



13th May 2024

# Newsletter



## Here's what has happened recently and what's to come!

Welcome to our charity newsletter! We are thrilled to share with you the latest developments in our mission to make a positive impact in our community.

Firstly, we would like to express our gratitude to all of our donors who have continued to support us during these challenging times. Your generosity and dedication have allowed us to keep our programs running smoothly and effectively.

In terms of our recent activities, we have successfully launched a new campaign to celebrate 35 years of service. This is a huge milestone for the charity that will be celebrated in December this year.

VITAL have been awarded funding from the National Lottery to develop a new Volunteers Project, that will be launching in June 2024.

We are pleased to share that we will be participating in Mental Health Awareness Week from May 13th to 19th. This year's theme is "Movement: Moving for our Mental Health." We look forward to sharing helpful tips throughout the week.

Finally, we want to remind everyone that our charity relies on the kindness and support of our community. If you are able to donate your time or resources, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Together, we can make a real difference in the lives of those who need it most. Thank you for your continued support!

We hope you enjoy our update!

*Vital Team*

### In this newsletter you can expect:

Mental Health Awareness Week

Mindful Movement

5K a day

National Lottery funding

35 years of service

Events



# MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK

13-19 MAY 2024

## “Movement: Moving more for our mental health”

Next week marks Mental Health Awareness Week which will run from 13th - 19th May. As always, we are proud to be a part of this campaign and this year the focus is on 'movement'.

Movement is important for our mental health, but so many of us struggle to move enough.

We know there are many different reasons for this, so this Mental Health Awareness Week we want to help people to find moments for movement in their daily routines. Going for a walk in your neighbourhood, putting on your favourite music and dancing around the living room, chair exercises when you're watching television – it all counts!.

We will be sharing tips throughout the week but will also be visiting The Broadway Shopping Centre in Bradford on 15th May, where you can pop by and find out more about the charity.

You can also join us on 16th May at Lister Park, where we will be doing a 'Mindful' Walk from 2pm. To book yourself on email [tracy.pickwell@vitalprojects.org.uk](mailto:tracy.pickwell@vitalprojects.org.uk) for further information.

We will be sharing some great articles and tips during the week, so please visit the website for further information:

[www.vitalprojects.org.uk](http://www.vitalprojects.org.uk)



Source: Mental Health Foundation



### Ways movement can help

- Reduces Stress
- Endorphin production
- Improves Self Esteem
- Socialising
- Can improve sleep
- Help with weight management



While you are waiting for the kettle to boil, use the time to move. Walk around the kitchen, do squats, dance, roll your arms.

Whatever you do, ensure you feel comfortable doing it. Be safe and know your limits.



# MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK

13-19 MAY 2024

## Why do so many of us avoid walking

Walking is a simple yet powerful form of exercise that has been proven to have numerous benefits for our physical and mental wellbeing. It is a low-impact activity that can be done by people of all ages and fitness levels. And even better - it is free to do! So why do so many people avoid it?

One of the main reasons is the fast-paced and busy lifestyle that many adults lead. With work, family, and other responsibilities, finding time to walk can seem like a luxury. But the truth is, walking doesn't have to take up a lot of time. Even a short 10-minute walk can have a positive impact on our mental health.

So to all the adults out there who struggle with finding the motivation to walk, remember that it doesn't have to be a daunting task. Start small, make it a part of your daily routine, and be patient. The benefits for your mental health will be worth it in the end.



**5K A DAY CHALLENGE**

From 13th - 19th May 2024 take part in our challenge as part of Mental Health Awareness Week  
**#MomentsforMovement**

For more information go to:  
[www.vitalprojects.org.uk/MHAW24](http://www.vitalprojects.org.uk/MHAW24)

The logo for Vital Projects, featuring a stylized 'v' made of colorful dots and the word 'vital' in a lowercase, sans-serif font, with the tagline 'experts by experience' below it.

## Fancy a challenge ...

During Mental Health Awareness Week, join us in walking 5K a day from 13th to 19th May.

We will be getting our bodies moving & sharing progress throughout the week on social media.

If you would like to partake in the challenge. You can join us and share your progress with us on social media **@vitalprojects18** using the hashtag **#MomentsforMovement**



Credit: Hotpot AI

# WHAT IS MINDFUL MOVEMENT?

Mindful movement is the practice of moving our bodies with awareness and intention. It can take many forms, from yoga and tai chi to dance and even walking. The key is to be fully present in the moment, paying attention to our body, breath, and surroundings.

## AND HOW CAN IT HELP OUR MENTAL HEALTH?

In today's fast-paced world, we are constantly bombarded with distractions and demands, leaving little time for self-care. Our minds are always racing, and our bodies are often neglected. This is where mindful movement comes in. By slowing down and tuning into our bodies, we can quiet our minds and find a sense of peace and balance.

But how does this benefit our mental health? The answer lies in the mind-body connection. Our physical and mental health are deeply intertwined, and when one is out of balance, the other is affected. Mindful movement helps to strengthen this connection, allowing us to become more attuned to our bodies and better able to recognise and respond to our emotions.

When we move mindfully, we are also practising self-compassion. We learn to listen to our bodies and honor our limitations, rather than pushing ourselves to the point of exhaustion or injury. This self-care and self-acceptance can have a profound impact on our mental wellbeing, boosting our self-esteem and reducing feelings of anxiety and depression.

Moreover, mindful movement can be a powerful tool for managing stress. By focusing on our breath and movements, we can quiet the constant chatter in our minds and find a sense of calm. This can be especially beneficial for adults who are juggling multiple responsibilities and often feel overwhelmed.

