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A GUIDE AND WORKBOOK

VOLUME 1



THE CIRCLE OF LIFE



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Welcome to the Healthy You, Healthy Communities Guide and Workbook – The Circle of Life



There is a lot in the news about health problems that are avoidable and the benefits to both quality of life and wellbeing if people led healthier lifestyles. There are a number of organizations, projects and programmes – both public and private that are committed to help people make healthier choices and to protect them from threats to their health.

The Healthy You, Healthy Communities project is an initiative of RCCG, Royal City, Sevenoaks to contribute to help people lead healthier lifestyles. We aim to provide health and wellbeing information through resources, publications and events and create healthy communities hubs to promote healthier living in our communities.

Some health information:

- Nearly two thirds of adults (63%) in England were classed as being overweight (a body mass index BMI of over 25) or obese (a BMI of over 30) in 2015.
- Nearly a third of children aged 2 to 15 are overweight or obese and younger generations are becoming obese at earlier ages and staying obese into adulthood
- Failing to address the challenge posed by the obesity epidemic will place an even greater burden on NHS resources. It's estimated that the NHS in England spent £6.1 billion on overweight and obesity-related ill-health in 2014 to 15

Source: Public Health England, www.phe.gov.uk

Public Health England indicated that, *“The vast majority of people know that eating a healthy diet, as well as being physically active is good for them and will help to prevent weight gain, but for many people it can be a real struggle to put this into practice.”* It was further identified that, *“This is primarily because we are living in an obesogenic environment that encourages us to eat too many calories and not be physically active.”*

Healthy You, Healthy Communities is an initiative to encourage, support and promote healthier lifestyles in our communities. In this edition, we've considered health across diverse areas of human living to give a 360 degree health overview. As a faith based organization, we are committed to the wellbeing of our communities.

I commend this first edition of healthy You, Healthy Communities to you as a keepsake resource that will support your journey to embrace a healthy lifestyle.

Dr Obi Orazulume
Chair, Board of Trustees
RCCG, Royal City, Sevenoaks

Healthy You, Healthy Communities: A Guide & Workbook, Volume 1 – The Circle of Life

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All correspondence should be addressed to Editor, Healthy You, Healthy Communities,
info@healthycommunities.life



Dedication

This publication is dedicated to the
memory and legacy of

**PASTOR TINUOLA
ADEYEMI**

she served diligently as the Pioneer
Pastor, The Redeemed Christian Church
of God, Royal City, Sevenoaks, Kent.

Discover a healthy you on your journey through the circle of life



**Nants ingonyama bagithi baba (there comes a lion)
Sithi uhhmm ingonyama (oh yes, it's a lion)
Nants ingonyama bagithi baba (there comes a lion)
Sithi uhhmm ingonyama (oh yes, it's a lion)
Ingonyama
Siyo nqoba (we're going to conquer)
Ingonyama
Ingonyama nengw' enamabaal (it's a lion and a tiger)
[repeats 5]
Ingonyama nengw' enamabala (se-to-kwa!)
Ingonyama nengw' enamabala (asana)**

**From the day we arrive on the planet
And, blinking, step into the sun
There's more to see than can ever be seen
More to do than can ever be done
There's far too much to take in here
More to find than can ever be found
But the sun rolling high
Through the sapphire sky
Keeps great and small on the endless round
It's the circle of life
And it moves us all
Through despair and hope
Through faith and love
Till we find our place
On the path unwinding
In the circle
The circle of life**

**It's the circle of life
And it moves us all
Through despair and hope
Through faith and love
Till we find our place
On the path unwinding
In the circle
The circle of life**

This popular song in the Lion King used to announce the birth of a lion and explain the interwoven lives of all animals in the pride land is an appropriate metaphor to use to introduce our initiative – Healthy You, Healthy Communities. This initiative is designed to present a wealth of information as a guide and workbook to support individuals and families to discover a healthy lifestyle. The primary aim is to create awareness of a healthy lifestyle, provide information and resources that will facilitate people to embrace a healthy lifestyle and foster the development of healthy communities. We will engage with people and communities using publications, resources, hubs, videos, social media, online forum and events.

The first edition of this initiative is focused on “The Circle of Life”. It is dedicated to support people to discover and embrace a healthy lifestyle on their journey through the circle of life. The specific emphasis in this edition is health. So across the various stages of human development – the circle of human life – from birth to old age, we consider factors that might affect, limit and improve our health. Also, we explore two crucial events in the circle of human life – birth and death. This publication is both a guide and a workbook, with overview information, practical tips and resources for further help. Case articles from people that have dealt with some of the health issues raised are included in the publication.

Every efforts has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this publication. It has been compiled by professionals across a wide spectrum including the health industry; however it is important to state that this publication does not form the basis for diagnosis and treatment of personal health cases. Readers are encouraged to seek professional advice for their personal health conditions.

As a Christian faith organisation, this publication has been produced with some references to our Christian beliefs and ethos. This initiative is our social action contribution towards the development of healthy people and healthy communities in our towns, cities and nation. Best wishes to a healthy you and healthy communities.

**Yinka Oshin
Pastor, RCCG, Royal City, Sevenoaks**

Healthy You, Healthy Communities

Promoting a Healthy Lifestyle
in the Circle of Life

"Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come."
1 Timothy 4:8 (NLT)

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HEALTHY YOU, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

**"Dear friend,
I hope all is well with
you and that you
are as healthy in body
as you are strong
in spirit."
3 John 2 (NLT)**

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EDITOR

Yinka Oshin

CONTRIBUTORS

Gabriel & Florence Ogunbiyi
Ade Awonaiké
Christy Iyaniwura
Tolu Akinyemi
Bebe Clement

DESIGN & PRINT

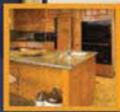
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For further enquiries please contact us:
Email: info@healthycommunities.life
Web: www.healthycommunities.life
Mobile: 07473 343 430
Facebook: [@Healthycommunities.life](https://www.facebook.com/Healthycommunities.life)
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 t: +44 20 7249 9211 f: +44 20 7249 8199
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The Circle of Life



We were all born into this world on a particularly date and time – hence we celebrate birthdays. This forms a distinct start point on the circle of life. Although, in reality the circle of life started at conception, for the purposes of clarity, we will consider the pre-birth stage of the circle of life under Section C.

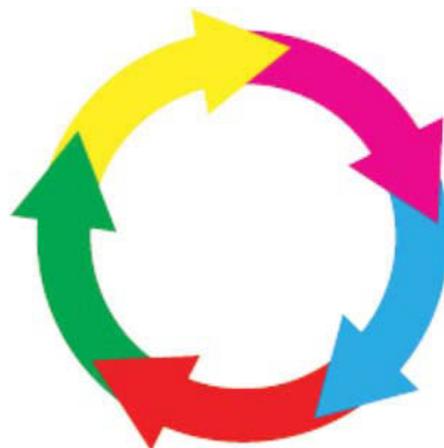
From birth, we commence our journey through the circle of life, charting a course for our respective lives. All things being equal, from birth, a child is expected to grow through the following stages of the circle of life:

0. Birth
1. Newborn (0 – 28 days)
2. Infant (0 month - 12 months)
3. Toddler (1 – 3 years)
4. Early Years (3 – 5 years)
5. Middle Childhood (6 - 11) – Primary school age/Preadolescence
6. Adolescence (12 – 19 years) – Peripuberty
7. Young adulthood (20 – 39 years)
8. Middle adulthood (40 – 60 years)
9. Elder/Senior citizen (60+ years)
10. Death

As the circle of life song states, “...we move through despair and hope, through faith and love, till we find our place, on the path unwinding, in the circle of life...;” it is not everybody that starts at birth that makes it till old age at the end of the circle of life. Death, an unpredictable event affects everyone across the circle of life. Some die at birth, some along the different stages of life; others eventually make it till old age before completing the circle of life with death.

Many factors affect the possibility of a person completing the “full circle of life” from birth to death at an old age; for the purposes of this publication we will be considering health across the various stages of the circle of life.

For everyone reading this publication, you are at a particular stage in the circle of life; you know others in your family, friends, neighbours and colleagues that are at the same or other stages. This publication will provide information that will assist you to discover a healthy lifestyle during these stages of the circle of life and contribute to a healthy you, healthy communities.



Healthy EATING Habits

Food and water are vital requirements to sustain the human body. They are required to generate energy which is used to maintain bodily functions, growth, nourishment and to work. The requirements for food and water vary across the circle of life; both in terms of quantity and quality.



Malnutrition is the inadequate intake of essential food nutrients required to sustain bodily functions, growth and development. When a person is malnourished, their bodily functions are weak, making them susceptible to illness and diseases. Malnutrition over an extended period might lead to stunted physical growth and maybe death.

Some reasons that can lead to malnutrition includes a long-term health condition, a low income or reduced mobility. It is estimated that there are about 3 million malnourished people in the UK at any time, with many more at risk of becoming malnourished, (www.nhs.uk).

Eating too much of some food nutrients might lead to a distortion in physical growth and accumulation of body fat. Obesity is used to describe someone that is very overweight with a lot of body fat. Body Mass Index (BMI) is a measure of whether you're a healthy weight for your height. It is a useful indication of whether you're a healthy weight, overweight or obese. For most adults, a BMI of:

- 18.5 to 24.9 means you're a healthy weight
- 25 to 29.9 means you're overweight
- 30 to 39.9 means you're obese
- 40 or above means you're severely obese

A better measure of excess fat is waist circumference, which can be used as an additional measure in people who are overweight (with a BMI of 25 to 29.9) or moderately obese (with a BMI of 30 to 34.9), (www.nhs.uk).

Obesity is a common problem in the UK that's estimated to affect around one in every four adults and around one in every five children aged 10 to 11, (www.nhs.uk).

Obesity if not addressed promptly can lead to a number of serious and potentially life-threatening conditions, such as:

- type 2 diabetes,
- coronary heart disease,
- some types of cancer, such as breast cancer and bowel cancer,
- stroke
- asthma
- high blood pressure
- high cholesterol and atherosclerosis (where fatty deposits narrow your arteries)
- reduced fertility
- osteoarthritis – a condition involving pain and stiffness in your joints
- liver disease and kidney disease

Obesity can also affect your quality of life and lead to psychological problems, such as low confidence and self-esteem, affecting your relationships with family and friends, and may lead to depression.

“Obesity can also affect your quality of life and lead to psychological problems, such as low confidence and self-esteem, affecting your relationships with family and friends, and may lead to depression.”

Obesity can cause a number of further problems, including difficulties with daily activities and serious health conditions. Day-to-day problems related to obesity include:

- breathlessness
- increased sweating
- snoring
- difficulty doing physical activity
- often feeling very tired
- joint and back pain

Obesity develops as a result of consuming more calories – particularly those in fatty and sugary foods – than you burn off through physical activity. The excess energy is stored in the body as fat.

To ensure physical health is not compromised, you need to eat food that has a balanced proportion of food nutrients required for your stage in the circle of life. This is often referred to as a balanced diet.

To stay healthy, and prevent malnutrition and obesity, you need to eat a variety of foods from the four main food groups including:

- plenty of fruit and vegetables
- plenty of bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods
- some milk and dairy foods
- some meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein

To prevent or treat obesity eat a healthy, reduced-calorie diet and exercise regularly. This will require lifestyle changes to help you keep a healthy weight. Healthy eating habits across the circle of life will support a healthy development of the body. It will sustain bodily functions, growth and nourishment. It aids the body's ability to fight diseases.

The Eatwell Guide

The Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government published The Eatwell Guide in 2016 to provide a pictorial diagram that shows how much of what we eat overall should come from each food group to achieve a healthy, balanced diet.

An overview from the guide include:

1. Eat at least five portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables a day

They should make up over a third of the food we eat each day. Fruit juice and/or smoothies should be limited to no more than a combined total of 150ml per day. Fruit and vegetables are a good source of vitamins, minerals and fibre.

2. Base your meals on potatoes, bread, rice, pasta or other starchy carbohydrates. Choose wholegrain where possible

Starchy food should make up just over a third of the food we eat. Choose higher-fibre, wholegrain varieties, such as whole wheat pasta and brown rice, or simply leave skins on potatoes. There are also higher-fibre versions of white bread and pasta.

3. Have some dairy or dairy alternatives (such as soya drinks and yoghurts). Choose lower-fat and lower-sugar options

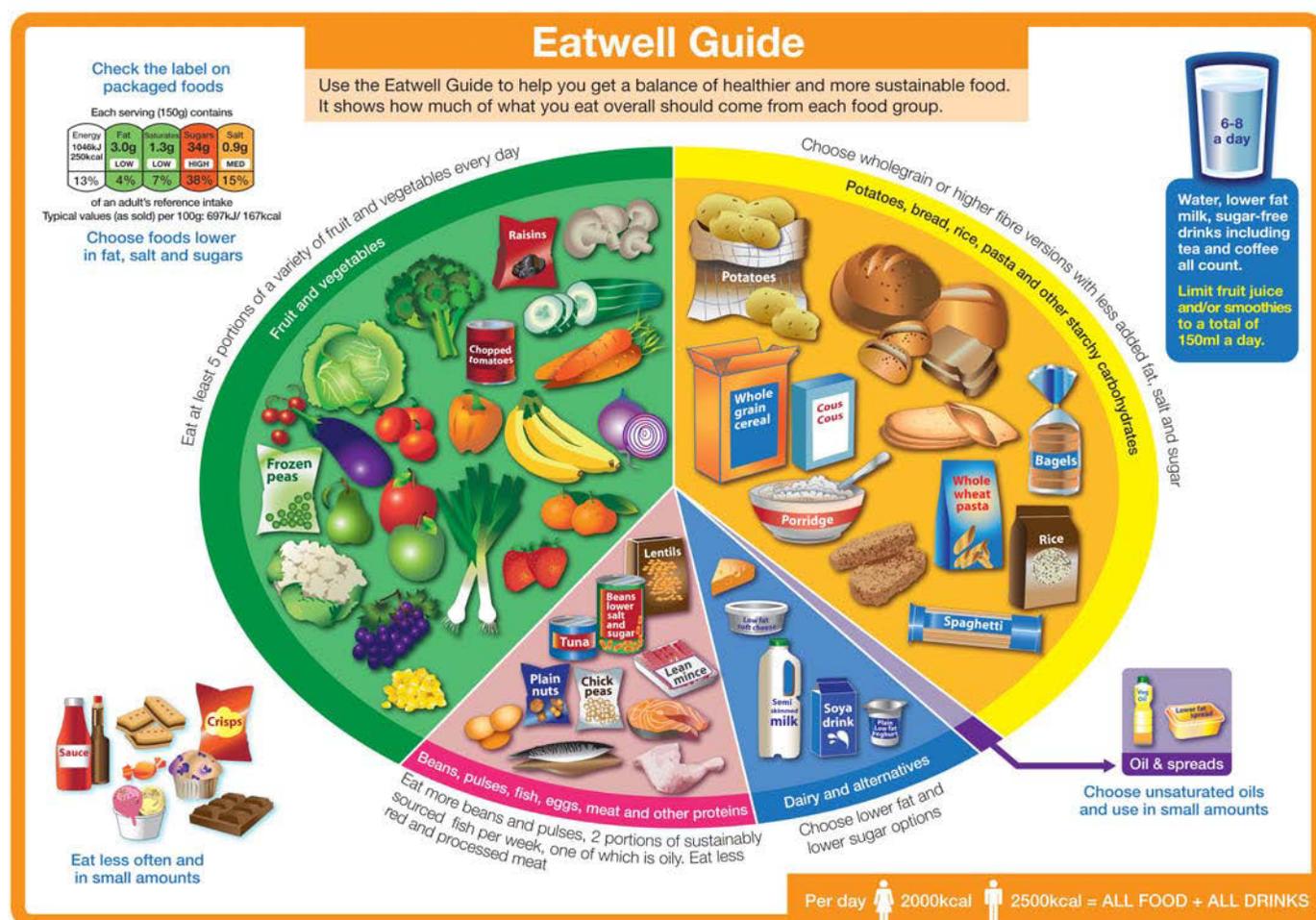
Milk, cheese, yoghurt and fromage frais are good sources of protein and some vitamins, and they're also an important source of calcium, which helps to keep our bones strong. Try to go for lower-fat and lower-sugar products where possible, like 1% fat milk, reduced-fat cheese or plain low-fat yoghurt.

4. Eat some beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other protein. Aim for at least two portions of fish every week – one of which should be oily, such as salmon or mackerel

These foods are good sources of protein, vitamins and minerals. Pulses such as beans, peas and lentils are good alternatives to meat because they're lower in fat and higher in fibre and protein, too. Choose lean cuts of meat and mince and eat less red and processed meat like bacon, ham and sausages.

5. Choose unsaturated oils and spreads and eat in small amounts

Unsaturated fats are healthier fats and include vegetable, rapeseed, olive and sunflower oils. Remember all types of fat are high in energy and should be eaten sparingly.



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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day (8,400 kilojoules) and men should have around 2,500 calories a day (10,500 kilojoules). Most adults are consuming more calories than they need.

10. Combination foods

Many foods, such as pizzas, casseroles, pasta dishes and sandwiches, are combinations of the food groups in the Eatwell Guide. With these meals, check the ingredients and think about how these fit with the sections on the guide to help you achieve a balanced diet.

11. The Eatwell Guide applies to most of us – whether we're a healthy weight or overweight, whether we eat meat or are vegetarian, and no matter what our ethnic origin.

Anyone with special dietary requirements or medical needs might want to check with a registered dietitian on how to adapt the Eatwell Guide to meet their individual needs.

The Eatwell Guide doesn't apply to children under the age of two, because they have different nutritional needs. Between the ages of two and five, children should gradually move to eating the same foods as the rest of the family, in the proportions shown in the Eatwell Guide.

Adapted from www.nhs.uk

6. Eat foods high in fat, salt and sugar less often and in small amounts

These foods include chocolate, cakes, biscuits, sugary soft drinks, butter, ghee and ice cream. They're not needed in the diet and so should be eaten less often and in smaller amounts. Cut down on sugar.

7. Drink plenty of fluids – the government recommends 6-8 cups/glasses a day

Water, lower-fat milks and lower-sugar or sugar-free drinks including tea and coffee all count. Fruit juice and smoothies also count towards your fluid consumption but they contain free sugars that can damage teeth, so limit these drinks to a combined total of 150ml per day.

8. The Eatwell Guide divides the foods we eat and drink into five main food groups.

Try to choose a variety of different foods from each of the groups to help you get the wide range of nutrients your body needs to stay healthy. You don't need to achieve this balance with every meal but try to get the balance right over a day or even a week.

It's important to get some fat in your diet, but foods that are high in fat, salt and sugar have been placed outside of the circular image as they are not necessary as part of a healthy balanced diet and most of us need to cut down on these.

9. Unsaturated fats from plant sources, for example vegetable oil or olive oil, are healthier types of fat. But all types of fat are high in energy (calories) and so should only be eaten in small amounts.

On average, women should have around 2,000 calories a

Alcohol and Smoking

These are substances we sometimes consume into our bodies which affects our physical health. Excessive intake of alcohol and smoking weakens our bodies by reducing the functionality of some major organs like the liver, lungs, kidneys and heart. Overtime, this affects the entire body making it more susceptible to diseases and eventually death.

Reduce your alcohol consumption

If you drink, don't exceed the maximum recommended limits.

- men and women are advised not to regularly drink more than 14 units a week
- spread your drinking over three days or more if you drink as much as 14 units a week

Always avoid binge drinking, as this increases the risk of a heart attack.

Give up smoking

If you smoke, giving up will reduce your risk of developing CHD. Smoking is a major risk factor for developing atherosclerosis (furring of the arteries). Research has shown you are up to four times more likely to successfully give up smoking if you use NHS support together with stop-smoking medicines, such as patches or gum. Ask your doctor about this or visit NHS Smokefree – www.nhs.uk/smokefree

Physical Activities

In addition to a healthy eating habits, to assist in maintaining the physical health of your body, engaging in physical activities is essential.

When we eat, our body produces energy for bodily functions and for work. However, with most work in the 21st century requiring less physical exertion, our bodies tend to accumulate the unused energy generated from the food we've eaten as fat. If this is allowed to build up over time, this might lead to obesity and other health complications.

