

Welcome to our Spring Newsletter. This means going blue for M.E in M.E. Awareness Week which takes place from May 8 to 14. To show support you can wear something blue and email me a photo or wear something blue for our May meeting.... Wigs allowed!! Photos will be in our next newsletter :)



AGM in brief...

In March we held our first AGM. We would like to thank everyone that attended, including our guest speaker Annie Brewster who was an inspiration. If you would like to see the full Chairs report it is available on the website in latest news on the Home Page.

In brief...we currently have funding to continue at the same level of activity until September 2017. After this we plan to continue current meetings and yoga of which funding is now being applied for. We aim to introduce a monthly mindfulness session starting soon on a Thursday morning.

Due to the demand from surrounding areas we all agreed to change the constitution to incorporate this. In September we will start working on publicity for Hertfordshire.

Myself, Mike and Linda remain trustees. We thanked our volunteers for their time and commitment and all the members for making the group such a warm, caring and supportive experience.

Celebrating our first birthday



In our April meeting we celebrated our 1st Birthday. We have come along way since last year and are proud of what we have achieved so far.

We had a fantastic turn out as you can see and welcomed some new members. It was a lovely vibe and we all had a great time.

There was an excellent suggestion to have topics to discuss at meetings so have a think and when you come next time write your topic ideas in the signing in book or email me.

St Albans M.E Group Membership Book. It would be nice to know more about each other and our top tips. If you are happy to share, Maureen will make a folder and a virtual one, so we can all read it. We will send out an email with a template soon.

John also did some mindfulness with us which was really interesting and bought up some discussion The mindfulness he shared is on page 3. We then ended with a relaxation.

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

MEETINGS

The 2nd Wed every month £2, London Colney Community Centre. Caledon Rd, London Colney. AL2 1PU 11am to 1pm. Refreshments provided

May 10th : We will be having 2 tables. One for crafts with Maureen where we will be making cards and a table for those who just chat and have refreshments or a bit of both :) materials supplied.

June 14th : We have a guest Jannah who will have a chat then open up discussion to the group for the first hour. Thank you John for the introduction. Jannah wrote a brief description for the group.

Jannah Britt-Green

Over the past few years I have trained in stress management therapy and Trauma / PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder) therapy. In this process, I have found one of the most remarkable and effective approaches to be the solution-focused approach. This solution focused brief therapy (SFBT) is based on the belief that by focusing on what one has achieved – the challenges they have overcome and how far they have come – and by focusing on one's hopes and goals for the future and reinforcing that way of thinking, they will begin to adopt a different outlook on life. This outlook will be distinguished by a solution-focused attitude, which will aid the individual in a more healthy, balanced way of thinking and living, rather than a problem-focused outlook and ensuing negative behaviour. And it all begins with subtle but significant changes in how we view ourselves and our worlds. As a group, we will look at some poignant questions that can help us to think in new ways and change the way we think and therefore live.

July 12th : We will have 2 tables. One for those who would like to have a go at painting with Maureen and Vijay. Then a table for chat and refreshments. You can do either or both :)

August 9th : This will be an informal meeting with the aim to be a BBQ or something similar

YOGA

The 1st Wed every month £2
London Colney Community Centre, Caledon Rd, London Colney, AL2 1PU

May 3rd 5pm

June 7th 5pm (was 11am)

July 5th 5pm

Aug 2nd 11am



We held our April's yoga at 11am which was really popular. There was 10 of us there. Some did it seated and some with mats. Because of this from September we will be changing it to 11am on a Saturday morning. The venue will be confirmed closer to the time as London Colney community centre is booked most Saturdays.

Monthly Mindfulness sessions

We will be aiming for 11am to 12 noon the 3rd Thursday of the month. Venue is yet to be confirmed. Details will be emailed out soon.

Group Publicity

We have a new Publicity role for the group, which Fiona as a member and volunteer has taken on. We aim to raise awareness for the group and let people know what we do. We hope to make contact with organisations such as local charities. Some of who we have already come into contact with, parish councils, GP Surgeries, community centres etc. We are currently working on Posters and Leaflets for the group, a newsletter circulation list and hope to expand our publicity with online sources such as local newspapers and M.E Websites.

Any ideas or suggestions for publicity, email Fiona at sameg.publicity@gmail.com

Johns mindfulness

In the April meeting John handed out a sheet with the quotes below on them. Someone in the group read it out and we then we talked about what these meant to us. As you can guess it was different for some of them and interesting to hear others views and how it affects us.

