

Thrive with Five

Give
Issue Five



Giving our time and attention to others – it's the little things that make a difference!

Welcome to Thrive with Five

Issue Five - Give



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People have been telling us about their worries and fears since our lives have changed due to the Coronavirus. Many of us have found that our usual coping outlets and networks have been disrupted or cancelled, leaving us feeling alone, worrying the future. Thrive with Five is a five-part series of self-help information based on Five Ways to Wellbeing. It helps us to focus on the small steps we can take each day, to build our self-care and emotional resilience, enabling us to cope better with life's challenges. We hope you enjoy Keep Learning and find these tips helpful – we are here to help support each other where we can. Stay safe and well.

Chloe

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Suffolk User Forum



@SUFMentalWealth

Help us to help others!

Be part of our supportive community and send us your self-care ideas and inspiration for keeping healthy and well whilst social distancing and self-isolating. Help us to grow a valuable resource of information with tried and tested tips for self-care.

We love to hear about the things that are working for you. Send your inspiring self-care tips direct to our inbox.

Try to keep your ideas shorter than 60 words. Pictures or illustrations would be a lovely addition. We cannot promise to publish every contribution and we may have to edit some text at our discretion, but we do read all self-care tips with great interest. Together we can do so much.

Thrive with Five

Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Give



Thrive with Five and nourish the soul.

Suffolk User Forum is the voice for mental health service users in the East and West of Suffolk. We provide peer advocacy and support and gather people's experiences of mental health services. Our reports to influence decision makers, promoting coproduction to improve services to better meet people's needs. We also signpost people to services and promote self-care for improved mental health and wellbeing.

Thrive with Five is based on the Five Ways to Wellbeing, researched and developed by the New Economics Foundation. The five ways are Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Give. They provide a framework that can help us think about the things that matter most to us.

They help us develop small changes that help us to feel stronger and healthier in mind, body, and spirit. We can use these wellbeing areas to support us, whatever our circumstances, age, or situation. Our Thrive with Five guides share proven tips on how we can incorporate self-care into everyday life.

Give is the fifth in this series. It is about giving our time and attention to help others.

Often, it is the little things that can make all the difference. Whether it is a smile, a "thank you" or a kind word. By cultivating gratitude in everyday life, we connect more with others and our communities, building a better sense of purpose and strengthening relationships with ourselves and the world around us.

Give

What is giving?



Cultivating gratitude in everyday life

Giving has been described as the key to success, fulfilment, and a life of prosperity. It is about adding value to other people's lives by freely parting with something and offering it to someone or something beyond ourselves. A stranger, friend, family member, a charitable organisation, our local or wider community.

Whilst giving can include parting with material things such as money and gifts, it really involves giving our time, skills, knowledge, enthusiasm, passion, and kindness. It can mean supporting a friend with a problem, donating unwanted or unused items to charity, or volunteering our time.

It can simply mean making more time for the people that we care about. Feeling part of something, being more connected to the world around us is important for our sense of wellbeing. We grow and feel better about ourselves when we connect with other people and our communities in a meaningful way.

When we give our attention, it builds a greater sense of trust and cooperation in our daily lives. Giving is about cultivating gratitude in everyday life, by showing the people around us that we care. Through this, we strengthen our relationships with others making them more positive for ourselves and for others.

Other people feel closer to us and we feel closer to them. We increase our own positivity about the world and those around us. This is the key to good mental health.

Scientifically several studies have shown that Giving has a positive effect on our moods. Evidence from neuroscience suggests that giving activates the 'reward' area of our brains. We experience good feelings. Giving is contagious. When we give to others, this has a knock-on effect. The people who are given to, are more likely to act kindly and give to others as a result. It increases life satisfaction, provides a sense of meaning, increases feelings of competence, improves our mood, and reduces stress.

Several studies over the past decade have found that many aspects of wellbeing are higher in those who do volunteering projects, compared with those who do not.