To address this and support a healthy physical body, you are encouraged to engage in some form of physical activity or exercise that will use the energy generated from food eaten. In addition to using generated energy, it assists to keep your bodies fit.

Some physical activities and exercises that you can engage in include:

Walking

- ◆ Get off the bus one stop early and walk the rest of your journey
- ◆ Take a walk round the block on your lunch break
- ◆ Make shorter journeys on foot or cycle
- ◆ Go for regular walks
- ◆ Take the stairs instead of the lift

House Chores

- ◆ Chores – work up a sweat with the housework and get the family involved

Explore taking up a sport and physical exercise:

- ◆ Skipping, Cycling, Jogging, Swimming, Dancing, Badminton, Table Tennis, Lawn Tennis

- ◆ Buddy up – find a friend or family member to exercise with
- ◆ Make it fun – choose something you enjoy and it'll be easier to stick to
- ◆ Family time – get outdoors and active with the kids
- ◆ Join a club – find a local club and try something new – Healthy Communities Hub coming to a location near you. To register your interest send us an email:

You can consider joining the Gym and making use of the vast array of exercise machines to burn calories and keep fit.

In addition to using generated energy, engaging in physical activity and exercise assists to keep the body fit by increasing blood circulation, efficient oxygen distribution and use, and muscle development.

Please note, appropriate care should be taken when engaging in these physical activities and exercises. Not all are suitable for some stages of the circle of life.

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Health Care

To maintain a healthy physical body, the need to keep basic hygienic habits cannot be over emphasized. Keep your body clean, regular washing – a shower, a bath; embrace good oral hygiene practices – regular brushing of your teeth, rinsing your mouth with a suitable mouthwash; washing of hands before and after preparing food, eating is good hygienic practice.

Maintaining clean toiletry habits is essential for keeping a good physical health; always wash your hands after using the toilet.

Do your laundry. Avoid wearing dirty clothes. Wash, air and iron them as appropriate. Keep your home tidy and clean; spring clean and declutter your home; get rid of what you don't need – sell them or give them to charity as appropriate.

Pay close attention to members of the family dependent on you for some of their physical hygiene requirement. Don't assume, teach, train and repeat until they practice it regularly on their own.

Explore personal grooming as an option to maintain your physical health. Regular washing of your hair, cutting, trimming and getting it done as appropriate is advisable. Pay attention to your nails, body odour and appearance; using appropriate beauty products and services might make all the difference for your physical health and wellbeing.

In addition to these, get a health check done regularly. For some stages in the circle of life, this might be done monthly,

quarterly or every six months. For others an annual health check might be appropriate. Know your weight, height and BMI – Body Mass Index; find out about your blood pressure, blood sugar levels, cholesterol, blood count, blood group and genotype.

Table of Health Information good to know

Weight	
Height	
BMI – Body Mass Index	
Blood Pressure	
Blood Sugar Level	
Blood Group	
Cholesterol	
Genotype	
Allergies	

Despite all these safeguards, we sometimes take ill; that is the reality of life. However, with advances in medical science, most illnesses can be treated. Visit your GP/doctor if you have any symptoms of ill health. For some common ailments, a visit to your local pharmacy/chemist can provide the guidance required to prescribe an appropriate treatment.

Non-Communicable DISEASES

As indicated under health care, despite all safeguards, we sometimes take ill; that is the reality of life. However, with advances in medical science, most illnesses can be treated. Visit your GP/doctor if you have any symptoms of ill health. For some common ailments, a visit to your local pharmacy/chemist can provide the guidance required to prescribe an appropriate treatment.

However, by practicing healthy eating habits and keeping fit, we might be able to reduce the risk of developing some non-communicable diseases.

Overview of some Non-Communicable Diseases
Adapted from various sources including www.nhs.uk

ASTHMA				
Description	Symptoms	Care / Treatment	Preventive Practices	Further Sources of Information
<p>Asthma is a common lung condition that causes occasional breathing difficulties. It affects people of all ages and often starts in childhood, although it can also appear for the first time in adults.</p> <p>Asthma is caused by inflammation (swelling) of the breathing tubes that carry air in and out of the lungs. This inflammation makes the breathing tubes highly sensitive, so they temporarily become narrow. This may occur randomly, or after exposure to a trigger. The tubes may also sometimes become clogged with sticky mucus.</p> <p>Common asthma triggers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allergens, such as house dust mites, animal fur and pollens • other irritants, such as cigarette smoke, strong smells, gases and cold air • exercise • chest infections <p>The reason why some people develop asthma isn't fully understood, although it's known that you're more likely to develop it if you have a close relative with the condition.</p>	<p>The main symptoms of asthma are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wheezing (a whistling sound when breathing) • breathlessness • a tight chest – which may feel like a band is tightening around it • coughing <p>The severity of the symptoms varies from person to person. They usually come and go, but for some people they're more persistent.</p> <p>Asthma symptoms can sometimes get temporarily worse. This is known as an asthma attack.</p> <p>Several conditions can cause similar symptoms, such as a chest infection or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), so it's important to get a proper diagnosis and correct treatment.</p>	<p>There's currently no cure for asthma, but there are simple treatments that can help keep the symptoms under control so it doesn't have a significant impact on your life.</p> <p>Some people, particularly children, may eventually grow out of asthma. But for others it's a lifelong condition.</p> <p>While there's currently no cure for asthma, there are a number of treatments that can help control the condition.</p> <p>Most asthma treatments are taken using an inhaler, a small device that delivers a spray or powder medicine to your breathing tubes as you breathe in.</p> <p>The main treatments are: identifying and avoiding asthma triggers if possible</p> <p>reliever inhalers – inhalers used when needed to quickly relieve asthma symptoms for a short time</p> <p>preventer inhalers – inhalers used regularly every day to reduce the inflammation in the breathing tubes, which prevents asthma symptoms occurring</p> <p>You'll usually draw up a personal action plan with your doctor or asthma nurse. This will include information about your medicines, how to monitor your condition and what to do if you have an asthma attack.</p>	<p>The main treatments are: identifying and avoiding asthma triggers if possible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reliever inhalers – inhalers used when needed to quickly relieve asthma symptoms for a short time • preventer inhalers – inhalers used regularly every day to reduce the inflammation in the breathing tubes, which prevents asthma symptoms occurring 	<p>Asthma UK</p> <p>Every ten seconds someone in the UK has a potentially life-threatening asthma attack and three people die every day. Tragically two thirds of these deaths could be prevented, whilst others still suffer with asthma so severe current treatments don't work.</p> <p>This has to change. That's why Asthma UK exists. We work to stop asthma attacks and, ultimately, cure asthma by funding world leading research and scientists, campaigning for change and supporting people with asthma to reduce their risk of a potentially life threatening asthma attack.</p> <p>www.asthma.org.uk</p> <p>British Lung Foundation</p> <p>We're the only UK charity looking after the nation's lungs. With your support, we'll make sure that one day everyone breathes clean air with healthy lungs.</p> <p>www.blf.org.uk</p>

CANCER

Description	Symptoms	Care / Treatment	Preventive Practices	Further Sources of Information
<p>Cancer is a condition where cells in a specific part of the body grow and reproduce uncontrollably.</p> <p>The cancerous cells can invade and destroy surrounding healthy tissue, including organs.</p> <p>Cancer sometimes begins in one part of the body before spreading to other areas. This process is known as metastasis.</p> <p>More than one in three people will develop some form of cancer during their lifetime. In the UK, the four most common types of cancer are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● breast cancer ● lung cancer ● prostate cancer ● bowel cancer <p>There are more than 200 different types of cancer, and each is diagnosed and treated in a particular way.</p>	<p>Changes to your body's normal processes or unusual, unexplained symptoms can sometimes be an early sign of cancer.</p> <p>Symptoms that need to be checked by a doctor include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● a lump that suddenly appears on your body ● unexplained bleeding ● changes to your bowel habits <p>But in many cases your symptoms won't be related to cancer and will be caused by other, non-cancerous health conditions.</p> <p>It's important to be aware of any unexplained changes to your body, such as the sudden appearance of a lump, blood in your urine, or a change to your usual bowel habits.</p> <p>These symptoms are often caused by other, non-cancerous illnesses, but it's important to see your GP so they can investigate.</p> <p>If your GP suspects cancer, they'll refer you to a specialist – usually within two weeks.</p> <p>The specialist will carry out further tests, such as a biopsy or X-ray, and plan any necessary treatment.</p>	<p>Surgery is the first treatment to try for most types of cancer, as solid tumours can usually be surgically removed.</p> <p>Two other commonly used treatment methods are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● chemotherapy – powerful cancer-killing medication ● radiotherapy – the controlled use of high-energy X-rays <p>Accurately diagnosing cancer can take weeks or months. As cancer often develops slowly over several years, waiting for a few weeks won't usually impact on the effectiveness of treatment.</p> <p>You shouldn't have to wait more than two weeks to see a specialist if your GP suspects you have cancer and urgently refers you.</p> <p>In cases where cancer has been confirmed, you shouldn't have to wait more than 31 days from the decision to treat to the start of treatment.</p>	<p>Reducing your risk of cancer</p> <p>Making some simple changes to your lifestyle can significantly reduce your risk of developing cancer.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● healthy eating ● taking regular exercise ● not smoking 	<p>Cancer Research UK</p> <p>We're the world's leading charity dedicated to beating cancer through research. We've saved millions of lives by discovering new ways to prevent, diagnose and treat cancer.</p> <p>Cancer survival is improving and has doubled over the past 40 years in the UK – now half of people diagnosed with cancer survive their disease for ten years or more, thanks to research.</p> <p>We fund research into more than 200 types of cancer, including the one that's most important to you. From the most common – such as breast, bowel, lung and prostate cancers – to rare types of tumour and children's cancers, we support groundbreaking science that benefits everyone.</p> <p>www.cancerresearchuk.org</p> <p>Macmillan</p> <p>At Macmillan, we know how a cancer diagnosis can affect everything. So we're here to support you and help you take back some control in your life. From help with money worries and advice about work, to someone who'll listen if you just want to talk, we're here.</p> <p>www.macmillan.org.uk</p>

DIABETES

Description	Symptoms	Care / Treatment	Preventive Practices	Further Sources of Information
<p>Diabetes is a lifelong condition that causes a person's blood sugar level to become too high.</p> <p>There are two main types of diabetes:</p> <p>type 1 diabetes – where the body's immune system attacks and destroys the cells that produce insulin</p> <p>type 2 diabetes – where the body doesn't produce enough insulin, or the body's cells don't react to insulin</p> <p>Type 2 diabetes is far more common than type 1. In the UK, around 90% of all adults with diabetes have type 2.</p> <p>During pregnancy, some women have such high levels of blood glucose that their body is unable to produce enough insulin to absorb it all. This is known as gestational diabetes.</p>	<p>Pre-diabetes</p> <p>Many more people have blood sugar levels above the normal range, but not high enough to be diagnosed as having diabetes. This is sometimes known as pre-diabetes. If your blood sugar level is above the normal range, your risk of developing full-blown diabetes is increased.</p> <p>It's very important for diabetes to be diagnosed as early as possible because it will get progressively worse if left untreated.</p> <p>Visit your GP as soon as possible if you experience the main symptoms of diabetes, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● feeling very thirsty ● urinating more frequently than usual, particularly at night ● feeling very tired ● weight loss and loss of muscle bulk ● itching around the penis or vagina, or frequent episodes of thrush ● cuts or wounds that heal slowly ● blurred vision <p>Type 1 diabetes can develop quickly over weeks or even days.</p> <p>Many people have type 2 diabetes for years without realising because the early symptoms tend to be general.</p> <p>Causes of diabetes</p> <p>The amount of sugar in the blood is controlled by a hormone called insulin, which is produced by the pancreas (a gland behind the stomach).</p> <p>When food is digested and enters your bloodstream, insulin moves glucose out of the blood and into cells, where it's broken down to produce energy.</p> <p>However, if you have diabetes, your body is unable to break down glucose into energy. This is because there's either not enough insulin to move the glucose, or the insulin produced doesn't work properly.</p> <p>Although there are no lifestyle changes you can make to lower your risk of type 1 diabetes, type 2 diabetes is often linked to being overweight.</p>	<p>If you're diagnosed with diabetes, you'll need to eat healthily, take regular exercise and carry out regular blood tests to ensure your blood glucose levels stay balanced.</p> <p>You can use the BMI healthy weight calculator to check whether you're a healthy weight.</p> <p>People diagnosed with type 1 diabetes also require regular insulin injections for the rest of their life.</p> <p>As type 2 diabetes is a progressive condition, medication may eventually be required, usually in the form of tablets.</p> <p>Diabetic eye screening</p> <p>Everyone with diabetes aged 12 or over should be invited to have their eyes screened once a year.</p> <p>If you have diabetes, your eyes are at risk from diabetic retinopathy, a condition that can lead to sight loss if it's not treated.</p> <p>Screening, which involves a half-hour check to examine the back of the eyes, is a way of detecting the condition early so it can be treated more effectively.</p>	<p>Reducing your risk of type 2 diabetes</p> <p>Making some simple changes to your lifestyle can significantly reduce your risk of developing diabetes.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● healthy eating ● taking regular exercise 	<p>Diabetes UK</p> <p>Diabetes UK is the leading charity that cares for, connects with and campaigns on behalf of every person affected by or at risk of diabetes.</p> <p>We provide information, help and peer support, so people with diabetes can manage their condition effectively. We are one of the largest funders of diabetes research in the UK.</p> <p>www.diabetes.org.uk</p> <p>Diabetes Research & Wellness Foundation</p> <p>The Diabetes Research & Wellness Foundation (DRWF) is a registered charity, established in 1998 to raise public awareness to the condition and its associated complications, treatment, avoidance and relief and to provide support to people living with diabetes.</p> <p>www.drwf.org.uk</p>

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION)

Description	Symptoms	Care / Treatment	Preventive Practices	Further Sources of Information
<p>High blood pressure, or hypertension, rarely has noticeable symptoms. But if untreated, it increases your risk of serious problems such as heart attacks and strokes.</p> <p>More than one in four adults in the UK have high blood pressure, although many won't realise it.</p> <p>Blood pressure is recorded with two numbers. The systolic pressure (higher number) is the force at which your heart pumps blood around your body.</p> <p>The diastolic pressure (lower number) is the resistance to the blood flow in the blood vessels. They're both measured in millimetres of mercury (mmHg).</p> <p>As a general guide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● high blood pressure is considered to be 140/90mmHg or higher ● ideal blood pressure is considered to be between 90/60mmHg and 120/80mmHg ● low blood pressure is considered to be 90/60mmHg or lower 	<p>A blood pressure reading between 120/80mmHg and 140/90mmHg could mean you're at risk of developing high blood pressure if you don't take steps to keep your blood pressure under control.</p> <p>If your blood pressure is too high, it puts extra strain on your blood vessels, heart and other organs, such as the brain, kidneys and eyes.</p> <p>Persistent high blood pressure can increase your risk of a number of serious and potentially life-threatening conditions, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● heart disease ● heart attacks ● strokes ● heart failure ● peripheral arterial disease ● aortic aneurysms ● kidney disease ● vascular dementia <p>If you have high blood pressure, reducing it even a small amount can help lower your risk of these conditions.</p>	<p>The only way of knowing whether you have high blood pressure is to have a blood pressure test.</p> <p>All adults over 40 are advised to have their blood pressure checked at least every five years. Getting this done is easy and could save your life.</p> <p>You can get your blood pressure tested at a number of places, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● at your GP surgery ● at some pharmacies ● as part of your NHS Health Check ● in some workplaces <p>You can also check your blood pressure yourself with a home blood pressure monitor.</p> <p>Some people with high blood pressure may also need to take one or more medicines to stop their blood pressure getting too high.</p> <p>If you're diagnosed with high blood pressure, your doctor may recommend taking one or more medicines to keep it under control.</p> <p>These usually need to be taken once a day.</p> <p>The medication recommended for you will depend on things like how high your blood pressure is and your age.</p>	<p>The following lifestyle changes can help prevent and lower high blood pressure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● reduce the amount of salt you eat and have a generally healthy diet ● cut back on alcohol if you drink too much ● lose weight if you're overweight ● exercise regularly ● cut down on caffeine ● stop smoking ● try to get at least six hours of sleep a night <p>It's not always clear what causes high blood pressure, but certain things can increase your risk.</p> <p>You're at an increased risk of high blood pressure if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● are over the age of 65 ● are overweight or obese ● are of African or Caribbean descent ● have a relative with high blood pressure ● eat too much salt and don't eat enough fruit and vegetables ● don't do enough exercise ● drink too much alcohol or coffee (or other caffeine-based drinks) ● smoke ● don't get much sleep or have disturbed sleep <p>Making healthy lifestyle changes can help reduce your chances of getting high blood pressure and help lower your blood pressure if it's already high.</p>	<p>Blood Pressure UK</p> <p>Blood Pressure UK is the only charity solely dedicated to lowering the nation's blood pressure to prevent disability and death from stroke and heart disease.</p> <p>Our vision is that everyone will know their blood pressure numbers, in the same way that they know their height or weight, and take steps to keep them healthy both now and in the future.</p> <p>www.bloodpressureuk.org</p>

STROKE

Description	Symptoms	Care / Treatment	Preventive Practices	Further Sources of Information
<p>A stroke is a serious, life-threatening medical condition that occurs when the blood supply to part of the brain is cut off.</p> <p>Strokes are a medical emergency and urgent treatment is essential because the sooner a person receives treatment for a stroke, the less damage is likely to happen.</p> <p>If you suspect that you or someone else is having a stroke, phone 999 immediately and ask for an ambulance.</p>	<p>The main symptoms of stroke can be remembered with the word FAST: Face-Arms-Speech-Time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Face – the face may have dropped on one side, the person may not be able to smile or their mouth or eye may have dropped. ● Arms – the person with suspected stroke may not be able to lift both arms and keep them there because of arm weakness or numbness in one arm. ● Speech – their speech may be slurred or garbled, or the person may not be able to talk at all despite appearing to be awake. ● Time – it is time to dial 999 immediately if you see any of these signs or symptoms. <p>Why do strokes happen? - Like all organs, the brain needs the oxygen and nutrients provided by blood to function properly. If the supply of blood is restricted or stopped, brain cells begin to die. This can lead to brain injury, disability and possibly death.</p> <p>There are two main causes of strokes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ischaemic – where the blood supply is stopped due to a blood clot (this accounts for 85% of all cases) ● haemorrhagic – where a weakened blood vessel supplying the brain bursts <p>There is also a related condition known as a transient ischaemic attack (TIA), where the supply of blood to the brain is temporarily interrupted, causing a "mini-stroke" often lasting between 30 minutes and several hours. TIAs should be treated seriously as they are often a warning sign that you are at risk of having a full stroke in the near future.</p>	<p>Treatment depends on the type of stroke you have, including which part of the brain was affected and what caused it.</p> <p>Most often, strokes are treated with medication. This generally includes medicines to prevent and remove blood clots, reduce blood pressure and reduce cholesterol levels.</p> <p>In some cases, surgery may be required to treat brain swelling and reduce the risk of further bleeding in cases of haemorrhagic strokes.</p> <p>Life after a stroke</p> <p>Around one in every four people who has a stroke will die, and those who do survive are often left with long-term problems resulting from the injury to their brain.</p> <p>Some people need to have a long period of rehabilitation before they can recover their former independence, while many will never fully recover and will need support adjusting to living with the effects of their stroke.</p> <p>Local authorities should provide free "reablement services" for anyone assessed as needing them. These services help the person recovering from a stroke to learn or relearn the skills necessary for independent daily living at home.</p> <p>Around half the people who have a stroke will be dependent on some form of care for help with their daily activities.</p> <p>For example, a care worker could come to the person's home to help with washing and dressing, or even just to provide companionship.</p> <p>A team of specialists are also available to help, including physiotherapists, psychologists, occupational therapists, speech therapists and specialist nurses and doctors.</p>	<p>You can significantly reduce your risk of having a stroke through a healthy lifestyle, such as eating a healthy diet, taking regular exercise, drinking alcohol in moderation and not smoking.</p> <p>Lowering high blood pressure and cholesterol levels with medication also lowers the risk of stroke substantially, as does taking anticoagulant medication if you have an irregular heartbeat due to a condition called atrial fibrillation.</p> <p>If you have had a stroke or TIA in the past, these measures are particularly important because your risk of having another stroke in the future is greatly increased.</p> <p>In the UK, strokes are a major health problem. Every year, around 110,000 people have a stroke in England and it is the third largest cause of death, after heart disease and cancer. The brain injuries caused by strokes are a major cause of adult disability in the UK.</p> <p>Older people are most at risk of having strokes, although they can happen at any age – including in children.</p> <p>If you are south Asian, African or Caribbean, your risk of stroke is higher. This is partly because of a predisposition (a natural tendency) to developing high blood pressure (hypertension), which can lead to strokes.</p> <p>Smoking, being overweight, lack of exercise and a poor diet are also risk factors for stroke, as are high cholesterol, atrial fibrillation and diabetes.</p>	<p>Stroke Association</p> <p>The Stroke Association is the UK's leading stroke charity changing the world for people affected by stroke.</p> <p>More people than ever are benefitting from cutting-edge treatments and making full recoveries. More people now understand the need to seek emergency treatment for stroke.</p> <p>We've been at the heart of every one of these developments, championing the cause of stroke and stroke survivors.</p> <p>www.stroke.org.uk</p>

CORONARY HEART DISEASE (CHD)

Coronary heart disease (CHD) is a major cause of death both in the UK and worldwide. It's responsible for more than 73,000 deaths in the UK each year. About 1 in 6 men and 1 in 10 women die from CHD. In the UK, there are an estimated 2.3 million people living with CHD and around 2 million people affected by angina (the most common symptom of coronary heart disease).