But perhaps the most significant benefit of mindful movement is the sense of connection it fosters. In a world where we are increasingly isolated and disconnected, moving mindfully can bring us back to ourselves and to others. Whether it's joining a yoga class or taking a walk with a friend, mindful movement can be a shared experience that strengthens relationships and builds a sense of community.

[www.vitalprojects.org.uk](http://www.vitalprojects.org.uk)



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This project is supported by:  **COMMUNITY FUND**

## Lottery funding for new Volunteers Project

VITAL have been awarded funding from the National Lottery to kick start a new Volunteers Project later this Spring.

The charity will utilise the new funding to implement a person-centred volunteering approach. This will give volunteers the freedom to pursue their interests and work individually with a mentor to develop a personalised plan for their growth once training is completed.

The seven week training plan is due to start at the beginning of July. If you are interested in volunteering for VITAL, please register your interest with [tracy.pickwell@vitalprojects.org.uk](mailto:tracy.pickwell@vitalprojects.org.uk)



## How we can benefit from volunteering

The pandemic put a stop to volunteering for many organisations but also led to an increase in isolation and loneliness, resulting in a decline in mental health which is still present today.

As a mental health charity, Vital Projects are eager to reduce this by promoting peer support within our volunteer programme through workshops and mentoring.

We want to ensure that everybody feels valued, has a voice and are part of a thriving team who are making a real difference to the wider community.

Our training aims to promote many benefits around: wellbeing, social connections and personal development.

### PLEASE NOTE:

Our intake for this course is limited to 12 volunteers in order to provide the valuable time needed for the development of individual, personalised plans.

If you are interested in the programme get in touch quickly to avoid disappointment.





## Story of impact: this month's story is about Marie's journey to find justice for her brother

**\* Content warning - this article discusses suicide.**

Marie's life changed dramatically in December 2018 when her brother took his own life.

When Marie started to look closer into what had happened, she began to uncover a series of problems with the way that her brother's search for support was handled by services in the city where he lived. Instead of supporting her brother at a time when he was incredibly distressed and vulnerable, she felt that he was turned away at every point and his claims of suicide were not taken seriously.

When she decided to make a complaint, an advocate was suggested to her. As a confident, intelligent, capable woman, Marie thought it was something she could manage alone but the moment she spoke to one of VITAL's Senior Advocates, she knew she had made the right decision:

*"She was an absolute Godsend, she was sympathetic, empathetic, helpful, and lived and breathed my whole dreadful experience, I was so glad that I contacted Vital as she saw things I didn't but, she has been amazing, I don't think I could have got through the process without her."*

Throughout this time her main aims were for the services to take accountability for their mistakes and to find much-deserved justice for her brother.

Throughout this process and through the incredible support of her advocate, significant changes have been made across the two Trusts that will be in place for years to come. For Marie, she got the much-needed answers she needed and the apology she and her brother deserved.

Having an advocate though goes further. It personally enabled her to share the pain of what had happened. To have somebody by her side throughout the journey, who she could trust, be vulnerable with and who would listen to her non-judgmentally. To be supported by somebody who knew the process, understood her rights, her brother's rights and also wanted justice.

Marie sums up this level of support so well with just one word **'invaluable'**.

The full story is available at [www.vitalprojects.org.uk/impact-stories/f/invaluable-icat-service](http://www.vitalprojects.org.uk/impact-stories/f/invaluable-icat-service)

## Resources available:



VITAL have a library of information to support wellbeing - including Self Care Booklets, Mindfulness Cards, Anxiety Guides and pin badges. For further information, please go to [www.vitalprojects.org.uk/ols/products](http://www.vitalprojects.org.uk/ols/products)

## Events

**Weds 15th May 2024**

VITAL WILL BE AT THE BROADWAY SHOPPING CENTRE, BRADFORD ON 15TH MAY - SHARING INFORMATION ABOUT THE ORGANISATION & TIPS TO HELP US ALL MOVE MORE TO SUPPORT OUR MENTAL HEALTH.

FIND US OUTSIDE SUPERDRY FROM 10AM TO 2PM

**Pop by & say hi**

[www.vitalprojects.org.uk](http://www.vitalprojects.org.uk)



**Thursday 16th May 2024**

Join us for a mindful walk at Lister Park, Bradford & activate your senses as you enjoy this glorious backdrop.

We will be meeting at 1.45pm outside Cartwright Hall & starting the walk at approx. 2pm.

If you are interesting in joining us - please email [tracy.pickwell@vitalprojects.org.uk](mailto:tracy.pickwell@vitalprojects.org.uk) with contact details for further information.

\*It will be an gentle amble but please ensure your are wearing suitable footwear.

[www.vitalprojects.org.uk](http://www.vitalprojects.org.uk)

**DONATE**



# HELP US TO PRESERVE OUR SERVICE

This year, VITAL celebrates its 35th Anniversary. We are the oldest, independent, user led, advocacy charity in the UK.

At VITAL, we understand that each individual has unique needs and challenges, and we are committed to providing personalised and compassionate support every step of the way.

We have many reasons to celebrate this year but there is also mounting pressure over funding cuts - which may lead to a very different future for the charity.

For further information about the charity or to see how you can support us - go to:

[www.vitalprojects.org.uk](http://www.vitalprojects.org.uk)

**"If it was not for your service,  
I would probably not be here to tell  
the tale. The caring nature &  
professionalism is second to none."**



**Please help us to continue  
delivering this extraordinary  
service by donating at:**

[www.vitalprojects.org.uk/donate](http://www.vitalprojects.org.uk/donate)  
or by scanning the code below.

