



# Carers 4 Carers

Finding support through supporting each other

March—April 2022

As we hear of more and more on the news of the atrocities being carried out by Russia, we can't fail to feel intensely for the people of Ukraine. Empathy is a great thing and we can empathise with those suffering, but can we honestly even start to imagine what it must be like living through such hell?



We are told by Ukrainians that the support offered by so many ordinary people around the world means a great deal. We are not all in a position to send large donations, boxes of supplies or take in refugees, but we know that the moral support also helps.

Last Saturday Lisa and I had a stall at the Kineton Farmers' Market. In addition to selling craft items from which 50% of the profits go to Carers4Carers, we also sold little sunflower brooches for a donation to the Ukraine Appeal. Additionally the full income from any item on the stall made with or decorated with a sunflower design will also be given to the appeal. I'll be at the Wellesbourne Spring Craft Fair at the Methodist Church on Saturday 19th March, 10—1 p.m. If I have enough stock, I'll bring some to our March meeting.

**OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS** Please note that it is essential to book a place for both our carers' meeting and the Companionship Group. Please leave a phone message or email as soon as you can after receiving this newsletter and by 6 p.m. on Wednesday 23rd March at the latest. Contact details are at the foot of this page.

Carers4Carers meets on the **fourth** Friday of the month, except in December, when it's the second Friday. We meet at Kineton Village Hall, Mill Street, Kineton, CV35 0LB, 10.30 a.m. until 12 noon. We start with time for coffee and chat and then, if a speaker or workshop is scheduled, this will usually begin at about 11 o'clock.

**Friday 25th March** — continuing our current theme of wellbeing and relaxation, we'll be looking at journaling this month. We often hear that carers write down a lot of their thoughts and emotions, finding that it helps alleviate stress and negative feelings.

**Friday 22nd April** - as we look towards November when we will be celebrating our 10th Anniversary, Penny Varley, ceramic

artist, will set us on the road to creating a group memento. It'll be fun, therapeutic and, for many of you, something different. Don't worry—you don't need to be an artist!

**Friday 27th May** - we're going to 'chill out with Tai Chi'. Our guest will lead both the Companionship Group and Carers in two short separate sessions to introduce you to this beneficial and gentle activity.

Carers4Carers is part of the network of Omega Care for Life Meeting Point Support Groups Reg. Charity No. 1120322

[www.carers4carersonthefosse.org.uk](http://www.carers4carersonthefosse.org.uk)

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## 5 WAYS TO BOOST YOUR MOOD—USING FOOD!

It's hardly surprising that many of us at the moment are struggling with low mood, anxiety and depression. Many people turn to food to cheer themselves up but looking for a high sugar level kick isn't always the best way or even healthy, although chocolate might just help

Foods rich in serotonin are known to help with stabilising mood. Another important nutritional element is tryptophan. This is an amino

acid which the body converts into serotonin. So here are a few foods that would be worth adding to your diet if you don't already enjoy them.



1. **Fatty fish.** Omega-3 fatty acids found in fatty fish help boost serotonin levels in the brain. Studies have shown that people who consume omega-3 regularly are less likely to become depressed. Tuck in to tuna and salmon or a tin of pilchards or sardines!

2. Who doesn't love a **banana**? They are high in vitamin B6 and tryptophan. Bananas are a good source of both fibre and sugar and when released together, they help stabilise blood sugar levels and mood. Off to make banana bread?

3. **Nuts and seeds** are also an excellent source of plant-based proteins, healthy fats and fibre. Enjoy them with your banana for a double whammy of tryptophan to increase your serotonin levels.

4. You'll love this one! **Dark chocolate.** Another source of the magical tryptophan, it can improve mood by providing a quick shot of fuel to the brain. It also contains health-promoting flavonoids, which have been shown to reduce inflammation and boost brain health; all these can support healthy mood regulation. Its smell, taste and texture is enough to boost anyone's mood. However, because dark chocolate is higher in those important flavonoids and lower in added sugar and fats than white or milk chocolate, chocolate with a higher cocoa percentage has the best health benefits.

5. **Oats** are another wonder food. They are an excellent source of protein, healthy fats which are also a good source of iron, most B vitamins and high in vitamin E and yes, tryptophan. Their healthy secret are beta-glucan which is a soluble fibre known to reduce the risk of cardiovascular and other diseases. Other known health benefits are that they lower cholesterol, help control blood sugar and insulin levels—I was advised that jumbo oats were the best for this – lower blood pressure, aid weight control and maintain a healthy gut.

No wonder they are great for a healthy breakfast with bananas and nuts. You could even sprinkle some chocolate curls on top!