CHD generally affects more men than women, although from the age of 50 the chances of developing the condition are similar for both sexes. As well as angina (chest pain), the main symptoms of CHD are heart attacks and heart failure. However, not everyone has the same symptoms and some people may not have any before CHD is diagnosed.

The heart

The heart is a muscle about the size of your fist. It pumps blood around your body and beats approximately 70 times a minute. After the blood leaves the right side of the heart, it goes to your lungs where it picks up oxygen.

The oxygen-rich blood returns to your heart and is then pumped to the body's organs through a network of arteries. The blood returns to your heart through veins before being pumped back to your lungs again. This process is called circulation. The heart gets its own supply of blood from a network of blood vessels on the heart's surface called coronary arteries.

What causes coronary heart disease?

Coronary heart disease is the term that describes what happens when your heart's blood supply is blocked or interrupted by a build-up of fatty substances in the coronary arteries.

Over time, the walls of your arteries can become furred up with fatty deposits. This process is known as atherosclerosis and the fatty deposits are called atheroma.

Atherosclerosis can be caused by lifestyle factors and other conditions, such as:

- smoking
- high cholesterol
- high blood pressure (hypertension)
- diabetes

Diagnosing coronary heart disease

If your doctor feels you're at risk of CHD, they may carry out a risk assessment. This involves asking about your medical and family history, your lifestyle and taking a blood test.

Further tests may be needed to confirm a diagnosis of CHD, including:

- an MRI scan
- a CT scan
- coronary angiography

Treating coronary heart disease

Coronary heart disease can't be cured but treatment can help manage the symptoms and reduce the chances of problems such as heart attacks.

Treatment can include lifestyle changes, such as regular exercise and stopping smoking, as well as medication and surgery.

Recovery

If you have problems, such as a heart attack or heart surgery, it's possible to eventually resume a normal life.

Advice and support is available to help you deal with aspects of your life that may have been affected by CHD.

Prevention

You can reduce your risk of getting CHD by making some simple lifestyle changes. These include:

- eating a healthy, balanced diet
- being physically active
- giving up smoking
- controlling blood cholesterol and sugar levels

Keeping your heart healthy will also have other health benefits, such as helping reduce your risk of stroke and dementia.

Causes of heart disease

Coronary heart disease (CHD) is usually caused by a build-up of fatty deposits on the walls of the arteries around the heart (coronary arteries).

The fatty deposits, called atheroma, are made up of cholesterol and other waste substances.

The build-up of atheroma on the walls of the coronary arteries makes the arteries narrower, restricting the flow of blood to the heart muscle. This process is called atherosclerosis. Your risk of developing atherosclerosis is significantly increased if you:

- smoke
- have high blood pressure (hypertension)
- have a high blood cholesterol level
- don't take regular exercise
- have diabetes

Other risk factors for developing atherosclerosis include being obese or overweight and having a family history of CHD (the risk is increased if you have a male relative under the age of 55, or a female relative under 65, with CHD).

Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a fat made by the liver from the saturated fat in your diet. Cholesterol is essential for healthy cells, but too much in the blood can lead to CHD.

Cholesterol is carried in the bloodstream by molecules called lipoproteins. There are several different types of lipoproteins, but two of the main ones are low-density lipoproteins (LDL) and high-density lipoproteins (HDL).

LDL, often referred to as "bad cholesterol", takes cholesterol from the liver and delivers it to cells. LDL cholesterol tends to build up on the walls of the coronary arteries, increasing your risk of heart disease.

HDL, often referred to as "good cholesterol", carries cholesterol away from the cells and back to the liver, where it's broken down or passed from the body as a waste product.

In the UK, the government recommends that total cholesterol levels should be:

- 5mmol/L or less for healthy adults
- 4mmol/L or less for those at high risk

Levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL) should be:

- 3mmol/L or less for healthy adults
- 2mmol/L or less for those at high risk

An ideal level of high-density lipoprotein (HDL) is above 1mmol/L. A lower level of HDL can increase your risk of heart disease.

High blood pressure

High blood pressure (hypertension) puts a strain on your heart and can lead to CHD.

Blood pressure is measured at two points during the blood circulation cycle. Your:

- systolic pressure - is a measure of your blood pressure as the heart contracts and pumps blood out
- diastolic pressure - is a measure of your blood pressure when your heart is relaxed and filling up with blood

Blood pressure is measured in terms of millimetres of mercury (mmHg).

When you have your blood pressure measured, the systolic pressure is the first, higher number to be recorded. The diastolic pressure is the second, lower number to be recorded. High blood pressure is defined as a systolic pressure of 140mmHg or more, or a diastolic pressure of 90mmHg or more.

Smoking

Smoking is a major risk factor for coronary heart disease. Both nicotine and carbon monoxide (from the smoke) put a strain on the heart by making it work faster. They also increase your risk of blood clots. Other chemicals in cigarette smoke can damage the lining of your coronary arteries, leading to furring of the arteries. If you smoke, you increase your risk of developing heart disease by 24%.

Diabetes

A high blood sugar level doesn't directly increase your risk of developing CHD, but it may lead to diabetes, which can more than double your risk of developing CHD. Diabetes can lead to CHD because it may cause the lining of blood vessels to become thicker, which can restrict blood flow.

CORONARY HEART DISEASE (CHD)

Thrombosis

A thrombosis is a blood clot in a vein or artery. If a thrombosis occurs in a coronary artery (coronary thrombosis), it will cause the artery to narrow, preventing the blood supply from reaching the heart muscle. This increases your chance of having a heart attack. A coronary thrombosis usually happens at the same place the atherosclerosis is forming.

Treating heart disease

Although coronary heart disease (CHD) cannot be cured, treatment can help manage the symptoms and reduce the risk of further problems.

CHD can be managed effectively with a combination of lifestyle changes, medicine and, in some cases, surgery. With the right treatment, the symptoms of CHD can be reduced and the functioning of the heart improved. The various treatments for CHD are outlined below.

Lifestyle changes

If you have been diagnosed with CHD, you can reduce your risk of further episodes by making simple lifestyle changes.

For example, stopping smoking after a heart attack will quickly reduce your risk of having a heart attack in the future to near that of a non-smoker.

Other lifestyle changes, such as eating more healthily and doing regular exercise, will also reduce your future risk of heart disease.

Medicines

Many different medicines are used to treat CHD. Usually they either aim to reduce blood pressure or widen your arteries. Some heart medicines have side effects, so it may take a while to find one that works for you. Your GP or specialist will discuss the various options with you. Heart medicines should not be stopped suddenly without the advice of your doctor as there is a risk this may make your symptoms worse.

Preventing heart disease

There are several ways you can help reduce your risk of developing coronary heart disease (CHD), such as lowering your blood pressure and cholesterol levels. There are a number of ways you can do this, which are discussed below.

- Eat a healthy, balanced diet
- A low-fat, high-fibre diet is recommended, which should include plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables (five portions a day) and whole grains.
- You should limit the amount of salt you eat to no more than 6g (0.2oz) a day, as too much salt will increase your blood pressure. 6g of salt is about one

teaspoonful.

- There are two types of fat: saturated and unsaturated. You should avoid food containing saturated fats, because these will increase the levels of bad cholesterol in your blood.

Foods high in saturated fat include:

- meat pies
- sausages and fatty cuts of meat
- butter
- ghee – a type of butter often used in Indian cooking
- lard
- cream
- hard cheese
- cakes and biscuits
- foods that contain coconut or palm oil

However, a balanced diet should still include unsaturated fats, which have been shown to increase levels of good cholesterol and help reduce any blockage in your arteries.

Foods high in unsaturated fat include:

- oily fish
- avocados
- nuts and seeds
- sunflower, rapeseed, olive and vegetable oils

You should also try to avoid too much sugar in your diet, as this can increase your chances of developing diabetes, which is proven to dramatically increase your chances of developing CHD.

Be more physically active

Combining a healthy diet with regular exercise is the best way of maintaining a healthy weight. Having a healthy weight reduces your chances of developing high blood pressure. Regular exercise will make your heart and blood circulatory system more efficient, lower your cholesterol level, and also keep your blood pressure at a healthy level.

- Keep to a healthy weight
- Give up smoking
- Reduce your alcohol consumption
- Keep your blood pressure under control

Keep your diabetes under control

You have a greater risk of developing CHD if you are diabetic. If you have diabetes, being physically active and controlling your weight and blood pressure will help manage your blood sugar level.

Take any medication prescribed for you

If you have CHD, you may be prescribed medication to help relieve your symptoms and stop further problems developing. If you do not have CHD but do have high cholesterol, high blood pressure or a history of family

heart disease, your doctor may prescribe medication to prevent you developing heart-related problems.

If you are prescribed medication, it is vital you take it and follow the correct dosage. Do not stop taking your medication without consulting your doctor first, as doing so is likely to make your symptoms worse and put your health at risk. If you're worried you may be at risk of heart disease and need help to make changes to your lifestyle, talk to your GP.

Further Sources of Information

British Heart Foundation

We are the nation's heart charity and the largest independent funder of cardiovascular research. Coronary heart disease is the UK's single biggest killer but we are leading the fight against it. Our pioneering research has helped to transform the lives of people living with heart and circulatory conditions.

www.bhf.org.uk

Heart Research UK - Helping hearts near you for 50 years

We're your local national charity, founded in 1967 by heart surgeon, David Watson to make surgery safer. Originally the National Heart Research Fund, we changed our name to Heart Research UK in 2005. As the second largest heart charity in the UK, we fund pioneering medical research into the prevention, treatment and cure of heart disease as well as helping communities improve their lifestyles with Healthy Heart Grants. Working with supporters across the UK, companies, some household names, we are a growing charity that works with to help people live healthier, happier, longer lives.

www.heartresearch.org.uk

HEART UK – The cholesterol charity

Providing support, guidance and education services to healthcare professionals and people and families with concerns about cholesterol. Over half of all UK adults have raised cholesterol. At least 1 in 500 people are born with a high cholesterol condition called Familial Hypercholesterolaemia (FH), which means they are at high risk of a heart attack, stroke or sudden death in their 20s, 30s and 40s.

HEART UK is here for anyone affected by raised cholesterol or other blood fats, including triglycerides. We bring people together by providing:

www.heartuk.org.uk

Adapted from various sources including www.nhs.uk

This is an overview, please consult a medical practitioner for a full diagnosis and treatment if you are showing any symptoms for these diseases.

What is DOMESTIC ABUSE?

Domestic abuse is defined as:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional
- Controlling behaviour – which is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capabilities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.
- Coercive behaviour – which is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim. This definition includes so called “honour” based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.
- Stalking/harassment

Office for National Statistics' latest figures:

- Seven women a month are killed by a current or former partner in England and Wales.
- There were 6.5% of women and 2.8% of men who reported having experienced any type of partner abuse in the last year, equivalent to an estimated 1.1 million female victims and 500,000 male victims.
- Overall, 27.1% of women and 13.2% of men had experienced any domestic abuse since the age of 16, equivalent to an estimated 4.5 million female victims and 2.2 million male victims.

For many victims, fear of reprisals, lack of knowledge about where to get help and the controlling behaviour of the perpetrator means that they feel unable to report the crime or seek help. Actual figures are therefore known to be significantly higher.

- On average high-risk victims live with domestic abuse for 2.6 years before getting help.
- Most victims - 85% - see on average 5 professionals in the year before they finally get effective support.
- Although widespread, it is also mainly hidden. An abusive relationship may not be obvious to others outside the family unit.
- It can escalate quickly possibly resulting in serious injury or death.
- Victims may be reticent to come forward fearing for their own safety, their children's safety and concerns about housing and having nowhere to go.
- It has a negative and long-lasting impact on children.
- It adversely affects the victim's mental health, particularly self-esteem and self-confidence which can make reporting it even harder.

NSPCC latest Statistics concerning children & young people:

- At least 1 in 5 children have been exposed to domestic abuse
- 1 in 5 teenagers have been physically or sexually abused by their boy or girl friend
- Children exposed to domestic violence are more likely to have behavioural & emotional problems
- A third of children witnessing domestic violence also experience another form of abuse

AGENCIES PROVIDING HELP

All agencies set up to provide help for victims/survivors work to break the cycle of abuse by providing advice and support for persons, and their dependants who have been physically, sexually, psychologically, emotionally and/or financially abused within an intimate or family relationship.

It is a complicated issue and many clients will present with a number of problems requiring individual advice and help including signposting them to relevant services (e.g. housing, legal, financial, counselling). If possible this means

supporting them at professional meetings and when they attend court and assisting with paperwork.

There are National and Local Agencies who provide helplines and sometimes one to one support. In the event of anyone being in immediate danger of serious harm, they need to ring 999 and try to get to a safe place.



DAVSS takes referrals from the West Kent area which includes Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling and Tunbridge Wells. It is a charity financed by grants and donations from a wide range of sources, including the public and private sectors, charitable trusts, individuals and the faith community. We are always seeking further funding and more volunteers in order to cope with increasing numbers of referrals year on year.

Website: www.davss.org.uk

Email: office@davss.org.uk

Tel: 01892 502074

HELPLINE: 01892 570538

Further Sources of Information

- **National Domestic Violence Helpline** – for women sufferers or those calling on their behalf
www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk
- **Men's Advice Line** – for male sufferers
www.mensadvice.org.uk
- **Respect Phonenumber** – for perpetrators who want to stop
www.respectphonenumber.org.uk
- **Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Services** – A West Kent charity supporting men and women experiencing domestic abuse; based in Tunbridge Wells but covers the whole North West Kent area
www.davss.org.uk

SEXUAL HEALTH

The sexual health of our communities is important to ensure our overall health and wellbeing. The aim here is to create awareness on the occurrence of sexually transmitted infections (STI) in our society. People engage in sexual relationships both within and outside of marriage; if adequate precautions are not taken, people will be exposed to and contract STIs. These might have long term implications for the health and wellbeing of the individuals involved, their partners, families and communities.

Some precautions that can be taken to prevent contracting STIs include practicing safer sex, the use of condoms, abstinence and remaining faithful to your spouse. It is important to state that once you've noticed any symptoms of sexual ill health, it is advisable to seek treatment and abstain from sexual relations till you have received the all clear from your doctor.

Know your status, take the test.

It is important to state that like any other diseases, being diagnosed as HIV positive would have physical, emotional and mental implications for your health; however, with treatment and care, it is still possible to experience a qualitative life. The main challenge that we need to address in our society is the stigma associated with the disease. This can only happen, when we create awareness about the diseases, treatment and care available; remove our misconceptions about the disease. As individuals we all have different health challenges and we can support each other to overcome them.

Sexually transmitted infections and chlamydia screening in England, 2015

- In 2015, there were approximately 435,000 diagnoses of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) made in England
- The most commonly diagnosed STI was chlamydia, with 200,288 diagnoses made in 2015
- The largest proportional increases in diagnoses between 2014 and 2015 were reported for syphilis (20%) and gonorrhoea (11%)

Key messages and recommendations:

- Consistent and correct use of condoms can significantly reduce risk of infection
- Rapid access to treatment and partner notification can reduce infection spread
- Regular testing for HIV and STIs is essential for good sexual health

Source: Health Protection Report, Public Health England

Sexually Transmitted Infections symptoms that need checking

Many people with sexually transmitted infections (STIs) don't get symptoms, so it's worth getting tested even if you feel fine. If you think you have an STI, the earlier you're tested, the sooner treatment can be given if it's needed.

An STI can be passed from one person to another through sexual contact, including vaginal, anal and oral sex. You can get or pass on an STI whoever you're having sex with.

Many STIs can be cured with antibiotics. Some, such as HIV, have no cure, but can be treated to prevent them getting worse.

You can't tell by looking at someone (including yourself) whether they've got an infection, so it's important to get a check-up if you've had unprotected sex or think you might be at risk.

Symptoms

Many people don't notice symptoms when they have an STI, including most women with chlamydia. If it's left untreated, chlamydia can affect your ability to get pregnant. Gonorrhoea can also affect fertility. Around 50% of women and 10% of men with gonorrhoea don't have symptoms. Left untreated, STIs can affect your health. If you have any of the symptoms listed below, get tested.

In women and men:

- pain when you pass urine (pee)
- itching, burning or tingling around the genitals
- blisters, sores, spots or lumps around the genitals or anus
- black powder or tiny white dots in your underwear – this could be droppings or eggs from pubic lice

In women:

- yellow or green vaginal discharge
- discharge that smells
- bleeding between periods or after sex
- pain during sex
- lower abdominal pain

In men:

- discharge from the penis
- irritation of the urethra (the tube urine comes out of)

These symptoms don't necessarily mean you have an STI, but it's worth seeing a doctor so you can find out what's

causing the symptoms and get treatment.

For example, it's possible to get thrush without having sex, but it can cause STI-like symptoms, such as soreness, itching and discharge. Thrush is easily treated.

Where can I get tested for STIs?

You can get tested at:

- a sexual health clinic or genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinic – find STI services near you
- some community contraceptive clinics – find contraceptive services near you
- some sexual health services – call the national sexual health line on 0300 123 7123 or Worth Talking About (for under-18s) on 0300 123 2930
- some GP surgeries & Some pharmacies can also test for chlamydia.

Have safer sex

Always use condoms to help protect yourself from catching or passing on an STI. Buy condoms that have the CE mark or BSI kite mark on the packet.

This means they've been tested to high safety standards. Condoms that don't have the CE mark or BSI kite mark won't meet these standards, so don't use them.

