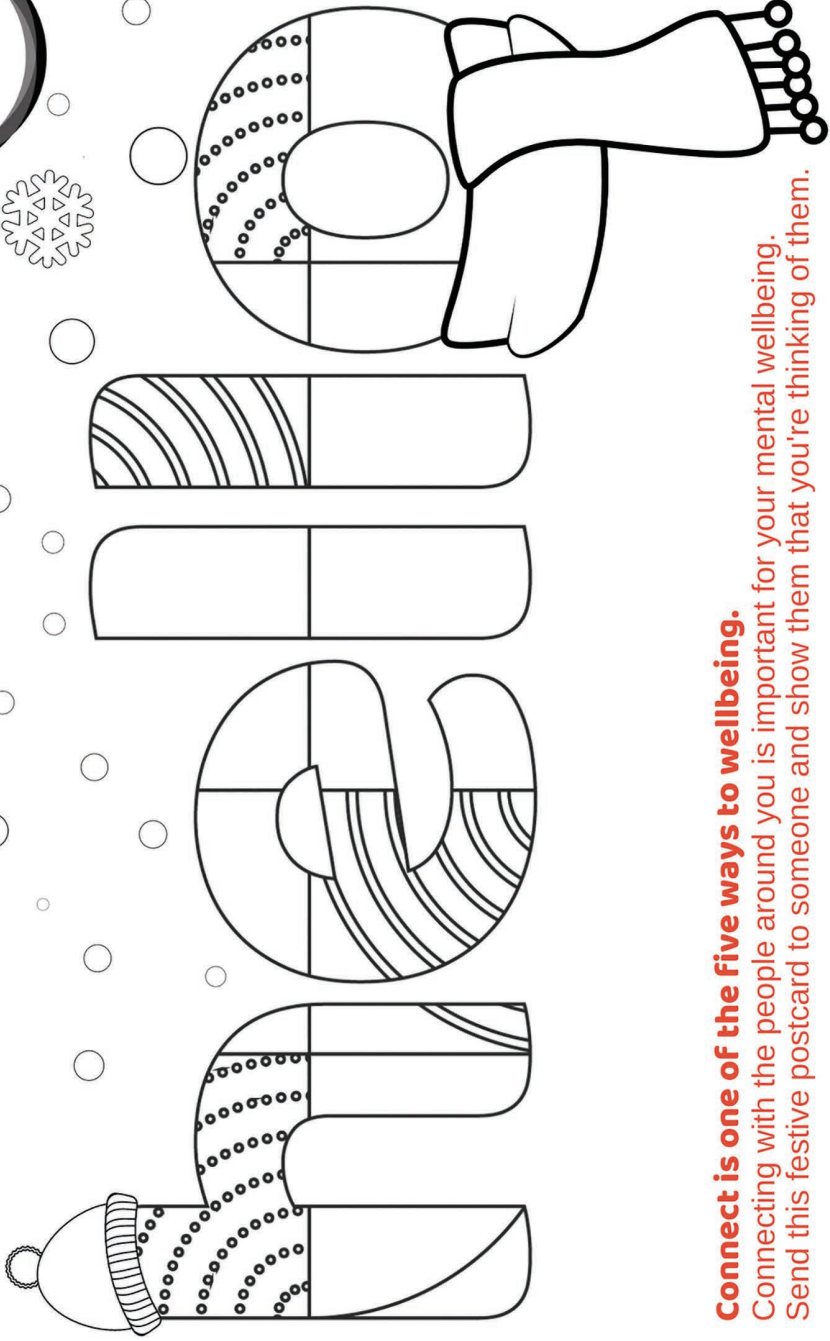
Method

Combine ingredients in a bowl, adding the oil gradually. You want the scrub to have a nice gritty texture, so adjust the oil as necessary. Place scrub in an air-tight jar and use twice a week for super soft skin.

The great thing is that you can adapt the recipe to make any scent you like - Lavender makes a relaxing scrub.

Homemade body scrubs also make perfect presents!





Connect is one of the five ways to wellbeing. Connecting with the people around you is important for your mental wellbeing. Send this festive postcard to someone and show them that you're thinking of them.

www.health-in-mind.org.uk

Health in Mind is a Scottish charity with your mental health at heart

#WritingToSayHello

We rely on donations and fundraising to provide mental health support to people living in Scotland. To support our work please visit our website or call 0131 225 8508.

Health in Mind is a charity, registered in Scotland SC004128 and a company limited by guarantee, registered in Scotland SC124090. The registered office is at 40 Shandwick Place, Edinburgh EH2 4RT.