7 Things Mindful people Do Differently...

1. Approach everyday things with curiosity and savour them
2. Forgive their mistakes big or small
3. Show gratitude for good moments and grace for bad ones
4. Practice compassion and nurture connections
5. Make peace with imperfection, inside and out
6. Embrace vulnerability by trusting others and themselves



Group members tips and treatments

This section is for members to tell us about treatments or tips that have helped them. This is not an endorsement of any products and we have no medical training. It is for us to share information and thoughts and we would suggest if you wanted to try new products you may want to discuss it with your GP first. If anyone would like to share what has been helpful for you please email me and I will add it in the newsletters. It can be a couple of lines to a whole page.

Diane's Supplements

IMPROVING ENERGY - MITOCHONDRIAL, ADRENAL AND THYROID SUPPORT – April 2017

This is a snippet from Diane's supplement regime. It will be emailed as a separate attachment to the newsletter in the same email.

“Below is a table of the supplements that I am currently taking which are really helping to reduce ME symptoms.

Noticeable increase in energy, brain clarity, reduced fallout and faster recovery times.

Most of my research has been via Dr. Sarah Myhill's website – see the below links - as well as supporting advice from fellow sufferers.”

Hope this helps

Diane

<http://drmyhill.co.uk/wiki/Category:Fatigue>



In our next newsletter we hope to have some feedback from members who are trying CBD oil. Please email any experiences with this or if you would like to share other things you have tried.



PART 2 OF SANDY'S STORY "ROAD TO RECOVERY"

Part 1 can be found in the Newsletter issue no 3

When I returned to the UK from Madrid, my body had changed. I started getting health problems I'd never had before: migraines, period pain that would cause me to faint in public places, gut problems (now called IBS) and worst of all the depletion of my energy. I had taken up a music teaching post in a High School in the beautiful Malvern Hills. Music is an exhausting subject to teach – as well as

routine classes there are many extra curricular activities (choirs, orchestras, productions) all taking place in lunch hours and after school. I struggled with my energy, especially after lunch – however big or small - and I remember lunch hour choir practices when through the brain fog I'd get my words wrong and be teased for appearing drunk!

Several times a year my mystery illness would strike and I'd be off work for two to three weeks, making me unpopular with the staff who had to cover my lessons. I thought perhaps I had a Spanish virus residing in my system which reared its head from time to time. But the doctors had other ideas ... I was missing my Spanish boyfriend, I needed to be settled and married, I needed 'the patter of tiny feet', I needed a part time job, I needed most of my large intestine removed (that happened). Then divorce, a new husband .. Of course none of it improved my health and some made the condition much worse.

I left the High School after three years to take up a lovely job in a boy's prep boarding school. Long hours (I remember rehearsing the second violins of the orchestra at 8.00am) but due to the way the day was formulated there was a teaching break in the afternoons. A siesta ! The early afternoon was, and still is, my worst time of day. I found that if I could sleep then for at least an hour I could live fairly normally. That, became a way of coping and still holds today. I feel so terrible at that time of day I could easily kill anyone who disturbs me.

My mystery illness was also a secret illness – only those very close to me knew a little of how I struggled. I never knew when I was going to be ill, or how my energy would be from day to day, or even during the day. But I developed coping strategies and within those restrictions I managed to keep going for over twenty years. I had a good life doing the things that normal people do – marriage, children, homes, work, holidays - and I even pursued my enduring passion for music, singing in choirs and giving performances and concerts.

Then my health started to deteriorate. I was doing too much and there was a lot of stress in my life. I wasn't coping. Strange new symptoms appeared: double vision in the evenings, excruciating muscle spasms in my arms. I was starting to get two three day migraines a week and I lived with constant debilitating anxiety and insomnia. I took any number of pills to keep my symptoms at bay. I knew things were terribly wrong but there was still that voice telling me it was all in my head and I just needed mental strength to keep going. I was out of control and I should have stopped but I didn't seem to know how. I felt as though I was careering downhill on a bob sleigh and that I may crash at the bottom. Which is exactly what I did.

Continued in our next newsletter...

If you would like to send a photo of you wearing something blue or have some useful tips or treatment feedback that has helped you please email stalbans.m.e.group@gmail.com We will share this in our newsletters.

Don't forget you can get information on services available on our website stalbansmegroup.org.uk