Adapted from various sources including www.nhs.uk

Overview of some Sexually Transmitted Infections

Adapted from various sources including www.nhs.uk

CHLAMYDIA			
Description	Symptoms	Care / Treatment	Preventive Practices
Chlamydia is the most common STI in the UK and is easily passed on during sex. Most people don't experience any symptoms, so they are unaware they're infected.	<p>In women, chlamydia can cause pain or a burning sensation when urinating, a vaginal discharge, pain in the lower abdomen during or after sex, and bleeding during or after sex or between periods. It can also cause heavy periods.</p> <p>In men, chlamydia can cause pain or a burning sensation when urinating, a white, cloudy or watery discharge from the tip of the penis, and pain or tenderness in the testicles.</p> <p>It's also possible to have a chlamydia infection in your rectum (bottom), throat or eyes.</p>	<p>Diagnosing chlamydia is done with a urine test or by taking a swab of the affected area.</p> <p>The infection is easily treated with antibiotics, but can lead to serious long-term health problems if left untreated, including infertility.</p>	Have safer sex

GENITAL HERPES

Description	Symptoms	Care / Treatment	Preventive Practices
Genital herpes is a common infection caused by the herpes simplex virus (HSV), which is the same virus that causes cold sores.	<p>Some people develop symptoms of HSV a few days after coming into contact with the virus. Small, painful blisters or sores usually develop, which may cause itching or tingling, or make it painful to urinate.</p> <p>After you've been infected, the virus remains dormant (inactive) most of the time. However, certain triggers can reactivate the virus, causing the blisters to develop again, although they're usually smaller and less painful.</p>	It's easier to test for HSV if you have symptoms. Although there's no cure for genital herpes, the symptoms can usually be controlled using antiviral medicines.	Have safer sex

GENITAL WARTS

Description	Symptoms	Care / Treatment	Preventive Practices
Genital warts are small fleshy growths, bumps or skin changes that appear on or around your genital or anal area. They're caused by the human papilloma virus (HPV) and are the second most common STI in England after chlamydia.	<p>The warts are usually painless, but you may notice some itching or redness. Occasionally, they can cause bleeding.</p> <p>You don't need to have penetrative sex to pass the infection on because HPV is spread by skin-to-skin contact.</p>	Several treatments are available for genital warts, including creams and freezing the warts (cryotherapy).	Have safer sex

GONORRHOEA

Description	Symptoms	Care / Treatment	Preventive Practices
Gonorrhoea is a bacterial STI easily passed on during sex. About 50% of women and 10% of men don't experience any symptoms and are unaware they're infected.	<p>In women, gonorrhoea can cause pain or a burning sensation when urinating, a vaginal discharge (often watery, yellow or green), pain in the lower abdomen during or after sex, and bleeding during or after sex or between periods, sometimes causing heavy periods.</p> <p>In men, gonorrhoea can cause pain or a burning sensation when urinating, a white, yellow or green discharge from the tip of the penis, and pain or tenderness in the testicles.</p> <p>It's also possible to have a gonorrhoea infection in your rectum, throat or eyes.</p>	Gonorrhoea is diagnosed using a urine test or by taking a swab of the affected area. The infection is easily treated with antibiotics, but can lead to serious long-term health problems if left untreated, including infertility.	Have safer sex

SYPHILIS

Description	Symptoms	Care / Treatment	Preventive Practices
<p>Syphilis is a bacterial infection that in the early stages causes a painless, but highly infectious, sore on your genitals or around the mouth.</p>	<p>The sore can last up to six weeks before disappearing.</p> <p>Secondary symptoms such as a rash, flu-like illness or patchy hair loss may then develop. These may disappear within a few weeks, after which you'll have a symptom-free phase.</p> <p>The late or tertiary stage of syphilis usually occurs after many years, and can cause serious conditions such as heart problems, paralysis and blindness.</p> <p>The symptoms of syphilis can be difficult to recognise.</p>	<p>A simple blood test can usually be used to diagnose syphilis at any stage. The condition can be treated with antibiotics, usually penicillin injections. When syphilis is treated properly, the later stages can be prevented.</p>	<p>Have safer sex</p>

HIV

Description	Symptoms	Care / Treatment	Preventive Practices
<p>HIV is most commonly passed on through unprotected sex. It can also be transmitted by coming into contact with infected blood – for example, sharing needles to inject steroids or drugs.</p> <p>The HIV virus attacks and weakens the immune system, making it less able to fight infections and disease.</p>	<p>Most people with HIV look and feel healthy and have no symptoms. When you first develop HIV, you may experience a flu-like illness with a fever, sore throat or rash. This is called a seroconversion illness.</p> <p>AIDS is the final stage of an HIV infection, when your body can no longer fight life-threatening infections.</p>	<p>A simple blood test is usually used to test for an HIV infection. Some clinics may also offer a rapid test using a finger-prick blood test or saliva sample.</p> <p>There's no cure for HIV, but there are treatments that allow most people to live a long and otherwise healthy life.</p> <p>HIV is a manageable long-term condition but being tested early is essential to getting appropriate healthcare and treatment.</p>	<p>Know your status, take the test There are over 8,000 HIV-positive people in the UK, and an estimated 30% of them are not aware of their condition. www.dred.com/uk/</p> <p>Have safer sex</p>

Further Sources of Information

Family Planning Association - FPA

We're a sexual health charity. We give straightforward information and support on sexual health, sex and relationships to everyone in the UK.

www.fpa.org.uk

Brook

Brook is the UK's leading provider of sexual health services and advice for young people under 25.

We are the only charity working across the UK and Channel Islands that specialises in working with young people to promote their sexual health in the wider context of health and wellbeing.

www.brook.org.uk

Find STI testing and treatment services

www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/STI-testing-and-treatment/LocationSearch/736

Terrence Higgins Trust

Terrence Higgins Trust is the UK's leading HIV and sexual health charity, providing a wide range of services to more than 100,000 people a year. The charity also campaigns and lobbies for greater political and public understanding of the personal, social and medical impact of HIV and sexual ill health.

www.tht.org.uk

This is an overview, please consult a medical practitioner for a full diagnosis and treatment if you are showing any symptoms for these diseases.

MENTAL HEALTH

A healthy you, healthy communities will not be achieved if we don't create awareness around mental health challenges in our communities. People across different stages of the circle of life experience mental health disorders. These affect their ability to carry out day to day living functions, limiting their potential for a sustainable healthy life. Moreover, it impacts on their families, loved ones and the wider health service.

Some people with mental health disorders will require round the clock, long term care; this makes a demand on the time, financial resources, emotional and physical health of members of their families; this can sometimes be quite draining, creating more health challenges for the carers.

There is the need to remove the stigma that tends to be attached to those experiencing mental health disorders. No one is immune to these disorders; it happens as a consequence of the challenges of life in our society. We cannot wish it away; neither can we ignore it. We need to pull resources together to address mental health challenges in our communities.

Overview of some Mental Health Challenges
Adapted from various sources including www.nhs.uk

ANXIETY	
Description	Symptoms
Anxiety refers to strong feelings of unease, worry and fear. Because occasional anxiety is a normal human experience, it's sometimes hard to know when it's becoming a mental health problem – but if your feelings of anxiety are very strong, or last for a long time, they can be overwhelming.	You might experience: Constant worrying about things that are a regular part of everyday life, or about things that aren't likely to happen. Unpleasant physical symptoms such as sleep problems, panic attacks, an increased heartbeat, an upset stomach, muscle tension or feeling shaky. A specific anxiety disorder , such as generalised anxiety disorder (GAD), panic disorder, a phobia, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

DEPRESSION	
Description	Symptoms
Depression is a feeling of low mood that lasts for a long time and affects your everyday life. It can make you feel hopeless, despairing, guilty, worthless, unmotivated and exhausted. It can affect your self-esteem, sleep, appetite, sex drive and, sometimes, your physical health.	In its mildest form, depression doesn't stop you leading a normal life, but it makes everything harder to do and seem less worthwhile. At its most severe, depression can make you feel suicidal, and be life-threatening. There are also some common specific forms of depression, such as: Postnatal depression (PND) – depression that can develop from between two weeks to up to two years after becoming a parent. It's usually diagnosed in mothers, but can affect partners too. Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) – depression that is related to day length and usually (but not always) occurs in the winter.

STRESS

Description	Symptoms
<p>Stress is the feeling of being under too much mental or emotional pressure.</p> <p>Pressure turns into stress when you feel unable to cope. People have different ways of reacting to stress, so a situation that feels stressful to one person may be motivating to someone else.</p> <p>Many of life's demands can cause stress, particularly work, relationships and money problems. And, when you feel stressed, it can get in the way of sorting out these demands, or can even affect everything you do.</p>	<p>Stress can affect how you feel, think, behave and how your body works. In fact, common signs of stress include sleeping problems, sweating, loss of appetite and difficulty concentrating.</p> <p>You may feel anxious, irritable or low in self-esteem, and you may have racing thoughts, worry constantly or go over things in your head. You may notice that you lose your temper more easily, drink more or act unreasonably.</p> <p>You may also experience headaches, muscle tension or pain, or dizziness.</p> <p>Stress causes a surge of hormones in your body. These stress hormones are released to enable you to deal with pressures or threats – the so-called "fight or flight" response.</p> <p>Once the pressure or threat has passed, your stress hormone levels will usually return to normal. However, if you're constantly under stress, these hormones will remain in your body, leading to the symptoms of stress.</p>

Care/Treatment

Stress is not an illness itself, but it can cause serious illness if it isn't addressed. It's important to recognise the symptoms of stress early.

Recognising the signs and symptoms of stress will help you figure out ways of coping and save you from adopting unhealthy coping methods, such as drinking or smoking.

There is little you can do to prevent stress, but there are many things you can do to manage stress more effectively, such as learning how to relax, taking regular exercise and adopting good time-management techniques.

Studies have found that mindfulness courses, where participants are taught simple meditations across a series of weeks, can also help to reduce stress and improve mood.

If you've tried self-help techniques and they aren't working, you should go to see your GP. They may suggest other coping techniques for you to try or recommend some form of counselling or cognitive behavioural therapy.

If your stress is causing serious health problems, such as high blood pressure, you may need to take medication or further tests.

Mental health issues, including stress, anxiety and depression, are the reason for one-in-five visits to a GP.

Preventive Practices

Recognising your triggers

If you're not sure what's causing your stress, keep a diary and make a note of stressful episodes for two-to-four weeks. Then review it to spot the triggers. Things you might want to write down include:

- the date, time and place of a stressful episode
- what you were doing
- who you were with
- how you felt emotionally
- what you were thinking
- what you started doing
- how you felt physically
- a stress rating (0-10 where 10 is the most stressed you could ever feel)

You can use the diary to:

- work out what triggers your stress
- work out how you operate under pressure
- develop better coping mechanisms

Doctors sometimes recommend keeping a stress diary to help them diagnose stress.

Take action to tackle stress and mental health

There's no quick-fix cure for stress, and no single method will work for everyone. However, there are simple things you can do to change the common life problems that can cause stress or make stress a problem. These include relaxation techniques, exercise and talking the issues through.

Get stress and mental health support

Because talking through the issues is one of the key ways to tackle stress, you may find it useful to attend a stress management group or class. These are sometimes run in doctors' surgeries or community centres. The classes help people identify the cause of their stress and develop effective coping techniques. Ask your GP for more information if you're interested in attending a stress support group.

Further Sources of Information

Anxiety UK

Anxiety UK is a national registered charity formed in 1970, by someone living with agoraphobia, for those affected by anxiety, stress and anxiety based depression.

www.anxietyuk.org.uk

MIND

We provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. We campaign to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding. We won't give up until everyone experiencing a mental health problem gets support and respect.

www.mind.org.uk

SAMARITANS

People talk to us anytime they like, in their own way, and off the record - about whatever's getting to them. You don't have to be suicidal.

Every six seconds, somebody contacts us. Ten times a minute, we can help someone turn their life around. That's a privilege, and a huge responsibility.

www.samaritans.org

YoungMinds

YoungMinds is the UK's leading charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people.

www.youngminds.org.uk

Rethink Mental Illness

We help millions of people affected by mental illness by challenging attitudes, changing lives. Our goal is a better life for everyone affected by mental illness.

www.rethink.org

Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM)

The Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) is an award-winning charity dedicated to preventing male suicide, the single biggest killer of men under the age of 45 in the UK. In 2015, 75% of all UK suicides were male.

www.thecalmzone.net

DEMENTIA

If you're becoming increasingly forgetful, particularly if you're over the age of 65, it may be a good idea to talk to your GP about the early signs of dementia. As you get older, you may find that memory loss becomes a problem. It's normal for your memory to be affected by age, stress, tiredness, or certain illnesses and medications. This can be annoying if it happens occasionally, but if it's affecting your daily life or is worrying you or someone you know, you should seek help from your GP.

How common is dementia?

According to the Alzheimer's Society there are around 800,000 people in the UK with dementia. One in three people over 65 will develop dementia, and two-thirds of people with dementia are women.

The number of people with dementia is increasing because people are living longer. It is estimated that by 2021, the number of people with dementia in the UK will have increased to around 1 million.

What is dementia?

Dementia is a common condition. Your risk of developing dementia increases as you get older, and the condition usually occurs in people over the age of 65.

Dementia is a syndrome (a group of related symptoms) associated with an ongoing decline of the brain and its abilities. This includes problems with:

- memory loss
- thinking speed
- mental agility
- language
- understanding
- judgement

People with dementia can become apathetic or uninterested in their usual activities, and have problems controlling their emotions. They may also find social situations challenging, lose interest in socialising, and aspects of their personality may change.

A person with dementia may lose empathy (understanding and compassion), they may see or hear things that other people do not (hallucinations), or they may make false claims or statements.

As dementia affects a person's mental abilities, they may find planning and organising difficult. Maintaining their independence may also become a problem. A person with dementia will therefore usually need help from friends or relatives, including help with decision making. Your GP will discuss the possible causes of memory loss with you, including dementia. Other symptoms can include:

- increasing difficulties with tasks and activities that require concentration and planning
- depression

- changes in personality and mood
- periods of mental confusion
- difficulty finding the right words

Most types of dementia can't be cured, but if it is detected early there are ways you can slow it down and maintain mental function.

Why is it important to get a diagnosis?

An early diagnosis can help people with dementia get the right treatment and support, and help those close to them to prepare and plan for the future. With treatment and support, many people are able to lead active, fulfilled lives.

Symptoms of dementia

Dementia is not a disease, but a collection of symptoms that result from damage to the brain. These symptoms can be caused by a number of conditions.

Symptoms specific to Alzheimer's disease

The most common cause of dementia is Alzheimer's disease. Common symptoms of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia include:

- memory loss – especially problems with memory for recent events, such as forgetting messages, remembering routes or names, and asking questions repetitively
- increasing difficulties with tasks and activities that require organisation and planning
- becoming confused in unfamiliar environments
- difficulty finding the right words
- difficulty with numbers and/or handling money in shops
- changes in personality and mood
- depression

Early symptoms of dementia (sometimes called cognitive impairment) are often mild and may get worse only very gradually. This means you might not notice if you have them, and family and friends may not notice them or take them seriously for some time.

In dementia, the brain becomes more damaged and works less well over time. The symptoms of dementia tend to change and become more severe.

For this reason, it's important to talk to your GP sooner rather than later if you are worried about memory problems. The speed at which symptoms get worse, and the way that symptoms develop, depends on what's causing the dementia, as well as overall health. This means that the symptoms and experience of dementia can vary greatly from person to person.

Symptoms in the later stages of dementia

As dementia progresses, memory loss and difficulties with communication often become very severe. In the later stages, the person is likely to neglect their own health and require constant care and attention.

Memory symptoms in later dementia

People with advanced dementia may not recognise close family and friends, they may not remember where they live or know where they are. They may find it impossible to understand simple pieces of information, carry out basic tasks or follow instructions.

Communication problems in later dementia

It's common for people with dementia to have increasing difficulty speaking and they may eventually lose the ability to speak altogether. It's important to keep trying to communicate with them and to recognise and use other, non-verbal means of communication, such as expression, touch and gestures.

Problems with mobility in later dementia

Many people with dementia gradually become less able to move about unaided and may appear increasingly clumsy when carrying out everyday tasks. Some people may eventually be unable to walk and may become bedbound.

Incontinence in later dementia

Bladder incontinence is common in the later stages of dementia and some people will also experience bowel incontinence.

Eating, appetite and weight loss in later dementia

Loss of appetite and weight loss are common in the later stages of dementia. It's important that people with dementia get help at mealtimes to ensure they eat enough. Many people have trouble eating or swallowing and this can lead to choking, chest infections and other problems.

How is dementia treated?

Most types of dementia cannot be cured and will gradually cause more severe problems. But there are important exceptions, including dementia caused by vitamin and thyroid hormone deficiencies, which can be treated with supplements. Some causes can be treated surgically – for example, some brain tumours, excess fluid on the brain (hydrocephalus) or head injury.

For types of dementia that involve degeneration of nerve and brain tissue, you can take action to prevent further damage. It's possible to do this by reducing dementia

DEMENTIA

risk factors, such as by managing high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type 1 diabetes and stopping smoking.

For dementia that currently cannot be cured, some types of medicine may prevent symptoms getting worse for a period of time. These medicines are usually given to people in the early and middle stages of the disease, to try to maintain or improve their independence.

It is fairly common for people with dementia to have depression. If you have dementia and depression, your GP may consider prescribing an antidepressant medication, or get you an appointment with a psychiatrist who specialises in working with older people. Perhaps the most important type of treatment for anyone with dementia is the care and support they receive from healthcare professionals, family and friends.

If you or a loved one have been diagnosed with dementia, you should start planning the future care that will be required. Discuss the options, such as Power of Attorney, with the people concerned – your family, your GP and your local authority. Finally, there are things you or your loved one can do to maintain memory, independence and function when you have dementia.

Help and support for people with dementia

A dementia diagnosis can come as a shock to the person with the condition and those around them. However, there are sources of help and support for everyone involved. It's natural to worry about the future, but it's important to remember that you're not alone. The NHS, social services and voluntary organisations can provide advice and support.

Get a needs assessment

Following a diagnosis of dementia, one of the first steps to take is to get a health and social care assessment. This assessment is how a person with dementia, and the person or people looking after them, gets help and support from their local authority's social services department. The assessment is carried out by social services to find out what help and support you need – such as healthcare, equipment, care services in your home, or a stay in a care home. If a person with dementia has ongoing medical care needs, they may qualify for free NHS continuing care, which will be assessed by NHS staff.

Care options for people with dementia

Many people with dementia stay in their own home if they have adequate support, either from family carers, community nurses or paid care workers. Being in familiar surroundings can help people cope better with their condition. Read about caring for someone at home and find out about small adjustments to the home that can help people with dementia. Many people with dementia will eventually need support in a residential care home.

This could be a care home or a nursing home, depending on their needs. The Alzheimer's Society has reported that around two-thirds of people in care homes have some form of dementia. However, not all care homes are suitable for people with dementia.

If you care for someone with dementia and they have to go into a care home, try to make their room as familiar as possible. For example, put photos of family and friends where they will see them every day. Favourite pictures, furniture and ornaments could also make them feel more at home. You may be able to arrange a trial period in a care home for the person you care for.

Some people with severe dementia may need palliative care in a hospice, where they can receive good nursing care and pain control.

Admiral Nurses

Admiral Nurses are registered nurses and experts in dementia care. They give practical, clinical and emotional support to families living with dementia to improve their quality of life and help them cope. Admiral Nurses work in the community, care homes, hospitals and hospices. To talk to an Admiral Nurse, call Admiral Nursing Direct on 0800 888 6678. The helpline is open seven days a week from 9am to 5pm; also from 6pm to 9pm on Wednesday and Thursday. The helpline is a free service for carers, people with dementia, and health and social care professionals.

Charities for people with dementia

There are several dementia charities that can offer excellent advice and support. The leading dementia charity is the Alzheimer's Society. Its website contains essential information on dementia and Alzheimer's disease, including how to live well with the disease and how to find help near you.

Dementia UK is a national charity that aims to improve the quality of life for people with dementia. It offers advice and support to families who are living with dementia through its Admiral Nurses, who are registered nurses and dementia experts.

Dementia UK and its Admiral Nurses also provide training for professionals who work with people with dementia. If you are looking after someone with dementia, it's important that you know how to get help and support for yourself as well. The Carers Trust is a good place to start looking for information and advice on how to get help and support, and even a break from caring.

Alzheimer's Research UK carries out dementia research, but it also answers questions about dementia and dementia research – including how you and your loved ones can get involved. The charity's infoline 0300 111 5 111 (open Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm) can provide help and guidance.

Dementia books on prescription

Reading Well Books on Prescription for dementia offers support for people diagnosed with dementia and their relatives and carers. GPs and other health professionals can recommend titles from a list of 25 books on dementia. The books are available for anyone to borrow for free from their local library.

This service is also available to people living without a formal diagnosis, who may be worrying about symptoms of dementia.

Dementia and managing money

People with dementia need to organise their financial and legal affairs while they are able to make decisions. It's a good idea to get professional advice about wills, pensions, how to manage any financial assets you have, and how to ensure any partner or children are protected and financially secure.

If you have dementia, you may want to consider appointing a trusted person to manage your money in case you are no longer able to do so yourself. This is called Lasting Power of Attorney, and can also enable the nominated person to make decisions about health and welfare matters on your behalf.