10 Top Tips for Winter Wellbeing

1. Think about little things you can do for yourself each day, like drinking enough water and going outside for some fresh air.
2. Remember to wrap up warm in cosy jumpers, hats, scarves and gloves (and waterproofs too!)
3. Try not to compare yourself to the things you see on TV or social media.
4. If you're not feeling your best or if things become overwhelming, try to be honest with family and friends about how you're feeling. Take some time out if you need it.
5. Winter can be an expensive few months. Try to work out a budget in advance and stick to it to avoid worrying and overspending.
6. What we eat can have an impact on how we feel. Try to plan some healthy meals as well to have a good balance over the winter period.
7. Plan out your week, and remember to plan fun things to do.
8. Make sure you have enough medication to last the days when the GP and Chemist are closed.
9. If you don't feel like going out, it's okay to cancel plans. The most important thing is to look after yourself.
10. Remember that there are people out there who can help. Reach out to the people around you or contact listening services if you are finding it hard to cope during the winter months. (See page 37 for details of listening services).

Mindfulness & Relaxation Ideas

Mindfulness is the ability to be present in the here and now. This can help you be more aware and understanding of your feelings in a non-judgemental way.

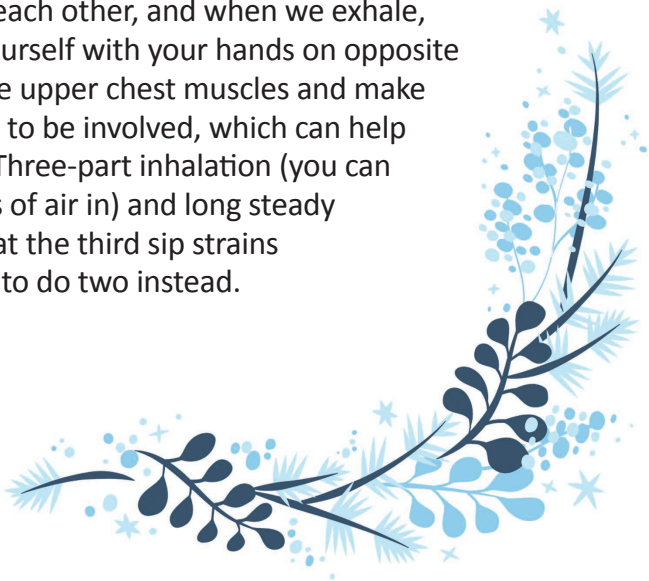
Mindfulness can help boost our mental health and wellbeing as it helps us better understand our emotions and actions and lets us enjoy the beauty in the world around us.

Here are some ideas for how you can relax and be mindful:

Try belly breathing

By taking some deep breaths, we can help ourselves to feel more relaxed. If you do try one of these breathing exercises, pay attention to how you respond and stop if you feel uncomfortable or strange in any way.

Place one hand on your chest and one hand on your belly (a few inches about the belly button) - try to breathe into the hand that is resting on your stomach. Place your hands on your lower ribs with middle fingers touching - if you are using your diaphragm, when you breathe in, the middle fingers draw away (just a few inches) from each other, and when we exhale, they touch again. Hug yourself with your hands on opposite shoulders (to stabilise the upper chest muscles and make it more difficult for them to be involved, which can help send the breath down). Three-part inhalation (you can imagine taking three sips of air in) and long steady exhalation. If you feel that the third sip strains your shoulders, feel free to do two instead.



Meditation

Find a seat somewhere that is quiet and where you won't be disturbed. You don't need to meditate for too long – 5 or 10 minutes can be enough.

Find a seated position that you feel comfortable in for the set time you have decided to meditate. Close your eyes and start to notice your breath going in and going out. Try and keep your focus on your breathing. If you catch your mind drifting off and thinking about something else (which it most likely will so don't worry if it does), return your attention to back your breathing.

When the time is up, open your eyes gently, take in your surroundings. Try and recognise how your body feels, what you are thinking and what emotions are coming up.

Mindful colouring and drawing

Take 5 minutes each day to try some mindful colouring and/or drawing. You don't need to be an artist to feel the positive effects of art on your wellbeing.

Instead of focusing on the end result, concentrate on the sensation of moving a pen or pencil across a piece of paper. You can also try mindful colouring-in books, which can help distract you from difficult emotions and the repetition can help soothe you.

To learn more about, check out the iThrive Edinburgh's self-help pages on 'relaxation' and 'mindfulness' at www.thriveedinburgh.org.uk



It's a Wonderful Life

Linda Irvine Fitzpatrick, Thrive Edinburgh.

For more years than I can remember just close to Christmas Day I watch **It's a Wonderful Life**, I love to go to the Filmhouse to watch it, on my own or, if I can persuade him, with my husband. Every year it's reassuringly familiar but also different - depending on what's happened that year, some parts will seem more poignant or relevant. Regardless though there are some bits I always laugh out loud (when they are dancing and the swimming pool opens up) and some bits where I always cry (that final "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" rendition). So this year I will once again curl up in my cinema seat, with hot chocolate and a candy cane thinking of the year that's been. Wishing you all, in the words of George Bailey:

**"Merry Christmas, movie house! Merry Christmas, Emporium!
Merry Christmas, you wonderful old Building and Loan!"**

My Magic Book

Cat Young, Thrive Team.