**Please note:** this nutritional information has been taken from trustworthy sources but it does not replace any advice you are given by health and nutrition professionals.

I have just one scam alert for you this month.

So many people are anxious to help support the Ukrainians at this time. However, unfortunately, scammers are being very quick to take advantage. It's known that fake websites have been set up, you may receive a knock on the door, or receive appeals by email or through the post.



As always, the advice is to 'take five' - i.e. take five minutes to think whether it is genuine. Poor spelling and grammar are a give away as are logos that don't quite look right.

If you wish to make a donation, the safest way is through the Disasters Emergency Committee, 2022 or DEC. This brings together 15 leading UK aid charities which raises funds quickly and ensures money goes directly where it is needed.

Their registered charity number is 1062638 and their Company, limited by guarantee, is registered in England and Wales, No. 3356526.

The quickest and safest way to donate is online at [www.dec.org.uk/](http://www.dec.org.uk/). You can also donate by phone 0370 60 60 900 or by post, make your donation payable to the DEC Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal, PO Box 999, London EC3A 3AA. There is a downloadable form from the website which contains a gift aid declaration if you are able to access it.

There are details of other ways to make your donation to DEC on their website.

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## OUR PROGRAMME OF MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

As we have welcomed a number of new members since we restarted face-to-face meetings, it seems a good time to write a little about what we offer you at our meetings.

Our first half hour is always devoted to 'coffee and chat'. Relax over a hot drink, reconnect with friends or make new ones. Many of our members choose to talk about their own situations and seek ideas and coping strategies from fellow carers. Although there is so much value in talking to others about what you are experiencing, please never feel obliged to do so. It is entirely up to you and how you are feeling at the time as to how much you choose to share. It goes without saying, of course, that you must be able to do this in confidence. What's said in the room, stays in the room.

We have always tried to respond to requests for information from our members about a specific topic. Sometimes this can take a while to arrange as we need to find the right person or organisation to invite. In the meantime, we are running a number of workshops aimed at offering ideas for carer wellbeing. We hope you will find our sessions enjoyable and relaxing. Take from them what is right for you. Last month we looked at some mindful activities. This month we'll be taking the ideas of writing down your thoughts, which many of you find helpful, and adding some therapeutic elements to that. Come with an open mind and enjoy!

## IMPORTANT CONTACTS AND LINKS



- Carers Trust Heart of England— [www.carerstrusthofe.org.uk](http://www.carerstrusthofe.org.uk); 024 7610 1040 Option 4
- To make a consumer complaint, obtain consumer help and advice or report an issue to Trading Standards, please contact the Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133.
- For consumer or business help and advice, including details of our approved trader scheme, please visit our website: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards>
- Advice on scams and rogue traders: Report fraud directly to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 0800 223 1133. More advice available at: [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/doorstepsellers](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/doorstepsellers) ; [www.actionfraud.police.uk/](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/).
- Healthwatch Warwickshire— [www.healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk) ; 01926 422823 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays) and email [info@healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk)
- **Silverline**—available 24/7 as well as a befriending service [www.thesilverline.org.uk/](http://www.thesilverline.org.uk/) . Email: [info@thesilverline.org.uk](mailto:info@thesilverline.org.uk) or phone 0800 4 70 80 90
- Warwickshire County Council: [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/) 01926 410 410 . For social media go to their facebook page: [www.facebook.com/WarwickshireCountyCouncil](http://www.facebook.com/WarwickshireCountyCouncil) or search 'Social Media' on the website for details of dedicated links such as Instagram and Twitter.

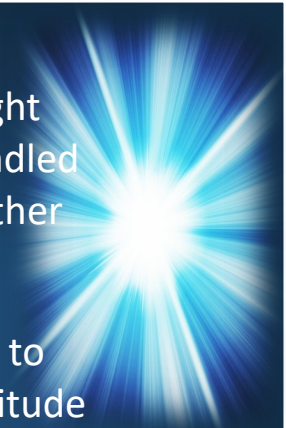
## OUR VOLUNTEERS

Carers4Carers benefits from a wonderful group of volunteers who freely give of their time. As our Companionship Group has grown over recent months, we have been actively recruiting more volunteers willing to support those you care for, so that we don't have to turn anyone away.

Gillian Jones has been working with the group since September and last month we welcomed Chris Killourhey, who came to us via the Time Bank. This month we will also welcome Lynne Stephens. They all bring their own skills and talents and this month Lynne will be helping the Companions to decorate biscuits. Sounds very tempting!

## POSITIVITY CORNER

A time to reflect and perhaps to smile



At times, our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person.

Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.

*Albert Schweitzer*