If you are looking after someone with dementia, you may find yourself helping them manage their daily finances and paying their bills. This may be dependent on the person's disability or mental capacity, and should be discussed with them in advance.

Benefits for people with dementia

If you care for someone with dementia, check you are both getting all the benefits and tax credits you are entitled to. For example, you may be able to claim Personal Independence Payment or Attendance Allowance for the person with dementia, and Carer's Allowance for the carer. You or the person you look after may be entitled to a discount on your council tax. To find out more, read the Money Advice Service's information on managing money when someone is in ill health. You can get advice and help about claiming benefits from your local social security office, voluntary organisations and support groups.

Dealing with bank accounts for someone with dementia

If you have Power of Attorney or have been made an appointee or deputy, you may be able to manage someone's banking activities. For this to happen, you need to have had your power of attorney registered to be recognised as a person's appointee or deputy. The bank or building society will require proof of your legal standing on managing someone's finances before they allow you access. They will also need to see proof of the name and address of the person you are caring for.

DEMENTIA

Restrictions may be in place regarding how you are able to manage the account. For example, if someone has been made an appointee, they can only deal with money from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

You can also apply for a third party mandate to deal with a bank, building society or other financial account on someone's behalf. This allows you to deal with someone else's banking for them in branch if they cannot attend the bank themselves. Contact the account holder's bank for more information about setting up a third party mandate.

Managing legal affairs for someone with dementia

Symptoms of dementia will become worse over time. That's why it's important to get an early diagnosis and start making plans for the future as soon as possible.

These plans should include ensuring your wishes are upheld should you not be able to make decisions for yourself – also called lacking or impaired "capacity".

Consent to treatment if your capacity is impaired by dementia. The Mental Capacity Act is designed to protect people who lack the mental capacity to make decisions for themselves. Under the Act, a person is presumed to have capacity "unless all practical steps to help him (or her) to make a decision have been taken without success".

Giving your consent means you must give express permission before any medical treatment can be carried out on you. Consent is needed for all treatments, whether it's a simple blood test or an organ donation. The only time when treatment can go ahead without your permission is if you cannot make a decision on your own and the doctors responsible for your care believe that treatment is in your best interests.

Power of attorney for people with dementia

There may be a time in the future when your symptoms mean you are no longer able to give consent. You may wish to give a relative you trust the power to make decisions about you if you are unable to. This is known as power of attorney.

There are three different types of power of attorney:

- Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) for matters relating to property and financial affairs
- LPA for matters relating to the person's welfare (including their health)
- Enduring Power of Attorney (EPA). EPAs made before October 1 2007 are still valid and can only be registered if the person is losing, or has lost, their mental capacity, and must be registered by the attorney

The LPA has to be made in a fixed legal way and is not legally recognised until it is registered with the Office of the Public Guardian.

The person making a power of attorney for property and affairs can register the LPA while they are able to make decisions for themselves. A personal welfare LPA may only be registered when a person has lost capacity. Separate powers of attorney can be made for either LPA, or both LPAs can be appointed to the same attorney.

Advance care planning in dementia

After you're first diagnosed with dementia, you might want to consider drawing up an advance decision. An advance care plan makes your treatment preferences known now in case you are unable to do this in the future.

Subjects covered by an advance decision can include:

- what treatment you would consider having, and in what circumstances
- what types of treatment you would never wish to have, no matter the circumstances
- what type of end of life care you would wish to have – for example, whether you would want to be resuscitated by artificial means, such as having a breathing tube inserted into your neck if you have lung failure
- whether you would be willing to donate organs after your death

You cannot request anything illegal in your advance decision, such as assisted suicide. Your care team will be able to provide you with more information and advice about advance decisions.

Wills

A will lets you decide what happens to your assets (your money, property and possessions) after your death. It's the best way of ensuring your wishes are carried out the way you want when you die. If you die without making a will, the government will decide what happens to your assets. You can write your will yourself, but it's a good idea to get legal advice. It will need to be formally witnessed and signed to make it legally valid.

GOV.UK recommends that when writing your will, it should include:

- who you want to benefit from your will
- who should look after any children aged under 18
- who is going to sort out your estate and carry out your wishes after your death (your executor)
- what happens if the people you want to benefit die before you

You should keep your will safe and tell your executor where it is.

Further Sources of Information

Alzheimer's Society

Dementia can happen to anyone and there's currently no cure. There are 850,000 people with dementia in the UK and the number is set to rise to 1 million by 2021.

At Alzheimer's Society, we believe passionately that life doesn't end when dementia begins. We are here for anyone affected by dementia, and we do everything we can to keep people with dementia connected to their lives and the people who matter most.

We are the UK's leading dementia support and research charity, here for anyone affected by any form of dementia in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

We provide information and practical and emotional support to help people live well with dementia, and we invest in world-class research with the ultimate goal of defeating it.

We also campaign to improve public understanding of dementia and the devastating impact it can have, and make sure it's taken seriously and acted on by our governments.

www.alzheimers.org.uk

Dementia UK

Dementia UK offers specialist one-to-one support and expert advice for people living with dementia.

www.dementiauk.org

Dementia Carer

Dementia Carer has been developed with and by family members who look after someone who has dementia.

www.dementiacarer.net

Adapted from various sources including www.nhs.uk

This is an overview, please consult a medical practitioner for a full diagnosis and treatment if you are showing any symptoms for these mental health challenges.

You can train to become a Mental Health First Aider – Mental Health First Aid England, www.mhfaengland.org



RELATIONSHIP HEALTH

The state of health of our family and close relationships is an indication of the health status of our communities. The quality of time, resources and care we are able to commit towards nurturing and growing a close bond with our relatives is vital to achieve a healthy you, healthy communities. Even in situations where the requirements of other health areas have been met, if we don't make a determined effort to work on and nurture our relationships, we might be exposing ourselves to some health challenges including stress and depression.

Make every effort to invest in your marriage and family. Spend quality time and support one another. Get to know them better. Create lasting memories. When issues arise, make a sincere attempt to resolve them amicably. Celebrate each other's achievement. Identify with each other's challenges. Remember give high priority to your marriage and family.

There is a defined time we will spend with each other as we all grow along the circle of life; as much as we desire that this time will be as long as possible, we can't control the quantity of the time; however, we can control the quality of the time. Make the best use of the time you have with your spouse and family; create quality, lasting memories. Work to leave a legacy that passes on from generation to generation.

You can create some traditions for your marriage and your family; this could revolve around day to day activities like meals, entertainment, school run and seasonal activities like festive holidays – Easter, Christmas.

In the circle of life, we meet people along the way; we form various levels of friendship with them. We build these friendships to varying degrees of commitment; some become close like family members, others remain loyal and true friends; and others we discover are not really friends.

For a healthy you, healthy communities, we need to pay close attention to a healthy friendship relationship. Be sincere; support others, spend time to grow and maintain your friendship relationships. A visit, an outing, a phone call, a text, an email can go a long way to building a lasting friendship.

Be cautious, set appropriate boundaries; relationship are meant for mutual benefits of all parties. When relationships become overbearing, controlling and emotionally draining, there is the need to reassess them and make decisions for the health of all parties. Focus on your goals, engage with those that will support you to achieve your goals. Always remember, you can say no without being made to feel guilty.

FINANCIAL HEALTH

A close-up photograph of a hand dropping a coin into a white ceramic piggy bank. The piggy bank is shaped like a pig and sits on a wooden surface. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light brown color.

Money plays an important role in our lives. We need it from the very beginning of the circle of life till the very end. Money helps to provide the basic necessities of life – food, water, shelter, employment, education, health care and social care. However, everyone does not have equal amounts of money to meet these necessities of life. We have to develop a system of managing our money; work hard to increase the amount and sources of money we earn and leave some legacy as start up for the next generation.

Having a sound financial health will greatly improve the chances of achieving a healthy life; money troubles can cause serious emotional and mental health challenges like stress, depression and might even lead to death – suicide. A sound financial health does not necessarily imply having lots of money but rather a situation where you are able to meet your financial commitments, have savings to meet project and emergency spending without causing you much difficulties.

In an ideal situation having lots of money should translate to a sound financial health, however in reality this is not always the case. People encounter financial challenges for various reasons including mismanagement, loss of employment, loss of a bread winner, sickness, divorce, business failure and economic recession. Irrespective of the reasons that leads to a financial challenge, there are solutions that can bring a remedy and return a sound financial health. These solutions will require discipline and determination to result in a desired outcome of a sound financial health.

The use of a personal/family budget as a management tool to keep track of financial commitments is highly recommended. This will assist in maintaining a sound financial health, reveal triggers of financial difficulties and assist in a recovery process when in financial difficulties. You can search the internet for a personal/family budget template.

The underlying principle to getting out of debt is to reduce expenses, increase income, service priority debts and don't take on more debts. It is important to maintain communication with your creditors, seek professional debt counselor advice and work diligently towards becoming debt free. Although, there is a social stigma attached to experiencing financial difficulties, you owe it a responsibility to yourself and generations coming after you in the circle of life to work on turning your financial difficulty into a sound financial health.

Further Sources of Information

Step Change Debt Charity

Our vision: We want to create a society free from problem debt.

By raising awareness of the issues surrounding debt in the UK, and building on the vital work that we've done over the last 20 years, we'll help to overcome the massive problems that debt presents in the 21st century.

Over the last two decades, our service has grown massively. From the introduction of debt management plans, to the pioneering use of cognitive behavioural therapy to help with debt-related stress in our Wellbeing tool, we have shown the quality of client care that sets the standard.

www.stepchange.org

Christians Against Poverty

We are passionate about releasing people from a life sentence of poverty, debt, unemployment and addiction. Working with the church we bring good news, hope and freedom to people in the UK.

www.capuk.org

Citizens Advice

We aim to provide the advice people need for the problems they face and improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

We provide free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination.

www.citizensadvice.org.uk



Another option to improve your financial health is to create multiple sources of income. It is recommended that for you to have the financial security that will last a lifetime, you need to have at least four sources of income. These will be a combination of active and passive sources of income.

“We have to develop a system of managing our money; work hard to increase the amount and sources of money we earn and leave some legacy as start up for the next generation.”

An active source of income will be a job (or jobs) you make money from by exchanging your time, skills and experience. A passive source of income will be resources, products, services you've developed and promoted in exchange for money; these will include shares, books, music, real estate, publications, training courses, videos, films, apps, software and investments.

The more income you can generate from passive sources, the better you can work towards a greater financial security and sound financial health. You can start by discovering your talent, turning it into a product or service and promoting these to create wealth. Your hobby can be the basis for your start up business to increase your sources of income generation.

1. Make a list of Your Talents/Hobbies
2. Select one Talent/Hobby you can work on and turn to a source of income
3. Develop your Talent/Hobby into a product or service
4. Promote your product or service – you can start with your close network of family, friends and contacts
5. Explore using free resources on the internet – social media, email marketing – to expand your promotion strategies
6. Network with others – attend trainings, seminars and events
7. Scale up your business – improve your product or service, diversify, develop spinoffs.

Further Sources of Information

Enterprise Nation

On a mission to create a more entrepreneurial society in the UK, helping you start, run and grow your business.

Since launching in 2005, Enterprise Nation have helped thousands of people start and grow their businesses, and, led by founder Emma Jones MBE, Enterprise Nation continues to be the most active UK small business community and a leading campaigning voice for small business.

Joining Enterprise Nation connects you with over 70,000 start-up entrepreneurs, small business owners and enterprise experts.

www.enterprisenation.com

The Talent University

The Talent University is a training outfit that advocates maximising the potential of your talent for your personal wealth creation and the benefit of your community.

We aim to achieve sustainable long-term growth for your wealth creation by maximizing the potential of your God given talent. We are committed to challenge, motivate and push you out of your comfort zones to discover, innovate (develop & deploy) and promote your talent for your maximum benefit. We will support you on your discovery journey as your partners and are determined to bring the best out of you.

We achieve our aims through a combination of

- inspiring events and classes
- insightful resources

Our events include:

- Talent 2 Wealth - The Talent University Foundation Class
- The Writers Conference

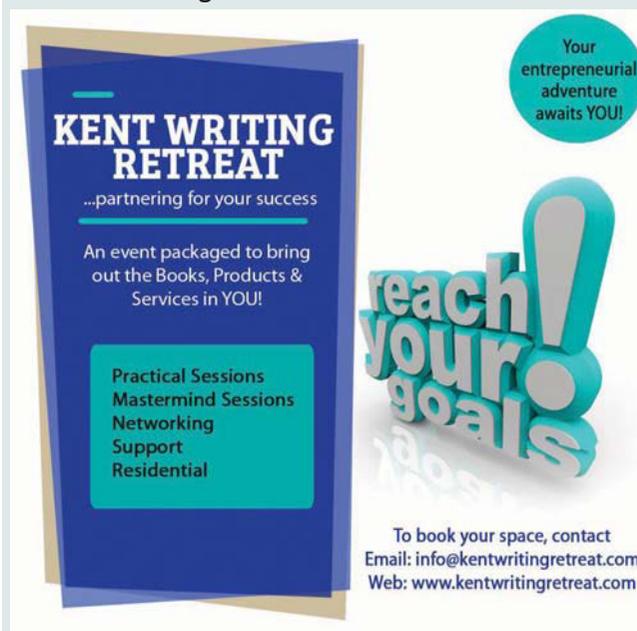
www.thetalentuniversity.org



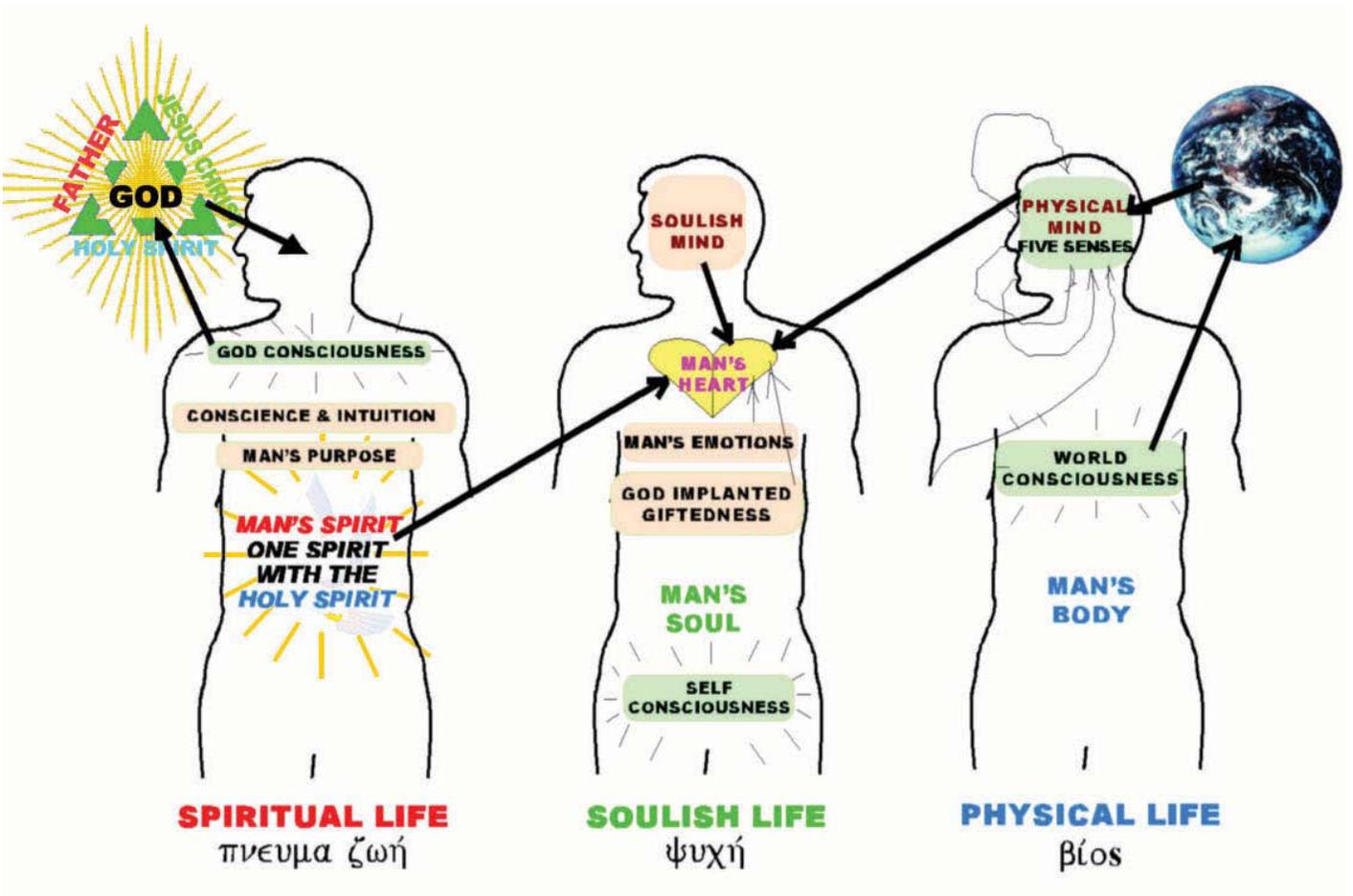
Kent Writing Retreat

An event packaged to bring out the books, products and services in YOU!

www.kentwritingretreat.com



SPIRITUAL HEALTH



We are spiritual beings irrespective of our choice of faith and beliefs including those in our communities that profess no faith. There is a spiritual dimension in our lives as human beings as we journey along the circle of life on earth. We make decisions and connections that have implications for our spiritual health which invariably impacts on our overall health and wellbeing.

Whatever faith and beliefs you decide to follow, it is advisable you genuinely make efforts to grow your knowledge of your faith, embrace the tenets of your faith and practice your faith sincerely. Ask questions:

- Why do I believe in this faith or in none at all?
- What are the short term and long term benefits of committing my time, energy and resources to this faith?
- What impact is this faith having on my health, wellbeing and development?

BEFORE BIRTH – PRENATAL

We indicated that the circle of life starts at birth and runs through till death, which is highly unpredictable as in reality, it occurs at any time along the circle of life.

Before the birth of a baby, there is the formation of an embryo by the fertilization of the female egg by the male sperm; this is implanted in the womb of the woman. The formed embryo undergoes intricate biological changes, developing into a foetus and is eventually delivered by the woman as a baby into the world. During this period, there is the need for a high level of care for both the growing foetus and mother-to-be to ensure adequate nutrition, health and wellbeing is maintained. Ideally other preparations are made for the arrival of the baby including family and social care.

In reality, death occurs during this period of the circle of life:

- babies die before being born – miscarriage/abortion/stillbirth
- babies die during the childbirth process,
- babies die before they grow up,
- mothers die before, during and after pregnancy

Any of this can be a very stressful and traumatic experience which can further impact on the health of other members of the family. For anyone in this situation, support in form of counselling will be beneficial.

A health challenge that is vital to raise at this juncture is infertility. There are many couples that have tried and are unsuccessful in having biological children of their own. Many reasons can be attributed to this unpleasant experience; these range from biological challenges with either the man or woman; health problems arising from after effects of medical treatment and some reasons that can't be explained medically.

Whatever the reasons, it can be a very depressing and traumatic experience to desire to want to have children and not be able to do so. Medical science has made some advances with in vitro fertilization (IVF) treatment; although this has been of tremendous assistance to many couples to realize their dream of becoming parents; there are many that will not be able to give birth biologically.

If you are experiencing infertility, seek professional medical advice; don't compromise your own health. Explore all options that are available including adoption.

Further Sources of Information

NCT

We're here to support parents. We give them accurate, impartial information so that they can decide what's best for their family, and we introduce them to a network of local parents to gain practical and emotional support.

Our vision is of a world in which no parent is isolated and all parents are supported to build a stronger society.

Our charitable purpose

- We offer information and support in pregnancy, birth and early parenthood.
- We campaign to improve maternity care and ensure better services and facilities for new parents.
- We aim to give every parent the chance to make informed choices.
- We want to make sure that everyone has access to our services and activities.