Sometimes over Christmas and all year round really, we can find ourselves having some challenges in our relationships and communicating with others. I have recently found a magic little book called **The Art of Communicating by Thich Nhat Hanh**.

I call it magic as I don't read it cover to cover but just open it up and it seems to just give me an answer and helps me feel lighter. The other night I was feeling a little confused and I happened to open it at p100 where it told a wonderful story about understanding different perspectives. It truly made me understand my predicament, made things 1000% better, and made me smile again. I recommend this book to everyone to have a read over Christmas time!

Merry Christmas everyone and wishing everyone a Happy 2022! 😊

Our “must contacts”

Lord Provost.

My family and I no longer send many paper Christmas Cards, it's nearly all electronic exchanges, but before sending out this year's messages we look through all those we received last year – it's always surprising to see how many are from friends that for one reason or another we haven't met up with this year or from those who have previously suffered a loss at this time of year. From this we make a list of “must contacts” by phone, digital call or a physical meeting. It's amazing how you can create time when your mind is focused on a simple task like saying hello.

When the nights draw in

Kate Deacon, Media Education.

I love people and I like to be around people. Sometimes when the nights draw in and we all go inside I feel a bit panicked as it is easy not to see so much of friends and neighbors so I make lots of arrangements for walks with people and visiting. I also invite people around a lot, often just for tea/ dinner. Nothing special just to share food and have a blether. At first I wasn't sure if people would want to come with Covid etc but the opposite seems to be the case and people seem to want to find ways to be with other people. Basically I put in an effort to have a busy house. I hope the restrictions keep allowing this over the winter.

Recycling Remembering

Jane Crawford, CAPS Independent Advocacy.

I keep all the Christmas cards from one year until the next Christmas. It's nice to get them out and read them, thinking about the people who sent them. Then I cut out any interesting or stand alone parts of the front cover in a rounded blob shape e.g. a robin or a tree. I make a hole at the top with a hole punch and thread through a piece of parcel ribbon or similar and hey presto, it's a gift tag to use on this year's presents.

My One Thousand Paper Cranes

Julie, Edinburgh Citizen.

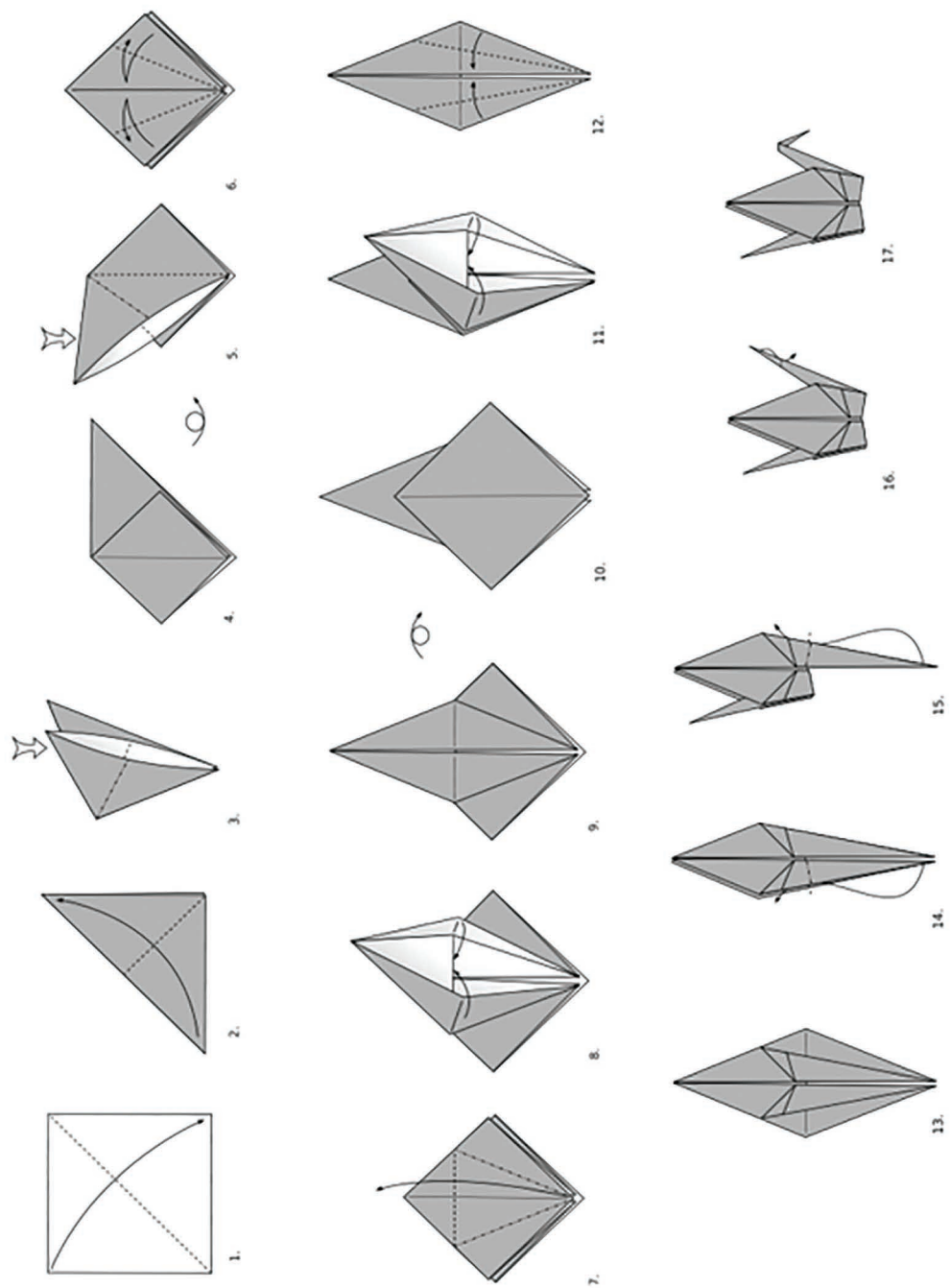
Knowing my love and need for mindful activity to support my mental wellbeing, my parents bought me a book on origami. It is a small square book, the first half filled with step-by-step instructions on how to fold some truly intricate shapes; stars, flowers, boxes, and butterflies. The other half filled with page after page of beautiful, colourful, swirling patterns. Each sheet scored with a perforated line to allow the page to be gently taken out: pulled with that soul-satisfying ripping sound.