Research also shows that individuals who report a greater interest in helping others are more likely to rate themselves as happy people. Happy people can live up to seven years longer. Small acts of kindness towards other people, or larger acts, such as volunteering in our local community can give us a sense of purpose. This makes us feel happier and more satisfied about life. Giving to others helps us change our thoughts from our own concerns. We can see the 'bigger picture'.

Inspirational quotes about Giving

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'We rise by lifting others.' - **Robert Ingersoll**

'Giving opens the way for receiving.' - **Florence Scovel Shinn**

'It's not how much we give, but how much love we put into giving.' - **Mother Teresa**

'I learned to give, not because I have much, but because I know exactly how it feels to have nothing.' - **Anonymous**

'It's about who you've lifted up, who you've made better. It's about what you've given back.' - **Denzel Washington**

'There are those who give with joy, and that joy is their reward.' - **Khalil Gibran**

'Happiness doesn't result from what we get, but from what we give.' - **Ben Carson**

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How to Give to Others

Give every day



It is the little things that make all the difference!

Whoever we are, whatever we do, we can make giving part of our daily lives. Often, it is the little things that can make all the difference. Whether it is a smile, a “thank you” or a kind word.

Give at home

- Praise those you love.
- If you do not usually cook a meal, cook one to say thank you!
- Notice a household job that needs to be done - do it without being asked!
- Give your time and attention.
- Pick up after yourself.
- Do chores with a happy heart and without expecting to be praised for it.
- Spend time at the end of each day touching base with those who are close to you.
- Listen to your loved one, with the true intention and focus of listening.
- Spend time teaching your children something new.
- Help your children with their homework
- Spend some time to have fun with your family, playing a game, or asking them to play you their favourite music or song.

How to Give to others around us

- Say “thank you” to someone for something they have done for you.
 - Volunteer in your local community. That might mean helping at a local school, hospital, or care home.
 - Make some biscuits or a cake for someone you know.
 - Show someone kindness.
 - Phone a relative or friend who needs support or company.
 - Ask a colleague how they are and, really listen to the answer.
 - Arrange a day out for you and a friend or relative.
 - Sign up to a mentoring project, in which you give time and support to someone who will benefit from it.
 - Offer to help a relative with DIY or a colleague with a work project.
 - Donate something you do not use.
 - Offer to help your neighbour with a task, for example gardening.
 - Next time you go shopping, make a donation to a local food bank.
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How to Give to others around us

Send a nice email: Just a quick note telling someone how much you appreciate them, or how proud you are of them, or just saying thank you for something they did.

Show appreciation, publicly: Praising someone at a meeting or in front of co-workers, is a great way to make them feel better about themselves.

Be helpful: Offer to pick up messages, files or packages to save co-workers’ time. Volunteer for a new work task. Offer your time to support a colleague with an area of work.

Be patient: Allow people time they need. Sometimes, it takes people more time to process a new skill, learn new information or respond to an event. Learn to be patient with others.

Just be there: When someone you know is in need, sometimes it is just good to be there. Sit with them, talk, and help if you can.

Think of others: Refill your colleagues supplies, too, while you restock your own. Pick up other people’s prints from the printer, offer to make a cuppa for your team.

Give to Our Communities

Volunteering our time



Making a difference

Volunteering for causes or organisations that we are passionate about can be a great way of giving something back whilst also bringing something meaningful into our lives. Not only do our efforts make a real difference to the cause itself, but through volunteering we are likely to learn a wealth of new skills and meet people with similar interest to us. Both brilliant ways to improve our sense of wellbeing.

If we have got some spare time, whether at the weekend or during the week, there are a wide range of organisations in Suffolk that offer opportunities for us to get involved.

You can look on individual charity's websites, if you already know a cause you would like to support. Alternatively, you can find out more about volunteering opportunities locally, by looking at the Volunteer Suffolk website: www.volunteersuffolk.org.uk

The Volunteer Suffolk website tells you all you need to know about volunteering, including reasons to volunteer, top tips and the Volunteer Passport (free training). It provides a link between voluntary organisations and the public, regularly posting new volunteering opportunities as-and-when they become available.



Suffolk user forum

your voice for emotional
and mental health



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Suffolk User Forum



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