For practical and emotional support in all areas of pregnancy, birth and early parenthood including help with feeding.

www.nct.org.uk

www.nct.org.uk/pregnancy

Fertility Network UK

The national charity, here for anyone who has ever experienced fertility problems.

www.fertilitynetworkuk.org

Fertility Friends

We are the Leading infertility community in the UK, with members at every stage of their journey.

Infertility, Adoption, Parenting after infertility and Moving on

- Our community is there to help you every single step of the way.

www.fertilityfriends.co.uk

Adoption UK

We are the leading charity providing support, awareness and understanding for those parenting or supporting children who cannot live with their birth parents.

Over 11,000 members provide a strong, supportive community and the largest voice of adopters in the UK.

www.adoptionuk.org

First4Adoption

First4Adoption is the national information service for people interested in adopting a child in England. We give clear and impartial information about adopting and can put you in touch with adoption agencies in your area.

www.first4adoption.org.uk

DEATH

We indicated that the circle of life starts at birth and runs through till death, which is highly unpredictable as in reality, it occurs at any time along the circle of life.

The end event for all people in the circle of life is death. Although we all desire to live to a good old age before this event were to occur; in reality this is not always the case. Across all stages of the circle of life people die due to many reasons. It is a highly unpredictable event. However, we can make the best use of our time alive that makes death a transition.

We will always miss our loved ones when they die; people even mourn those that are not directly related to them but have made an impact in their lives – friends, mentors, leaders, and celebrities. Some practical things we can do to make the eventual death more bearable for our loved ones include:

- a. **Create lasting memories** – Spend quality time with your spouse and family; make an indelible mark in their lives; create memories of times spent together, places visited together and things done together. Take pictures, write poems and love notes/letters/emails. Say good and nice words to each other; make up after a misunderstanding/disagreement/fight. Celebrate each other's achievement; support each other's vision; make things happen for each other.

b. Restore Relationships – As long as it is practical and within your control, make attempts to mend and restore broken relationships. Celebrate those that were supportive of you in life. Forgive those that hurt you; it releases the pain from your life. You don't need to take that pain with you to the grave.

c. Leave a legacy – Write your will; it is never too early to make a will. You can always update it as you grow older and acquire more assets. It makes life bearable for your descendants. It gives them something to start up and continue on their journey through the circle of life. Get a life insurance; it can make the difference between your family living in poverty or financial security. Consider giving to a charity in your memory.

Do I Need a Will?

The short answer is yes. Writing a valid Will is the only way you can be sure that your wishes are carried out and your loved ones provided for after your death. Also, dying without a Will may cause your family the distress of resolving legal problems on top of losing a loved one.

Can I write my own Will?

It is perfectly legal to write your own Will, but few of us have the skills needed to do this properly. It is said that solicitors make more money sorting out badly written or invalid Wills than they do out of writing them!

What happens if I die without a Will?

If you die without a Will the laws of intestacy determine who will inherit. This may not be what you were expecting. It is essential to write a Will if you wish to be sure that the people you wish to benefit are the ones who do.

What about my children?

If you have young children, writing your Will is even more important as you will need to appoint legal guardians for them in the event of your death.

Adapted from www.willaid.org.uk

What does a will do?

Writing a will has four main functions:

1. To name your executors

These are the people who'll look after the financial process when you die. Try to choose a responsible and trusted friend or relative, who can think clearly in a troubled time.

Alternatively some name a bank or solicitor, though they often charge monstrous fees (and can add themselves automatically), so make sure you only allow this if you've chosen it for yourself.

They're also the people who will sort out finances – such as paying off the mortgage and/or other debts out of your estate.

2. To distribute your estate

This is where you work out who you want your estate to go to. That means everything you own at the point you die, including your property, businesses, car, savings, investments, pension fund, life insurance, expensive jewellery, pets and more.

3. To provide for any surviving children aged under 18

If you die, responsibility for your children automatically goes to anyone else with 'parental responsibility'.

If you don't make a will, and there is no one else with parental responsibility, the courts will decide what happens to your child in the event of your death.

4. To mitigate inheritance tax

If you die intestate (without a will) there are strict laws about to whom and how your estate is distributed. This causes two problems. First, the money may not go where you want, and secondly, it's likely to be inefficient for inheritance tax purposes.

Adapted from www.moneysavingexpert.com/family/free-cheap-wills

Further Sources of Information

Free Wills Month

Free Wills Month brings together a group of well-respected charities to offer members of the public aged 55 and over the opportunity to have their simple Wills written or updated free of charge by using participating solicitors in selected locations around England and Wales. A gift in your Will costs you nothing now but can make a difference for years to come.

www.freewillsmoonth.org.uk

Will Aid

Help yourself and charity

Having your Will written professionally can give you great peace of mind. Each November, you can use a local solicitor who has signed up to Will Aid and you can enjoy the added feel-good factor of supporting nine leading UK charities. Instead of paying your solicitor's fee, you will be invited to make a donation to charity.

www.willaid.org.uk

AFTER DEATH

We indicated that the circle of life starts at birth and runs through till death, which is highly unpredictable as in reality, it occurs at anytime along the circle of life.

What happens after death; this is an age long question. In most cultures, it is believed there is life after death. In the film, *The Lion King*, Mufasa made a reference to past kings watching over present and future kings, when he was encouraging Simba to be ready to take up his responsibility as the King in the future.

In Christianity, we believe in life after death; we believe in a healthy you, healthy communities on both sides of the circle of life – here on earth and after death.

In this publication we’ve tried to provide information and resources to support a healthy you, healthy communities across all stages of the circle of life. To be assured of a healthy you, healthy communities after death, we believe the best provider of a safe, secure and lasting health service is Jesus Christ – *“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” John 10:10 (NKJV)*

We believe this health service can be accessed from this side of the circle of life by developing a personal relationship with the provider – Jesus Christ – *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” John 3:16 (NKJV)*

We are reassured of the benefits of a lasting legacy that covers all our health requirements in a safe and secure environment – heaven – *“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.” John 14:1 – 3 (NKJV)*

This is an overview of our beliefs for a healthy you, healthy communities after death; this publication will be incomplete without these sets of information. We kindly request you

consider exploring Jesus Christ as a health provider for life after death.

New King James Version (NKJV) Scripture taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Further Sources of Information

Alpha

Everyone has questions



We believe that everyone should have the chance to explore the Christian faith, ask questions and share their point of view; wherever they are in the world.

Alpha is a series of sessions exploring the Christian faith. Each talk looks at a different question around faith and is designed to create conversation. Alpha is run all around the globe, and everyone's welcome. It runs in cafés, churches, universities, homes—you name it. No two Alphas look the same, but generally they have three key things in common: food, a talk and good conversation.

www.alpha.org

Christianity Explored

What is Christianity?

It's all about one life, the life of Jesus, and it can be summed up in the answers to three questions.

1. Who is Jesus?

He's the Christ. The King who God himself had promised to send, who would put everything right by setting up a kingdom of justice and love. He's also the Son of God. God himself, entering the world as a human being.

Jesus proved who he was by what he did. He healed people. He calmed storms. He raised the dead. By doing these things, the King was giving a glimpse of life in his kingdom. A perfect place, with no suffering, fear or death. It's the world we all want.

2. Why did Jesus come?

• To be rejected

Many people rejected Jesus. They thought they'd be happier making their own rules and living outside his kingdom. This rejection of the King is something we all do. Jesus called it sin. It damages our lives and will eventually leave us separated from the joy of being in the kingdom. God won't let those who reject the King live with him. So we face what Jesus called hell. An existence without anything good, forever.

• To be killed

People rejected the King so violently that they killed him by nailing him to a cross. But his death wasn't a mistake by God – it was a masterstroke. On the cross, Jesus was cut off from God's friendship and goodness. He chose to experience hell – so that we don't have to. The sinless King died to take the punishment sin deserves. Jesus was opening the way into his kingdom.

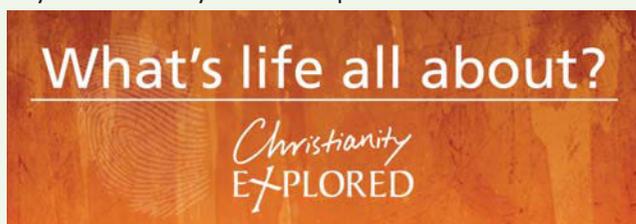
• To rise again

Three days after his execution, his tomb was found to be empty. Over the next few weeks many ate with Jesus. Dozens spoke with him. Hundreds saw him. Jesus the King could not be contained by death. He had risen!

3. What does it mean for us?

So, today, right now, Jesus is inviting people to come into his kingdom. He tells us to repent and believe the good news. Repent means to turn around, to live with Jesus in charge instead of ourselves. Believe means to trust that Jesus has done everything we need to give us a place in his kingdom.

Living with Jesus as King isn't easy. His followers will be rejected, just as he was. But they also live a life of deep security, satisfaction, and joy, knowing God and his forgiveness, being helped by his Spirit, and looking forward to the King's return, when he will finally establish his loving kingdom forever. Jesus offers all this to anyone and everyone who repents and believes. Jesus freely offers all this to anyone and everyone who repents and believes.



www.christianityexplored.org

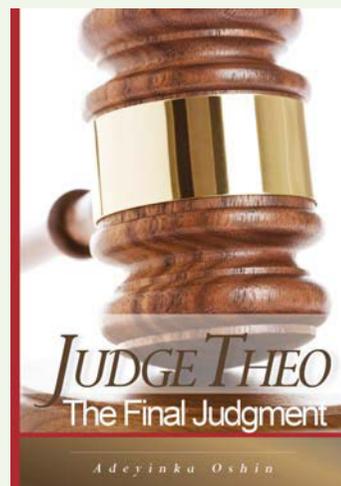
Judge Theo, The Final Judgment

7 Individuals | 2 Outcomes

A compilation of separate court trials of seven individuals when they were required to give an account of their lives on earth before the Most High Judge Theo at the Eternal Supreme Court. "And just as each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment," Hebrews 9:27 (NLT).

The book presents the concept of judgment in the format of a court trial. It identifies the vital condition for a successful appearance before Almighty God as the acceptance of the offer of Jesus Christ as an Advocate.

www.judgetheo.com



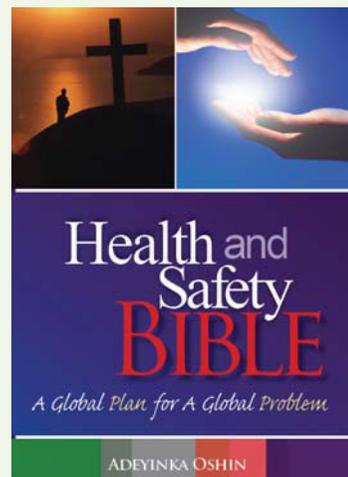
Health and Safety Bible

A Global Plan for A Global Problem

A book that outlines how God used the principles of Health and Safety to solve once and for all the issue of sin in the world. God has conducted a risk assessment of life on earth; He identified sin as a primary hazard to human existence; He has provided a precaution for this hazard in the person of His Son Jesus Christ.

JESUS RESCUE SERVICE is God's global plan for a global problem called sin – you only have to accept the plan. Do you want to know about God's fire alarm system? Are you interested in knowing what happens when God's emergency plans and procedures are activated? Do you want an assurance that you will be evacuated from the fire and disasters that are coming on earth? Then read this insightful book!

www.healthandsafetybible.com



MY RECOVERY FROM STROKE

Gabriel & Florence Ogunbiyi

'Dear friend, I hope all is well with you and that you are as healthy in body as you are strong in spirit.' 3 John 1:2



Healthy living goes beyond eating healthy foods. It includes ensuring regular medical check-ups and regular exercise of the body for optimal performance. Healthy living is living life to its fullest.

My Wife's Sickness

In February 2015 after returning from work, my wife, Florence, suffered a stroke which made her completely unconscious for five days. The stroke affected both her right arm and right leg. It was a very difficult period for the whole family but we received adequate support from the NHS medical staff, the Church with constant prayers and visitations, The Stroke Association, relatives and friends. And most importantly, through the sheer determination of my wife to recover from her sickness.

The Recovery Process

Recovery from stroke could be a lifelong process. For many people, recovery begins with formal rehabilitation. However, it is important for you to know that no matter where you are in your recovery stage, there is always hope of recovering fully.

After the Stroke occurred, she was transferred to a stroke specialist hospital where she was admitted for three months. As part of the recovery process, specialists like Neurologist, Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapist were regularly working with her to support the healing process. The following were some measures put in place to aid her recovery.

Recovery Measures

- 1. Physical Therapy:** This helps her restore her physical functioning of her body and skills like walking and motion. Florence was started on series of physical activities like walking, exercising and most importantly using the gym to restore her nerves. This helped a lot in her recovery because within a very short time she started mobilising and to the glory of God she can walk independently with little assistance from anyone.
- 2. Occupational Therapy** is a process that involves re-learning new skills needed for everyday living like eating, going to the bathroom, dressing and taking care of herself. The Occupational Therapist worked with her and taught her how she can live independently and this had actually helped her a great deal in restoring her confidence especially doing things herself.
- 3. Speech Therapy:** The Speech Therapist also worked with her. The purpose of speech therapy is to restore her voice and correct any communication problems.
- 4. Support Group:** One of the groups that helped is the support group. The Support Group allows her to interact with other

stroke survivors; they are people who know what you are going through. People in a support group helped her find ways to solve problems related to her experience of stroke; share information about products that may help her recovery; encourage her to try new things; some people in this group have become her new friends

- 5. Medicine:** There are regular medications prescribed that must be taken as prescribed to aid her recovery and to prevent a re-occurrence of a second stroke. She takes her medication regularly and when there are concerns about her health, we contact her Doctors.

Besides, taking her medications, she gets her blood pressure done regularly. When your heart beats, it pumps blood round your body to give it the energy and oxygen it needs. As the blood moves, it pushes against the sides of the blood vessels. The strength of this pushing is your blood pressure. If your blood pressure is too high, it puts extra strain on your arteries and your heart and this may lead to stroke.

At this juncture, I will like to advise that it is very important you check your blood pressure as often as possible. A typical normal blood pressure reading should be 120/80. If you have concerns about your blood pressure you should contact your Doctor immediately. Prevention is always better than cure. You can check your blood pressure at your local GP Surgery.

- 6. Control your Diet:** Another important consideration to recovery is that you must eat healthy foods such as broiled fish and fruits. You must ensure you reduce your salt and oil intake. These are not good for a healthy living.

Finally

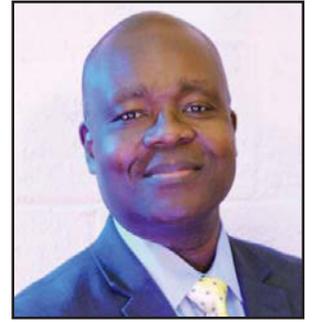
You must be determined and prayerful. In Florence case, she was determined to work towards living a normal life again. She didn't allow the sickness to hold her down. She fought back with determination and prayers; and to the glory of God she is recovering well.

If anyone is in such a situation, our advice to you is that 'don't give up', complete and total restoration is coming your way soon. Thanks and God bless you.

Gabriel & Florence Ogunbiyi are the Resident Pastors at The Redeemed Christian of Church, Rivers of Living Water, Thamesmead where they host the regular monthly interdenominational programme 'Hour of Glory' a programme design to equip and empower the saints. They are the Author of the book, '*What Do You Want?*' They are blessed with 4 wonderful children.

HOW I RECOVERED FROM A MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGE

Yinka Oshin



I never knew I had a mental health challenge; everything seemed normal on the surface; however there was an internal mental struggle that I could never explain, discuss or share with others – including my wife. I noticed I became easily irritable, moody, pent up anger, anxious and sometimes irrational in taking some decisions. Yet I couldn't put a finger to what was wrong with me, even when suicidal thoughts were crossing my mind. I did not seek mental health professional care because I never thought I had a mental health challenge. Moreover, as a Christian, a man with a black African background; we don't discuss mental health challenges. On the contrary, doing so seems to imply something is indeed wrong with you. Why can't you just man up and face life squarely?

Yet the problems mounted, the pressure increased and it seemed no solution was at hand. I lost my confidence at work; had anxiety attacks when talking in a group; sometimes I will just freeze, I knew what to say but I just couldn't connect my thoughts together to speak! I took some decisions without thinking them through; it was like I was on autopilot, a zombie, doing things mechanically yet was not happy; the implications were far reaching, causing more problems for me and others. I don't know where I would have ended if God did not reach out to me using diverse means and people to bring me back to a sound state of mental health.

The first way, God reached out to me, was to show me someone in the Bible – Elijah – that had a similar mental health challenge and the process of his recovery. My initial thoughts were, Elijah was a very unlikely person to have a mental health challenge – he was a prophet of God, how could he have a mental health problem?

Elijah is an historical personality in the Bible; he was empowered and used by God to do many supernatural miracles. By virtue of his privileged profession as a prophet of God, he was the last person that should experience a mental breakdown; but he did. Elijah had an episode of anxiety attack leading to depression and suicidal thoughts.

During his mental health breakdown, he had no other person that could help him except God. Elijah's experience of overcoming his mental breakdown became a lesson template for me to deal with my own mental health challenge.

Lesson 1: Elijah, a prophet of God had a mental health challenge. This means, there is nothing strange in acknowledging you have a mental health issue; it does not make you less of a person to accept you need help. It does not make you less of a Christian to accept you need help. Mental health challenges has no barriers – it affects everyone irrespective of their gender, race, age, social status, ethnic background, education and faith. Elijah had depression and was apparently suicidal; but he cried for help.

Lesson 2: Seek help, it is your life; don't let anyone or circumstances hold you back. Others might make fun of you, but you need to pull yourself through the challenge and recover. Elijah called on the only person available to him – God. In the 21st century, in addition to our respective faiths, we have access to mental health professionals that can provide the required support, care and treatment to see you through to recovery.

Lesson 3: Some interesting things I learnt from Elijah's mental health challenge and recovery include:

- God did not judge Elijah or tell him to man up
- God did not abandon Elijah
- God gave him food to nourish his body
- God allowed him to sleep and rest to renew his physical strength
- God invited him for a retreat to refocus his vision
- God gave him information to let him know, there were many others He could have used for the work Elijah was doing
- God gave him a new perspective to be appreciative of his privileged position that he was chosen to do the work
- God gave him new assignments to complete; using the same talent and passion he was ready to abandon
- God appointed an assistant for him to train as a successor

Lesson 4: In my attempt to work my way out of the mental challenge, God reached out to me through this experience of Elijah. A series of events assisted me to identify the source that was causing me to have a mental health challenge. I took practical steps to separate myself from this source. I reassessed all my relationships, setting up appropriate safeguards and boundaries to limit my re-exposure to triggers that were causing the mental health challenge.

Lesson 5: In addition, God gave me some phrases that became my watchword – *"It is a Privilege"* & *"You Deserve a Second Chance"*. In other words, He did not judge me, neither did He abandon me. He guided me out of the circle of influence that

“Seek help, it is your life;
don't let anyone or
circumstances hold
you back.”

was inflicting mental anguish on my life. He raised up people – family, mentors and friends to positively support my re-orientation. I realized I could dedicate more time to my relationships with family and friends; I rediscovered old relationships.

“It is a Privilege” – is a phrase to encourage me that life was a privilege; things could have been worse; I should be grateful for the many simple things of life I am able to enjoy; I became more appreciative of God, myself, my family and other people.

“You Deserve a Second Chance” – is a phrase to reassure me of the better things to come from my experience irrespective of the circumstances or errors made. It was to reinforce in me to disregard the opinions of others and work diligently to make the best use of this second chance.

Lesson 6: I discovered strategies to maintain appropriate balance in life – giving time to day to day activities like eating, resting and spending time with the family. I started paying attention to my eating habits, found ways to make sure I was resting – physically and mentally (I started playing Words with Friends again). I discovered I stopped using strong painkillers as I used to when I was under mental stress and anxiety. I became less irritable. I started exploring new hobbies and projects. I rediscovered my passion to write and threw myself into it; writing became an avenue to express my creativity and protect my healing. At this juncture, I need to state that in my traumatic emotional state, I wrote some materials that in hindsight, I ought not to have written and I offer my sincere apologies for any offence this might have caused.