And so began my journey to fold one thousand paper cranes. On my recovery journey, I have wished for many things; an end to the sadness and the anxiety, a return to my old self with joy and happiness.

An ancient Japanese legend promises that the gods will grant anyone who folds one thousand paper cranes a wish.

But guess what...

I may not fold one thousand paper cranes, but with each fold I make, I gain a moment's calm, peace, mindfulness, and a glimmer of understanding that with regular moments like these, I may not need that wish granted after all.



Staying Active This Winter

From Edinburgh Leisure

“There’s no such thing as bad weather – only the wrong clothes.”

Whether you dread the winter weather or look forward to the crisp mornings it is important to keep moving during the winter months and get outside when you can. The mental health benefits of being active or moving can be felt very quickly – people often feel less stressed and more relaxed after some activity or fresh air.

Here’s our top tips to help you be active this winter:

Find a workout or walking buddy – it’s much harder to skip a session or cancel a walk , if you have arranged to do it with someone. Having company can also take your mind off the weather if it’s bad.

Build activity into your daily schedule - it can be harder to motivate yourself when it’s cold or dark outside. If you can schedule your activity during the day or during your lunch break, and if it is really miserable, why not try an online workout or head to a shopping centre or museum for an indoor walk.

Plan ahead and keep an eye on the weather - if you are planning to go for a walk or be active outside make sure you dress for the weather - in the words of Billy Connolly *“There’s no such thing as bad weather – only the wrong clothes”* so wrap up if it’s going to be cold and warm up afterwards with a bowl of soup, or find an indoor activity that you enjoy.

If you are looking for some support to be active or want to know what's going on in your local leisure centre check out Edinburgh Leisure's website.

It's not just gym and sports - we offer low intensity fitness classes and swimming and our Ageing Well programme for older adults offers dance, walking, cycling and even gardening. These opportunities are ideal for those who feel it has been a long time since they were last active and are looking for a gentle start to help improve their health and wellbeing.

We also deliver physical activity programmes in partnership with NHS Lothian, Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership and the voluntary sector supporting people with a range of health conditions including mental health.

Our **Healthy Active Minds** programme supports inactive adults (18+) living with mild to moderate mental health conditions such as depression, stress, anxiety, or low mood to improve their mental health and wellbeing by being active.

If you would like more information on our Healthy Active Minds programme on our website: www.edinburghleisure.co.uk/healthy-active-minds or contact our Active Communities team using the details below:

Phone: 0131 458 2260

Email: active@edinburghleisure.co.uk



ithrive



EDINBURGH

Your online space for
mental health and wellbeing
information in Edinburgh

Find local support that works for you

.....
**Access to a wide range of self-help materials
on topics including anxiety, depression,
sleep problems and anger**

.....
See what events are taking place in Edinburgh

.....
**Keep up to date with latest mental health
and wellbeing news**

www.ithriveedinburgh.org.uk



@iThriveEdin



@iThriveEdinburgh

Learn more about...

Green Spaces

Being in nature is a brilliant way to boost your mental health and wellbeing. Being in nature can involve going for a walk, taking up gardening at home or through a community project, or simply sitting in a green space and enjoying your surroundings.



On iThrive, you can find ideas, resources and local projects and organisations related to our wonderful green spaces in Edinburgh.

Anxiety



Anxiety is a feeling of worry or fear of something. Lots of people feel anxious in certain situations, like when giving a speech or sitting an exam, but sometimes anxiety can be longer term and can have a negative impact on your life.

We have put together resources on anxiety, links to organisations, factsheets, videos, podcasts and exercises which can help you better understand different types of anxiety, what causes it and ways to manage it.