Lesson 7: I went on a retreat; where my mentality was refreshed, refocused and renewed. This retreat was for over 2 years. I didn't see my weekly commute to Church at RCCG, Royal City, Sevenoaks as a retreat until now. Looking back, I realized that most of the recovery progress were possible through the atmosphere of love, peace, joy and respect in existence in the Church and the various practical teachings that made me refreshed, encouraged and challenged to make the best out of God's purpose for my life.

Lesson 8: God allowed the events of life to unfold and choose me as a successor. That was very humbling, that despite my mental health challenge, God had confidence in me to become a Pastor. I did not have an inkling; all I was keen on was to complete my full recovery and work towards fulfilling my vision. However, He had other plans, He decided to call home Pastor

Tinu Adeyemi, our Pioneer Pastor; unknown to me, the few years we spent together to plant and build the Church – RCCG, Royal City, Sevenoaks were indeed training opportunities for me.

God used many people to support me through the recovery process families, mentors, friends, books, blog posts, social media posts etc.

Pastor Tinu Adeyemi was a motivator, she was raised as a helper to support me through the recovery process; it never crossed my mind that I was being prepared as a successor. Elder Esther Samuels was instrumental in giving me hope during this period of mental health challenge; she, her husband – Elder Matthew Samuels and their family were very supportive. Members of my wider family and friends too numerous to list here played vital role in the recovery process. I am grateful to all these people for the sacrifices they made to support me through my mental health challenge.

I appreciate the love, support and care of my darling wife – Foluke and my lovely children – Demilade, Durotimi and Damilare. They stood by me; we went through the challenge together, they did not give up on me.

I have written this article, to reveal that mental health issues are real; they affect everyone in varying measures; with appropriate support and help, recovery is possible. In addition to others supporting you in the recovery process, your passion can become a springboard for your healing. I rediscovered writing as a passion and it helped me – **Discover your passion and explore new pursuits.** You can use other resources that include:

- Reading Well programme of The Reading Agency
- Try your hands on Colouring Books, Dot 2 Dot & Puzzles
- Take a break to a farm – Care Farming,
- Go for walks – explore nature
- Visit the museum – learn about the past and developing trends
- Have a hobby
- Start a business

You will be surprised how your story can turn your life around and become an inspiration for others.

The story of Prophet Elijah's mental health challenge is documented in 1 Kings 19: 1 - 21

Yinka Oshin is a Christian Entrepreneur, a seasoned author and a researcher. He is passionate about using innovative strategies to inspire and change lives. He is the author of Judge Theo – The Final Judgment, God Has Got Talent – ME, How to Become Debt Free by Discovering Your Talent - A Seven Steps Model and numerous other books.

He is the Editor, The Talent Journal and the CEO/Co-founder, The Talent University – a publication and training outfit that advocates maximising the potential of your talent for your personal wealth creation and the benefit of your community. He serves as Pastor, RCCG, Royal City, Sevenoaks.

He can be contacted via Email: pastor@royalcity.org.uk Twitter: @JudgeTheo

Your Health is KEY

Ade Awonaike



Healthy living is one of the most highly desired phenomenons in today's modern world. Fortunately, healthy living is within the reach of an average man even though the consequences associated with its negligence are quite obvious in our contemporary society.

According to Hitti (2009), healthy living is not a short-term commitment many people erroneously takes it to be, but a very long-term venture that may even last throughout life-time of an individual. Basically, healthy living has always been associated mainly with healthy eating and life style, with the former being the most prominent of all. In their study, Shepherd et al (2006) noted that healthy eating is a significant contributor to man's overall sense of well-being. His postulation is based on the proven fact that healthy eating helps to prevent lots of health-related issues that include but not restricted to diabetes, coronary heart diseases, dental caries, high blood pressure, asthma, cancer and stroke. Additionally, healthy eating is very instrumental for cognitive development as well as healthy growth of children. It is very important to note that healthy eating is not just about strict dietary limitation, avoidance of highly cherished meals, staying unrealistically thin; rather it is simply about stabilization of one's mode, improvement of one's health, generation of more energy and feeling overly great

Effects of healthy eating on your mental and emotional health
It is a well known fact that, eating the right diet enables an individual to stay healthy and be in good physical shape. However, research has shown that healthy diet has profound effect on an individual's mood and senses of wellbeing (Robinson et al., 2017). For instance, increased incidences of stress, depression, anxiety and bipolar disorder have been linked to higher intake of processed meals, sugary snacks, and fatty foods. Robinson et al. (2017) even pointed out that unhealthy diet may likely facilitate the development of some mental health disorders like, schizophrenia and Alzheimer's disease as well as increased risk of suicide among younger individuals.

Additionally, Bisogni et al. (2012) noted that, consumption of more vegetables, fruits and less sugary foods may minimize risk of mental health issues and also improves one's mood. Consequently, eating these categories of meals is highly recommendable for anyone that has already been diagnosed of mental health problems as such foods are relatively effective in managing symptoms associated with mental health problems. This approach will go a very long way in enabling such patients to regain absolute control of their life.

However, even though certain meals have been proved to have positive and highly beneficial effects on human's mood, the overall dietary pattern remains the most important aspect of healthy living. In other words, adopting a healthy living style by focusing on healthy diet shouldn't have to be an all or nothing proposition.

Thus, consumption of healthy diets shouldn't necessary involve absolute elimination of unhealthy foods. The key is to strike a balance, as moderation is fundamental to healthy eating.

Practical Approach to Healthy Living

Most times, people strive to adopt new healthy lifestyle without much preparation. However, the adoption of new healthy lifestyle should not be an impromptu process as such approach may likely lead to cheating or giving up on the new eating plan. Consequently, anybody planning to adopt healthier eating habit must first and foremost set himself up for success. The practical processes involved in adoption of a more healthy living style include:

- Reducing the practice of eating outside and getting use to preparing one's meal at home
- Making the right changes by gradually getting rid of unhealthy diets like processed foods and focusing more on plenty of fruits and vegetables
- Simplifying the overall process by thinking of diets on the basis of its variety, colour and freshness, rather than been overly concerned with computation of calorie intake
- Being conscious of the actual components of any processed food that is labelled healthy by taking time and reading the labels and making sure that none of such packaged food contains unhealthy fats or huge quantity of sugars.
- Switching over from soft drinks, alcohols and sugary beverages to plenty of clean water.
- Consuming more of whole grains, healthy carbs and diets that are rich in fibre
- Minimizing the intake of salty foods and eating more of sea foods
- Exercising regularly for a minimum of two and half hours per week.

In summary, the process of health living is majorly concerned with healthy eating and lifestyle. According to Kolasa (2012),

“consumption of healthy diets shouldn't necessary involve absolute elimination of unhealthy foods. The key is to strike a balance, as moderation is fundamental to healthy eating.”

consuming those foods that are termed healthy is known to be very effective in combating certain illness. For instance, foods that are rich in dietary fibre are capable of minimizing risk of heart disease, diabetes, strokes, and also helpful in shedding excessive weight. Robinson et al (2017) noted that this benefit can be obtained by consuming a minimum of 21 to 38 grams of fibre on daily basis. Similarly, healthy carbohydrates like whole grains and fibre diet are rich in antioxidants and phytochemicals, both of which help the body to withstand certain diseases such as diabetes, cancer and heart diseases (Freeland-Graves and Nitzke, 2013). Avoidance of huge salt intake is also very necessary for healthy living as too much intake of salt has been linked to certain diseases like stroke, erectile dysfunction, kidney disease, coronary heart disease and memory loss.

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Ade Awonaike is the Pastor of RCCG, Royal City, East Grinstead and has overall responsibility for the Church. He is a prolific teacher of deep truths of God's life changing word with great insight and simplicity. He is also a course facilitator at the Kingdom Life Bible Institute, London. He has served in various capacities within the body of Christ over the years as Sunday School teacher, Youth Leader, Head Steward to name a few. Ade is a Geographical Information Systems and Data Consultant by profession and also pursuing a doctorate degree in Data Science. He is married to Funke and they are blessed with two adorable children. He can be contacted via Email: ade@rceg.church

HEALTH & FITNESS WORDSEARCH

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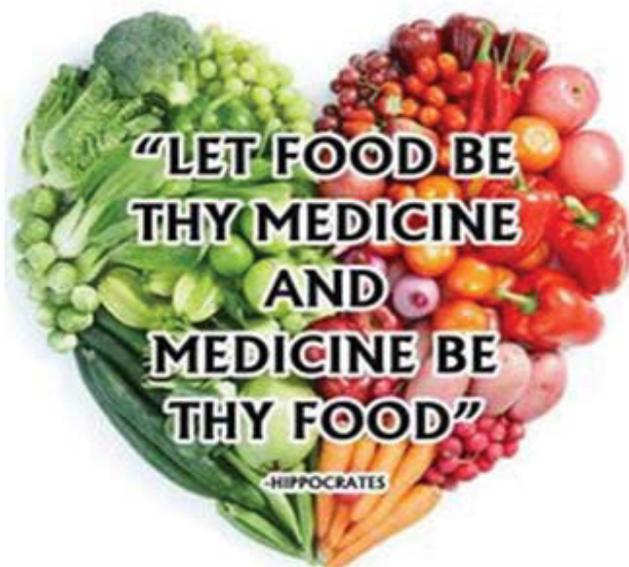
Culled from Ashdown Forest Living, January 2017 pg32

EAT WELL, LIVE WELL

Christy Iyaniwura



Have you ever heard that you are what you eat? Food and our well being are directly related. If you eat well, you are more likely to be healthy and avoid certain diseases. Does healthy diet prevent all diseases? No, but eating healthy would reduce your risk of many diet related diseases and make you stronger and healthier.



For many people, healthy eating is a significant priority while some do not bother to think about it. Several research studies have shown that what we eat significantly affect our health and quality of life.

What is healthy eating?

According to NHS Choices (2016) Healthy eating is defined as eating a wide variety of foods in the right proportions, and consuming the right amount of food and drink from each food group to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight. There are five main food groups: Fruits and vegetables, protein foods, grain (whole grains or refined), dairy and fats. Care must be taken to ensure that adequate proportion of each food group is eaten to maintain health and wellbeing. Excess or inadequate consumption of nutrients have been associated with diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, osteoporosis, low iron level, weakness. Eating well will enable individuals to maintain strong healthy bones and muscles.

Tips to eat healthy and well

Eat colour

Five a day is a common slogan. Evidence shows that people who eat at least five portion of fruits and vegetables per day have a lower risk of heart diseases and some cancers. Fruits and vegetables provide important nutrients and antioxidants.

Having 5 a day may be easier than you think. At least a banana or any fruit with your breakfast, an orange or tangerine for snacks, a side salad or vegetable with your lunch and dinner. You can design several ways to achieve your 5 -a-day. Make your food colourful and varied with fruits and vegetables. The more colourful the better. Try seasonal fruits and be adventurous as you plan your 5-a-day.

Grains/Starchy food

Foods such as pasta, potatoes, rice should provide the base of our food. They are good sources of energy but we need to pay attention to the proportion. Carbohydrate foods should make up just over one third of everything we eat. Potatoes with the skins, brown rice, wholegrain and whole wheat are also great sources of fibres and vitamins. Fibre improves bowel movement and reduces the risk of bowel cancer.

Protein foods

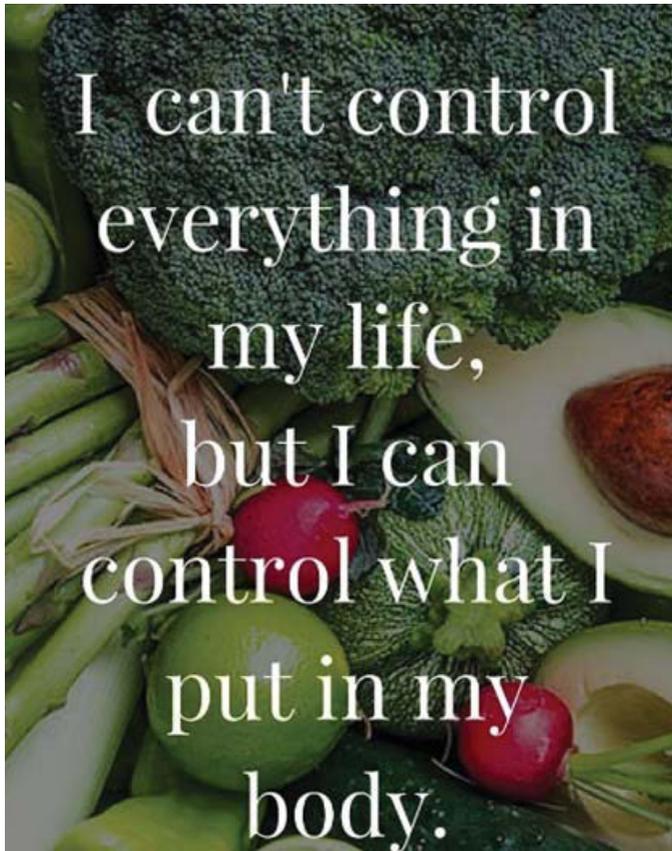
Common protein sources such as beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat provide essential amino acids for body growth and repair hence they are very important for children and teenagers. They also provide a range of vitamins and minerals which promote wellbeing. Meat is a good source of protein, vitamins and minerals, including iron, zinc and B vitamins. Lean meat and skinless poultry are preferred to cut down on fat. Oily fish such as mackerel, salmon, tuna, halibut are rich in omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3 has been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease, play an important role in brain function, reduce inflammation and promote growth and development. Individuals should plan to eat at least two portions of fish a week, including one portion of oily fish. Nuts are good sources of protein and fibre but they contain high level of fat, so eat nuts in moderation.

Milk and dairy

Milk and dairy are good sources of protein and calcium. Calcium is important for healthy bones. It is better to consume low fat variants such as semi-skimmed and skimmed milk, lower fat cheese or yogurt.

Fat

Fat is a good source of energy, fat soluble vitamins and improves the taste of food but it should be consumed in limited quantity. Eating a high level of saturated fat could increase the amount of cholesterol which increases the risk of heart diseases. Therefore aim to buy unsaturated fats.



Others

Other important components include sugar and salt. Many of us love sugary drinks, while they are a good source of quick energy, there is a risk of obesity with increased consumption. Sugar is also linked with high risk of dental caries (tooth decay) so mothers should watch out for the sugary drinks consumed by children and young people. Salt improves taste and is good for

maintenance of blood pressure but high level of salt could cause increase in blood pressure. When buying processed food, check your food label for fat, sugar and salt quantity.

Water

The best drink is water. It is recommended that an adult drinks six to eight glasses of water per day (1.5L- 2L). Water keeps you hydrated, flushes your system of toxins and carries nutrients to your tissues. Next time that you are feeling tired, drink water.

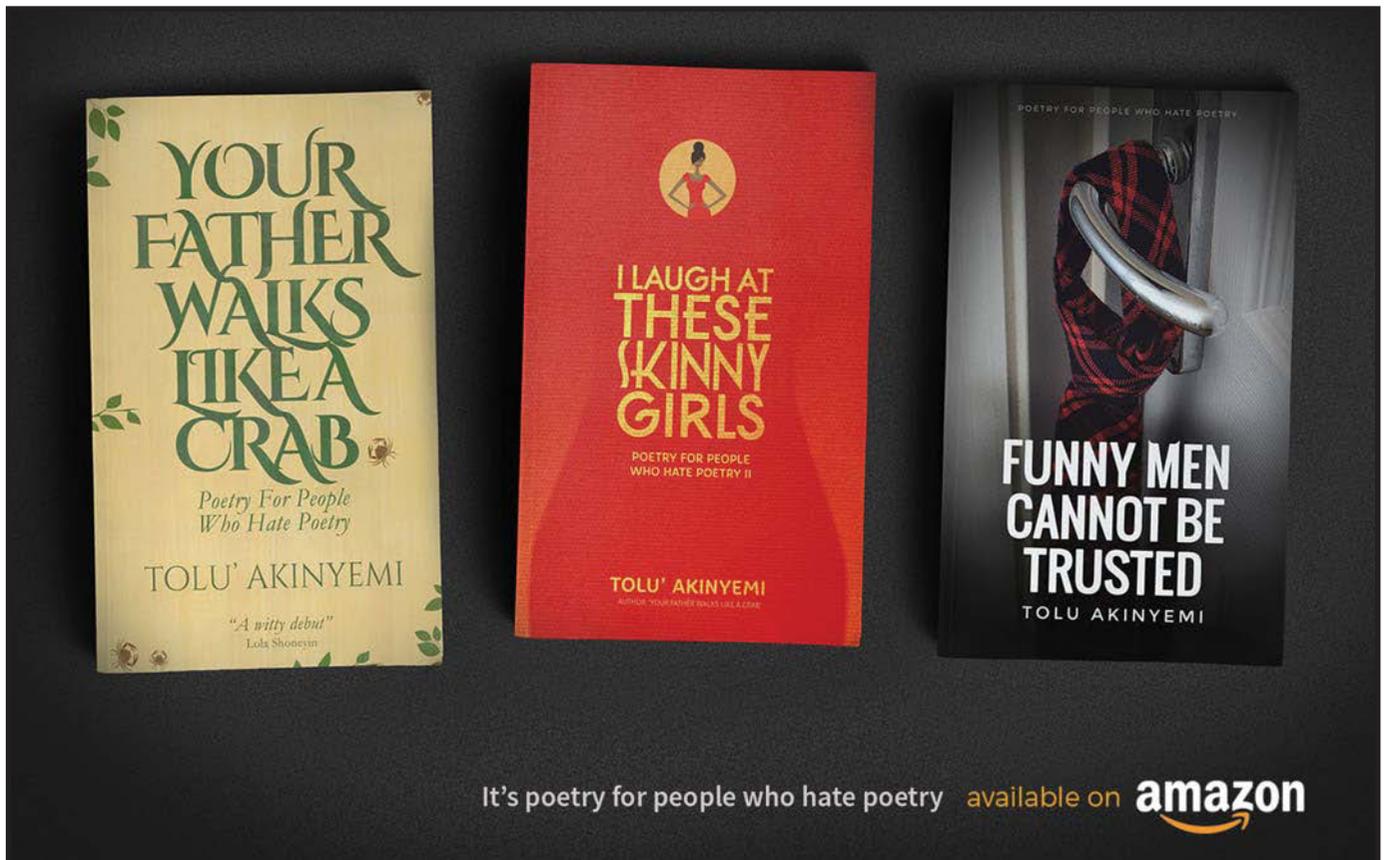
Hippocrates said, let food be your medicine. Food is the best source of nutrients. The more attention you pay to your meal, the more likely that you will lead a longer, healthier life. Eat well, live well.

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Christy Iyaniwura is a medical doctor. She is passionate about providing practical solutions to alleviate public health issues in the community. She is a lecturer in Further Education Colleges, teaching science, health and social care. She holds a Masters in Public Health from London School of Tropical Hygiene.



It's poetry for people who hate poetry available on **amazon**

A TRUE STORY

Tolu Akinyemi



The last time we saw
it was an airport lounge
on a cheap holiday
to Tenerife.

This time, I'm staring through
a London shop's rack of shoes
and she looks nothing like
in Tenerife.

I walked up to her
and let it all out
"you'll have to forgive me
if this sounds rude
but weight loss
really looks good on you".

All she said was somberly;
"when you are obese;
no one says it (to your face)
they stand by, watch you waltz
to your death, crumb by crumb
as they help you chant
"big is beautiful!".

Tolu Akinyemi was born in Akure, the sleepy capital city of Ondo State, Nigeria.

His writings have appeared in a number of notable anthologies such as 'Verses From The Sun', an Association of Nigerian Authors anthology, 'AWayWithWords' (2014 & 2016), a Great British Write Off Anthology and other printed and online outlets. His poetry play 'The Big Society'; written for The Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust, London was performed at The Greenwich-Lewisham Young

People's Theatre, London. In 2017, he was named on the 'Nigerian Writers' Awards' list of '100 Most Influential Nigerian Writers under 40' and also won the 'Poetry Writer of the Year' Award.

You can find Tolu on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter (@poetolu). He believes in 'The Big Bang Theory' TV Show, Google and Jesus. Tolu currently lives in London, England.