Loneliness and Staying Connected

Here are some tips on how to stay connected this winter and fight off those feelings of loneliness:

Pick up the phone

Set aside time to call someone for a chat. It doesn't need to be anything significant or for a long time; just a quick hello and catch up can help you feel connected.

Send someone a card

Sending a card to someone can let them know that you care and you are thinking of them. You can send the winter edition of our **#WritingToSayHello** postcard in this booklet.

Make fun winter plans!

There are plenty of activities you can book into your diary to try out. Crisp winter walks, trying a new recipe, reading a classic book you know you will enjoy, or even doing some winter crafts (see our origami page for some inspiration).

Take time for self-care

Taking time to do some self-care can help you relax and counteract the negative feelings connected to loneliness. This could be having a dance around your home, running a bath, watching your favourite film or cosying up with a hot drink.

Whatever you do, find the time to coorie in this winter.





It's My Coorie!

Maria Arnold, EVOC

It's the total opposite of how to 'coorie in' really, but swimming at Wardie Bay has definitely become the most important way I look after my mental health and wellbeing. I started in lockdown – a bit of a cliché - but home schooling two children at the same time as working definitely left me in need of some kind of release.

I do it all year round but it's definitely the winter where you get the full effect – nerves on the way down, wondering why I'm putting myself through such an odd thing, but once your body forgives you for the discomfort there is such total exhilaration after it's all worthwhile. It's got me through some difficult times and whatever I've felt stressed or anxious about, it always feels slightly less pressing after I've been in for a chilly dip.

It has become my favourite place to be in Edinburgh and whenever I have a spare hour it's where I choose to go.

Grace's "easy-peesy" Lemon "squeezy" Cake!

Lee Frey, Thrive Edinburgh.

My mother-in-law's recipe - an easy recipe for any time of the year, especially around Christmas. When you are short on time, and when you want a quick delicious treat.

Ingredients

- 2 cups flour + baking powder 1 tsp
- 2 cups sugar
- 100 g butter unsalted
- 3 eggs
- Rind from two lemons / boiling water 1 tsp
- 3 tablespoon milk
- Use one lemon for the mix / one for topping
- 4 oz icing sugar for the topping
- Topping - icing sugar and lemon juice

Method

1. Mix everything together in one bowl. That's the best bit. It's just so easy!
2. Remember to use unsalted butter.
3. Add only three tablespoons milk.
4. Add the lemon rind & boiling water once everything is in the bowl, and just one teaspoon of boiling water.
5. Bake in loaf tin (using greaseproof loaf tin liner) for approximately 1 hour - 175°C fan.
6. Poke holes in the cake once it comes out, and pour on the icing sugar while still in the container. Then take out and put on drying rack. Once cooled a little bit, take off paper and continue to let cool.

Enjoy with all your friends over a nice cup of tea or coffee.

My 5 Christmas Ways to Wellbeing

Kat, Patients Council.

Connect - Although I'm not a religious person I do like to send Christmas cards, particularly to people who live far away or whom I don't get to see too often. It's a personal touch to receive a written note and a constructive way to reflect on the year. I like to start doing this in November...

Take Notice - The main thing I notice when the Winter months come is the lack of sunshine! I swear by Vitamin D supplements every winter for a well-needed mood-boost!

Give - The winter is particularly hard on birds - I like to stock up the bird feeders and make suet balls to keep them well fed over the winter months - they need all the help they can get!

Get Active - I try and delight in winter walks - with the right clothing (waterproofs, wellies and woolly hats!) Winter can be as enjoyable as any other season - seeing the frost on the trees, warm breath in the air, ice on the puddles and knowing it's nature's necessity to withdraw all but its evergreens in order to bless us with the coming Spring. Plus there's nothing quite like getting cosy again and treating yourself to a hot-chocolate when you've been out walking in the cold!

Keep Learning - I like to look up new words and try and work them into my vocabulary as a way of stretching my brain. Poems are a great way to learn new words and a good way to still enjoy reading if your mood is low and/or you don't have great concentration. A trip to the library can provide you with many an anthology to keep you going with a poem a day through the winter months and doesn't have to cost a penny.... One of my favourites:

**Hope is the thing with feathers,
that perches in the soul,
and sings the tune without the words
and never stops at all.**

Emily Dickinson



ACE IT

Helping people over 50
access the digital world

10 things to do online at Christmas

Tracking Santa at NORAD <https://www.noradsanta.org>

Streaming Christmas music on YouTube or Spotify

Use a spreadsheet to keep track of who you've got to buy gifts for, and who you're sending cards to

Watching Christmas movies on Netflix, Amazon Prime or other streaming service

Buying Christmas presents online

Use Microsoft Word to type your Christmas round robin letter, to save you writing it out 50 times!

Find out what activities are happening in your local area by searching online

Print out a Christmas colouring-in sheet to relax

Host a Christmas get together online over Zoom for those you can't see in person

Find all the recipes you need for the festive season

A Good Lunch Loaf

Michelle Lloyd, Cyrenians.

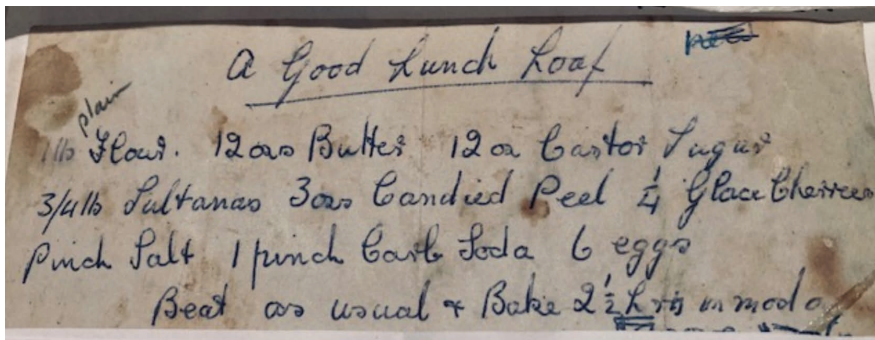
For me, a key part of the run up to Christmas is spending a Sunday in December baking 10-12 fruit cakes. Each taking quite a while to prepare and longer to bake. Suffice to say, it takes all day and well into the night.

Let me explain... In my family a few folk didn't like the traditional rich Christmas cake. So my Grandma started to bake a lighter fruit cakes at Christmas. Each packed with goodness and love. In those days, you didn't really buy cakes, so she also baked them for friends and family. As she got older, I helped her in the kitchen and, in her later years, this meant her sitting on a high kitchen chair giving instructions and carefully checking I was not taking shortcuts – in other words, putting in the required amount of effort! No mixers were used, so all that beating sugar into butter, folding in the flour, sultanas, cherries and mixed peel certainly helped develop healthy biceps. It was quite exhausting, but those were also such special times together.

Sadly, Grandma has now passed away, but every year when I get out her baking tins (once a year!) and her baking bowls, and the recipe below, I fondly remember those special moments. Please note the method is simply 'beat as usual'! And yes, I now use a mixer to speed it up a bit.

I keep the tradition of passing the cakes onto family and friends and in the past, they've also been sent to relatives living overseas. The joke is, in my own house no one actually likes 'lunch loaf', but plenty of others seem to.

I now work for Cyrenians and I feel privileged to work for an organisation that truly values the importance and benefits of building relationships and creating communities by baking and eating cakes together.



Useful Contacts

Help Now

Police, Fire, Ambulance (emergency) Call: 999

Police (non-emergency) Call: 101

NHS 24 Call: 111

Provides urgent care and advice when your GP, pharmacy or dental practice is closed.

Social Care Direct Call: 0131 200 2324

Out of Hours call 0800 731 6969.

Open: Monday to Thursday from 8.30am – 5.00pm and Friday from 8.30am – 3.55pm.

If someone needs urgent social care or you think an adult or child needs protection.

Samaritans Call: 116 123

Open: 24 hours.

A listening service for people having a difficult time, thinking about suicide or are worried about someone who is having suicidal thoughts.

SHOUT Text: SHOUT to 85258

Open: 24 hours.

Free, 24/7 mental health text support service.

Edinburgh Crisis Centre Call: 0808 801 0414

Open: 24 hours.

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis and need to talk to someone.

Help Now

Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline

Call: 0800 027 1234

Open: 24 hours.

Provides support for anyone with experience of domestic abuse or forced marriage, as well as their family members, friends, colleagues, and professionals who support them.

Mental Health Assessment Service Call: 0131 286 8137

Open: 24 hours.

For people in crisis who need an emergency mental health assessment.

Parents

Lone Parent Helpline Call: 0808 801 0323

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.30am – 4.00pm.

Support and advice for single parents.

Parentline Scotland Call: 0800 028 2233

Open: 24 hours.

Advice and support for parents living in Scotland.

NSPCC Helpline Call: 0808 800 5000

Open: Monday to Friday from 8.00am – 10.00pm

and 9.00am – 6.00pm at weekends.

Advice and information for parents or carers who are looking after a child.

Young People

Papyrus Hopeline Call: 0800 068 4141

Text: 07860039967.

Open: 9.00am – midnight, every day.

A helpline for young people having suicidal thoughts.

Young Minds Text: YM to 85258

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.30am – 4.00pm.

Text service for young people experiencing a mental health crisis.

Older People

Age Scotland Call: 0800 124 4222

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 5.00pm.

Provides information and advice to tackle loneliness and isolation.

Silverline Call: 0800 4708 090

Open: 24 hours.

Offering friendship and advice to older people.

Hourglass Call: 0808 808 8141 (Press 2 for Scotland)

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 5.00pm.

Provides information and support for anyone concerned about harm or abuse of an older person.

Housing and Homelessness

Shelter's Housing Advice Call: 0808 800 4444

Open: 9.00am – 5.00pm.

One-to-one personalised help with housing issues and homelessness.

Emergency Housing (Edinburgh) Call: 0800 032 5968

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 5.00pm.

Advice and support for people with emergency housing issues.

Edinburgh Housing Advice Organisation Call: 0845 302 4607

Open: Monday to Thursday from 8.30am – 5.00pm

and Friday from 8.30am – 3.40pm.

Provides free housing, advice, information, and representation to tenants of all tenure types in Edinburgh and Midlothian.

Home Energy Scotland Call: 0808 808 2282

Text: WARM to 81025.

Open: Monday to Friday from 8.00am – 8.00pm,

Saturday from 9.00am – 5.00pm.

Advice on energy saving and keeping warm at home.

Citizens Advice Call: Call 0131 510 5510

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 5.00pm.

Specialising in confidential information and advice to assist people with housing issues in the UK.

Access Point Call: 0131 529 7438

Open: Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from

9.00am – 5.00pm, Tuesday from 10.00am – 5.00pm

and Friday from 9.00am – 4.00pm.

Homeless support for people with support needs.

Money

Citizens Advice Call: 0131 550 1000

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 5.00pm.

Specialising in confidential information and advice to assist people with legal, debt, consumer, housing, and other problems in the UK.

Scottish Welfare Fund Call: 0131 529 5299

Open: Monday to Friday from 8.30am – 5.00pm.

Provides grants for people on low income.

Debtline Call: 0808 808 4000

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 8.00pm

and Saturday from 9.30am – 1.00pm.

Free and independent debt advice.

Advocacy and Legal

Advocard Call: 0131 554 5307

Open: 9.00am – 5.00pm

Independent and collective advocacy for people in Edinburgh.

Partners in Advocacy Call: 0131 478 7723

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 5.00pm.

Independent advocacy for adults in Edinburgh and children and young people across Scotland.

Carers

Voice of Carers Across the Lothians (VOCAL)

Call: 0131 622 6666

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 5.00pm.

Working with family members, partners and friends who are caring for someone.

Edinburgh Carers Council Call: 0131 322 8480

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 5.00pm.

Advocacy for carers supporting someone with physical or mental health difficulties.

MECOPP (Minority Ethnic Carers of Older People Project)

Call: 0131 467 2994

Open: Monday to Thursday from 9.00am - 5.00pm,
Friday from 9.00am – 4.00pm.

Support for Black and Minority Ethnic carers to access appropriate support and services.

Carers Scotland Advice Line Call: 0808 808 7777

Open: Monday – Friday from 8.00am – 10.00pm,
Saturday and Sunday from 9.00am – 5.00pm.

Advice line for carers.

Substance Use

Alcoholics Anonymous Call: 0800 917 7650

Open: 10.00am – 10.00pm, every day.

Advice and support for those who feel they have or are developing an addiction to alcohol or are worried about someone who is.

Drinkline Scotland Call: 0300 123 1110

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 9.00pm,
Saturday and Sunday from 10.00am – 4.00pm.

Advice to callers concerned about their own or someone else's drinking.

Narcotics Anonymous Call: 0300 999 1212

Open: 10.00am – midnight, every day.

Support for people who have a drug problem.

Gambler's Anonymous Call: 0370 050 8881

Open: 24 hours.

Advice to callers concerned about their own or someone else's gambling habits.

Al-Anon Call: 0800 0086 811

Open: 10.00am – 10.00pm, every day.

Support for families and friends of alcoholics.

Frank Call: 0300 123 6600

Text: 82111

Open: 24 hours.

Support and information about drug use.

Listening Services

Samaritans Call: 116 123

Open: 24 hours.

A listening service for people having a difficult time, thinking about suicide or are worried about someone who is having suicidal thoughts.

Breathing Space Call: 0800 83 85 87

Open: Monday to Thursday from 6.00pm – 2.00am, Friday from 6.00pm – Monday 6.00am.

A confidential, phone and webchat service for anyone in Scotland over the age of 16 experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety.

CALM Call: 0800 58 58 58

Open: 5.00pm – midnight, every day.

For people who are down or have hit a wall, who need to talk to find information and support.

No Panic Call: 0844 967 4848

Open: 10.00am – 10.00pm, every day.

Advice and support for people living with phobias, OCD and anxiety.

Switchboard LGBT+ Call: 0300 330 0630

Open: 10.00am – 10.00pm, every day.

Confidential listening service for LGBT+ communities.

ChitChat Britain Call: 0800 001 4455

Open: 9.00am – 9.00pm, every day.

Free helpline to just have a chat about how you are feeling.

Food

Edinburgh Community Food Call: 0131 467 7326

Open: Monday to Friday from 8.00am – 4.00pm.

Help for people to access a healthy diet.

Eat Well Age Well Malnutrition Helpline Call: 0131 447 8151

Open: Monday from 9.00am – 4.00pm, Wednesday from 9.00am – 4.00pm, Thursday from 9.00am – 4.00pm.

Provides practical tips and advice about how older people can stay well-nourished.

Edinburgh Food Project Call: 0131 444 0030

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 4.00pm.

Provides emergency food and support to local people.

Edinburgh Northeast Foodbank Call: 0131 554 2578

Open: Monday from 1.00pm – 2.30pm, Tuesday from 10.00am – 12.00pm and 1.00pm – 2.30pm, Wednesday from 4.30pm – 6.00pm, Thursday from 10.00am – 11.30am, Friday from 10.00am – 12.00pm and 3.00pm – 5.00pm.

Foodbank located in north east Edinburgh.

Edinburgh Southeast Foodbank Call: 0131 664 9353

Open: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 10.00am - 1:30pm

Foodbank located in south east Edinburgh.

Edinburgh Southwest Foodbank (Salvation Army)

Call: 0131 346 2875

Open: Monday from 1.00pm – 3.00pm, Wednesday from 11.00am – 1.00pm and Friday from 10.00am – 12.00pm

Foodbank located in south west Edinburgh.

Social Bite Call: 0131 353 0250

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 5.00pm.

A social enterprise that helps give food and advice to homeless people.

Grief and Bereavement

Cruse Bereavement Care Call: 0808 802 6161

Open: Monday from 9.30am – 5.00pm, Tuesday from 9.30am – 8.00pm, Wednesday from 9.30am – 8.00pm, Thursday from 9.30am – 8.00pm, Friday from 9.30am – 5.00pm, Saturday and Sunday from 10.00am 2.00pm.
Support for anyone who is bereaving.

PETAL (People Experiencing Trauma and Loss)

Call: 01698 324502

Open: Monday to Thursday from 9.00am – 5.00pm, Friday from 9.00am – 4.00pm.
Support for people experiencing trauma or loss.

The Scottish Funerals Costs Helpline Call: 0300 0113 301

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 5.00pm.
Support making arrangements for funerals.

Practical Support

Gas helpline Call: 0800 111 999

Open: 24 hours.
Support with any queries about gas.

Electricity Helpline Call: 105

Open: 24 hours.
Support with any queries regarding electricity.

Scottish Water Helpline Call: 0800 0778 778

Open: 24 hours.
Support with inquiries about water supply.

Edinburgh Council Emergency Call: 0131 200 2000

Open: 24 hours. Support if you are experiencing a critical situation. www.edinburgh.gov.uk/contact.

Keeping Safe

Rape Crisis Scotland Call: 0808 801 0302

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 4.00pm.

A national rape crisis helpline and email support for anyone affected by sexual violence.

Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre Call: 0131 556 9437

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 7.00pm.

Confidential emotional and practical support, information and advocacy to women, all members of the trans community, non-binary people and young people aged 12-18 in Edinburgh, East and Midlothian, who have experienced sexual violence at any time in their lives.

Scottish Women's Aid Call: 0800 027 1234

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 5.00pm

Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline.

Edinburgh Women's Aid Call: 0131 315 8110

Open: Monday from 10.00am – 3.00pm, Tuesday from 10.00am – 7.00pm, Wednesday from 10.00am – 3.00pm, Thursday from 10.00am – 3.00pm, Friday from 10.00am – 3.00pm, Saturday from 10.00am – 1.00pm.

For support or advice from Edinburgh Women Aid's services.

Victim Support Scotland Call: 0800 160 1985

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 5.00pm.

Provides support and information to people affected by crime and campaigns for victims and witness rights.

Shakti Women's Aid Call: 0131 475 2399

Open: Monday to Friday from 9.00am – 5.00pm.

Support for Black and Minority Ethnic women and their children who are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse.

My Five Ways

Mark Innes, Police Scotland.

Connect

I have always been aware of the importance of relationships, but this has been reinforced during the pandemic. I will be making sure that, during the winter months, and over the festive season, I will be spending time with my parents and catching up with friends whenever I can. When I say catching up, I mean seeing them in person and talking. I never underestimate the benefit of talking!

Take Notice

I am generally kept busy at home and I often forget the simple things in life. So, I am going to make sure I find some time to just sit! I love music, it can have such a positive influence of mental wellbeing, so I am going to make sure I find time to just sit and listen to music.

Give

My family are the most important thing to me and I always make sure I give my time to them – to listen and talk with them, to play with the kids, to have meals together and help with homework! That won't change during the winter months, especially as we get more opportunity to do this with everyone being indoors together more often.

Get Active

I would usually go skiing in the winter but, sadly that won't be happening this year. I will be keeping active though by cycling and going on long family walks with our dog. We enjoy taking her to Beecraigs Country Park or to the beach. Making sure the kids get to swimming, gymnastics and Brownies also keeps me physically and mentally active!

Keep Learning

There isn't a day goes by that I don't learn something. However, having been inspired by last year's 'Coorie In For Winter', I am going to surprise, not only myself, but my wife and kids, by learning to cook and, maybe in next year's book I can share my favourite winter recipe!



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