AUTISM & ME

Bebe Clement



Bebe Clement had noticed for some time that her son was displaying characteristics such as disturbed sleeping and eating patterns, delayed development, disconnection from the world around him and gaze avoidance. Although he was a very placid and happy child, these characteristics were of concern. After reading a newspaper article, Bebe realised that her son was displaying characteristics of autism and decided to confide in her husband who to her surprise had also been noticing similar behaviour. She remembers the night that they finally talked about it and the process that occurred afterward, she shares her experience in this article in the hope that this will help others who are in a similar situation.

That night we decided we would both spend a week researching autism and then compare notes. We assured ourselves that there was obviously no way that he had autism, but we would do it all the same. All I can say is "thank God for the internet" that gave us all the information we needed.

Our doctor referred us to a paediatrician who thankfully was very versed in autism, (there are not a lot of them sadly). He was also up to date on and open to trying many of the interventions new research was showing could greatly help these children, such as 'Applied Behaviour Analysis', (otherwise known as Lovaas therapy), biomedical and diet intervention, etc.

We began to put strategies in place to help our son. I had read somewhere that it is vital to keep talking to children with autism, so they have less opportunity to disappear into their own little world. I would talk to our son all day long, taking him with me all around the house. He was not to be left on his own for more than 30 minutes in a day. We vocalised everything. "We are going up the stairs" as we plonked up the stairs together. "Cup, This is a Cup" (I would show him the cup and have him touch it).

We got a speech therapist who gave us strategies to make him talk. She explained the importance of non-verbal communication, such as eye contact, so when talking to him we would put our finger under his chin to make sure he looks at us first. "Look at me" became the most used phrase in our household. She advised us to break language down to the barest minimum, no long sentences, clear direct speech, "sit down", rather than "can you go and sit over there please?"

We had an Occupational therapist who helped with coordination etc. We were told it was important to make interacting with people fun. There were lots of tickling games, over the top praise.

We started an intensive therapy programme called Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA). This is where tasks are broken down into bite size pieces and once one part is mastered, they go to the next stage.

We also changed his diet. There is a lot of debate about what causes autism, some say it is genetic, others that it is caused by vaccination etc, but there is an autistic school of thought that says it is caused by a faulty digestive system, (often

referred to as 'leaky gut syndrome'). This is where because the gut is faulty, digestion is not going on the way it should do, peptides cause the gut to begin to leak and food that should be digested begins

to enter the blood stream and carries it to the brain which interferes with brain function. I personally believe there is a genetic disposition towards autism and I am not sure if "leaky gut" is a cause or rather a symptom of autism, but identify totally with the theory, as it is characterised by constipation and other characteristics that were all present in our son's infancy.

In order to rebuild the gut, certain biomedical interventions had to be employed. I learnt a new language of enzymes, amino acid, fatty acid, IQ (a brand of fish oil), zinc etc and learnt the essence of these on brain function and child development.

Our friends were fantastic. They began to research on the topic and would send us any information they could find (and still do). I read Lyn Hamilton's book, "Facing autism". It was an eye opener and very informative, as well as Catherine Maurice's excellent book, "Let me hear your voice", which gave me hope and introduced me to ABA. Catherine had 2 children on the autistic spectrum that both "recovered" and have gone on to be indistinguishable from their neuro-typical, "(normal)" peers. I also read "Sonrise", a book by Barry Kaufmann whose son also "recovered" from autism through a similar programme.

Today our son is a very happy, affectionate, handsome 10 year old boy. He attends a special school for 3 days a week and still continues his ABA programme at home for 2 days a week and it is to the principles of this programme that I attribute the majority of his progress.

Although he is now verbal, his speech is much delayed, but his vocabulary is broadening all the time. His self-help skills are also improving. What does the future hold? Only God knows. In the early days of his diagnosis I nearly drove myself insane by dwelling on questions like that. Thankfully we have come to a place where we can use our time concentrating on the things that are within our power to affect and are productive for our son.

First of all we love him unconditionally and ensure that we enjoy every moment that we can with him. We have made a choice decision to concentrate on the wonderful things about him. We will do our best to teach him independence skills, the rest is in God's hands and what better hands for him to be in?

Bebe Clement is a Speaker, Trainer and Business Consultant. Her motto is 'Put your signature on life' She has just written her first book, "How to go from employee to entrepreneur" – a 'must have resource for anybody looking to set up a small business. She can be contacted via Email: bebe@bebeclement.com Twitter: @bebeclement

THE BUSINESS OWNERS BEATING THEIR MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Jose Gonzalez



Running a business has helped Laura-Leigh turn her life around

Before starting her dog-grooming business Laura-Leigh DiGiovanni's life had spiralled out of control.

"I was living in a homeless shelter to get away from a man... we were both getting arrested, there were restraining orders," says the 47-year-old.

"So I was going in this downward sledge, really hitting rock bottom."

Suffering from anxiety disorder and depression, the Toronto native says she often couldn't face the world at all.

"For two years I couldn't leave the house without a panic attack. Men scared the hell out of me, everything scared the hell out of me."



There is now a waiting list for Laura-Leigh's services

Laura-Leigh was ultimately pulled from her abyss by a policeman who referred her to a Canadian mental health court.

These are criminal courts created to deal with people with mental health problems. The idea is that the judges try to focus more on helping the accused tackle their condition instead of just punishing them.

Laura-Leigh was put in the care of the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), a charity that gave her a place in one of its shelters in Toronto. As she started to get slowly back on track, Laura-Leigh was introduced to another Canadian charity that has transformed her life - Rise Asset Development.

Backed by a mixture of private and public money, Rise offers loans to people with mental health or addiction problems, to

help them set up their own businesses.

Laura-Leigh just needed to come up with an idea. A lone bright spot in her life was her dog Molly, who gave her the inspiration to set up Pawfect Cuts Pet Grooming in 2012.

With support from Rise, she has never looked back. Today she has a loyal customer base, and the waiting time for an appointment can be as long as four weeks.

While Laura-Leigh might seem a rarity, a lone example of someone with mental health problems succeeding in business, she is in fact far from alone.

In Greenville, South Carolina, Nichole Livengood is a serial entrepreneur who also happens to suffer from bipolar disorder.



Nichole Livengood says she can "multitask like a beast"

The 40-year-old currently runs two businesses, a public relations firm called NicLive PR, and food blog Gap Creek Gourmet.

Rather than seeing her mental condition as a handicap, Nichole says it can be a source of strength, and that her manic phases are a boost to her productivity.

"It's like a super power sometimes. I can multitask like a beast." However, she does add that she needs to manage her condition much like managing a business. *"I have to be very self-aware, and be very careful with my needs, and know my body,"* says Nichole.

Another woman who has succeeded in business while having mental health issues to deal with is 56-year-old Susan Jamieson.



Susan Jamieson's autism means she is great with numbers

Raised on Canada's Prince Edward Island, at the age of six she says she was diagnosed as "mentally retarded".

Although Susan would later learn that she was actually on the autism spectrum, she says that the initial diagnosis stuck through her childhood, and her unusual behaviour in the eyes of other children made her a target for bullying.

Being autistic means that Susan can struggle with social settings, but at the same time she has an affinity for numbers and logic.

She has found these latter skills very effective in the world of business, and says that as a result people have ignored her autism. "When people know you know how to make money, everyone is interested," she says.

After first working for Hilton Hotels and Resorts, at the age of 26 Susan launched her own sales and marketing agency, which was bought three years later by the Financial Times of Canada. She then went on to start a number of other successful businesses.

Susan's latest venture is Zoned Comics, a partnership with Marvel Comics to create anti-bullying comic books that give voices to children.



Zoned is a tie-up with comics giant Marvel

Run as a competition in Canada, children are invited to send in stories, either a personal experience of bullying, or about a superhero who prevents bullying through non-violent means. The best stories are then turned into comic strips by staff at Marvel.

The partnership has already produced its first book, which is available online and distributed in classrooms throughout Canada. The scheme makes money through sponsorship and advertising.

Back at Pawfect Cuts Pet Grooming, Laura-Leigh says she first started to build up the business by offering her services for free. "People would come, and I would groom their dog for free, and then they'd want to give me a tip, or insist on paying me. It evolved from that."

She adds: "It brought me out of my shell, and I had to talk to people."



Laura-Leigh says that running a successful business is "an incredible feeling"

The Rise programme that backed Laura-Leigh started in 2010, and has so far issued more than 190 loans at a total value of more than 600,000 Canadian dollars (\$450,000; £370,000). Rise says that so far a quarter of the loans have already been paid back.

Sally Wilkie, a Rise project manager, adds that the organisation works to offer participants all the help they need, including matching them with a mentor.

While most people might think that living with a mental illness could only ever be a hindrance to running your own business, Dr Sean Kidd, a clinical scientist at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto, disagrees.

He points to the fact that many successful businesses are built from the life experiences of their owners, and that living with a mental illness offers a unique one.

"Some of the insights that having had a mental illness might provide may actually give the person an angle on the [business] market that makes them more competitive," says Dr Kidd.

Laura-Leigh says starting her business has changed her life. "I can plan for my future, I have an RSP [registered savings plan] for my kids, I'm not going to the food bank anymore. It is an incredible feeling."

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THE FORMER DRUG ADDICT WHO FOUND GOD AND BUILT A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS

Julie Griffiths



Ryan's life had spiralled out of control in his teens

At his lowest point, Ryan Longmuir took drugs every day *"just to feel normal"*.

He was also dealing them, and at one point faced a possible jail sentence.

Born in the Scottish new town of Cumbernauld, Ryan began experimenting with drugs when he was 12, initially because he was curious and had fallen in with likeminded friends.

"I tried everything - cocaine, Valium, ecstasy, speed, heroin... I'd go on benders for two or three days at a time, and I'd take five or 10 ecstasy tablets in one night," he says.

"From the age of 15 to 20 I took drugs every single day."

Thankfully for Ryan, everything changed when he was 20, and he has not touched drugs ever since. While the cynical may raise their eyebrows, Ryan, now 37, says he discovered God and quit overnight.

Without the drugs, he was able to get his life back, and aged 24 he launched a catering company called Regis Banqueting.

Today the 13-year-old business has blue-chip clients including mobile phone network O2, luxury carmaker Bentley, and investment bank JP Morgan.

With drugs his main interest and income at the time, Ryan left school in Cumbernauld, 13 miles north-east of Glasgow, aged 16.

Four years later he was dealing thousands of pounds worth of drugs a week, and if he continued he says it was clear that he would become a *"big time gangster drug dealer"*.

Trying to run away from his lifestyle, Ryan decided in 2000 to go to New Zealand for a year in search of a fresh start.

But it fell apart just two weeks after he arrived, when New Zealand customs intercepted a package of 100 ecstasy pills that Ryan had posted to himself from Scotland.



Ryan says that becoming a Christian changed his life

Facing a jail term, he phoned a friend back in Scotland. She said that she would pray for him and suggested he do the same.

Ryan says: *"I thought 'you're off your head' but I decided to try it, and I got down beside my bed and I said, 'I don't believe that there is a God, but if you're real then show me that you're real and I'll believe in you.'"*

Out on bail, Ryan had to go to the police station every two days, but his appetite for drugs was undiminished.

It was only when he met two female hitchhikers that things changed. The women took him out for lunch, then to church, and allowed him to move in to their home.

"That was when I thought there was maybe something to this because why would two complete strangers do that? That was the catalyst for change."

Ryan says that discovering his faith was fast, and the change immediate. Drugs suddenly lost all appeal, and he threw all the substances that he had into the sea, and has been clean ever since.

"I know most people who have been taking drugs don't have that experience. Most people do ok for a bit then they relapse. Everyone's journey is different but that was mine."

While Ryan escaped jail time in New Zealand, his visa was revoked, and he returned to Scotland in May 2000.

He joined a church, the evangelical Freedom City Church in Cumbernauld, met his wife and got married.



Tea is now Ryan's drink of choice

To earn money he got a job working with drug and alcohol addicts, where he was able to draw on his own experience to try to help others to quit.

However, when the funding for his role ran out a few years later he found himself without work. It was then that the opportunity to start his own business came about.

His church wanted a catering company to run the cafe attached to their conference centre on an ad hoc basis, and the then-pastor suggested Ryan might fit the bill.

Despite having little to no catering experience he jumped at the chance and Regis Banqueting was formed. Ryan attended catering college alongside running the cafe and learned as he went along.

"I had to phone my mother-in-law to ask how you make steak pie," he says.



The company has a number of blue-chip clients

"I was young and naive. If I knew what I know now, I probably wouldn't have started it."

To help Ryan expand the business into contract catering, the Princes Trust, the UK start-up support charity led by the Prince of Wales, gave him a £5,000 loan.

While Ryan says the first three years were tough, with him taking a salary of just £6,000 in year one, over time the clients and contracts got bigger.

Cumbernauld-based Regis Banqueting now has 65 staff - 20 full-time and 40 part-time, many of whom are seasonal - and annual turnover is £1.3m.

Meanwhile, Ryan and the company have won a number of awards including the Royal Bank of Scotland's young business of the year crown, and director of the year from the Institute of Directors organisation.



Ryan is now starting another company, alongside Regis

Prof Eleanor Shaw, head of the Hunter Centre for Entrepreneurship at the University of Strathclyde, says it is Ryan's motivation and enthusiasm that helps make him such a success.

"Catering is a really difficult market to be competitive in, but he has such energy," she says. *"He's very hardworking and is so motivated that it brushes off on everyone around him."*

Looking back on his troubled youth, Ryan says he knows that his life might have turned out very differently.

As a result he tries to help others who face addiction and poverty, for instance by employing former addicts and ex-offenders among his staff.

He is also in the process of starting another company, alongside Regis, that will focus on creating a brand of casual dining restaurants, the first to be launched in Glasgow next year. The plan is to expand across Scotland and the UK before going international.

"I say to my wife sometimes that it's amazing how we're making more money than a doctor or lawyer - and we're making sandwiches," says Ryan.

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MENTAL HEALTH THERAPY FOR MUSLIMS EMBRACES RELIGION

Alex Strangwayes-Booth

Muslims with mental health issues could be helped by embracing their beliefs and religious teachings, it is claimed. Traditionally, therapists have shied away from talking about religion as part of treatment - and can often see it as part of the illness.

But an NHS project based on research by Leeds University is "showing some individual signs of success".

Those behind the therapy say many Muslims do not get help because of stigma attached to mental illness.

'I was broken'

Samia, who is in her late 40s, has struggled with depression and is taking part in the project.

"I just felt like I had to constantly keep myself strong and put on a brave face. Deep inside I was actually broken," she says.

"When I actually fell apart, when I was at my lowest, I felt that there was something that I might have done to upset Allah, which is God."

Lead researcher professor Ghazala Mir, of the university's Leeds Institute of Health Sciences, says this is a common concern among Muslims, who are under-referred for mental health treatment.

"This stigma does involve the idea that maybe if you need treatment, there might be something wrong with your faith identity in the first place," she says.

"Not only is there under-referral but the outcomes for people who do actually get referred are not as good as the general population."

NHS data assessing the people accessing psychological therapies found depression can be more chronic for British Muslims, who tend to have lower rates of improvement.



Professor Ghazala Mir says Muslims are under-referred for mental health treatment

The NHS has a statutory duty to provide culturally appropriate care for its patients, but Prof Mir claims it often struggles to do so.

"There are a lot of inconsistencies amongst practitioners about how they interpret culturally appropriate," she adds.

Prof Mir also believes many therapists are mistaken in not considering faith as part of someone's culture.

"We know that in Muslim populations people can get quicker

results from faith-sensitive therapies that have been tested elsewhere in the world. They tend to use religion as a coping resource more than people in other religious groups."

Prof Mir has helped to create a new treatment, based on an existing form of **cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)** called behavioural activation. Following a successful pilot involving 20 patients, it is being provided by the NHS via a mental health charity in Leeds.

Patients on the course are asked if faith was part of their life when they were well.

Those who stopped their religious practice because of depression are re-introduced slowly using a self-help booklet, which highlights passages from the Koran that illustrate "even people with strong faith" can become depressed and that it does not mean God is displeased.



Samia says her treatment with a traditional therapist "felt like half a journey", but that when she started to use the new booklet her life began to change.

"There are some teachings in here that help me reflect that the Koran actually

acknowledges there is depression, there is grief, there is hardship upon you," she says.

"God is actually giving me those tools. So it really strengthened my 'imam', which is my faith.

"I'm happy that I can live my life with my religion and that I've got the support of teachings from the Koran."

Therapists left trial

Richard Garland runs the team at the Touchstone Mental Health Charity which is providing the treatment to some of its Muslim clients.

He says several therapists left the initial trial of the treatment for a number of reasons.

Some were worried about imposing religion on clients, others said they did not know enough about Islam, were resistant to the idea of using religion in therapy at all, or felt religion was not a helpful framework for treating depression.

However, Mr Garland claims this type of religiously-centred treatment can help.

"What has been produced here is a type of therapy that takes full account of people's faith, this particular faith, and links it to people's value framework. So it's a very practical application of someone's belief system."

The people behind the treatment say they hope it can be rolled out across the country and be extended to other faith groups.

Article & Image Credits: Adapted from www.bbc.co.uk/news

Acknowledgements

We give Almighty God all the glory for the grace, wisdom and favour to start this initiative and promote a healthy living in our communities. We are grateful to our communities for the opportunity to serve them in this capacity.

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We extend our deep appreciation to all Royal City Covenant Partners for your prayers, generous gifts and support; thank you for partnering with the King's work at Royal City, Sevenoaks.

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We are grateful to you our reader and friend, member and visitor to the Healthy Communities Hub; thank you for engaging with this initiative and best wishes for a healthy you, healthy communities.

Yinka Oshin
Pastor, RCCG, Royal City, Sevenoaks

Tribute to Partners of Royal City, Sevenoaks

We extend our profound gratitude to all our Leaders, Mentors and Partners for their prayers, love and support in the work of the Kingdom.

Lead Contact

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 Pastor (Mrs) Folu Adeboye
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Royal City

SEVENOAKS

ABOUT US

We are a parish of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, planted in Sevenoaks, Kent. We commenced services in May 2014.

OUR PURPOSE

Our purpose is to **make, mature and mobilise** disciples to be Christ-like, fulfil the great commission and walk in their God-given destiny.

OUR VISION

In fulfillment of the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18 – 20, our vision is to use various strategies to **connect communities with the message of The KING – Jesus Christ.**

OUR MISSION MANDATE

- To make heaven.
- To take as many people with us.
- To have a member of RCCG in every family of all nations.
- To accomplish No. 1 above, holiness will be our lifestyle.
- To accomplish No. 2 and 3 above, we will plant churches within five minutes walking distance in every city and town of developing countries and within ten minutes driving distance in every city and town of developed countries.

We will pursue these objectives until every Nation in the world is reached for the Lord Jesus Christ.

OUR CORE VALUES

Biblically-based, culturally relevant, evangelistic, church planting, community, discipleship, excellence, grace & stewardship

Our Commitment

Our commitment is to provide a forum where you will discover the life promised by The King and be empowered to experience the abundance of the life promised by The King in John 10:10,

“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”(NKJV)

We are committed to support you to discover the life promised by The King and for you to embrace this promised life to the fullest potential. We are determined to encourage you to move from just living to experiencing the abundant life in Jesus Christ.

EDITORIAL TEAM



Yinka Oshin

Yinka Oshin is a Christian Entrepreneur, a seasoned author and a researcher. He is passionate about using innovative strategies to inspire and change lives. He is the author of Judge Theo – The Final Judgment, God Has Got Talent – ME, How to Become Debt Free by Discovering Your

Talent - A Seven Steps Model and numerous other books.

He is the Editor, The Talent Journal and the CEO/Co-founder, The Talent University – a publication and training outfit that advocates maximising the potential of your talent for your personal wealth creation and the benefit of your community. He serves as Pastor @ Royal City, Sevenoaks.



Foluke Oshin

Foluke Oshin is a psychologist specialising in the psychology of education and early years learning. She is passionate about nurturing and supporting children to fulfill their potential. She is a psalmist, song writer and has released a bestselling music single - Be the C.H.A.N.G.E

She is the Managing Editor, The Talent Journal and the Director of Programmes, The Talent University – a publication and training outfit that advocates maximising the potential of your talent for your personal wealth creation and the benefit of your community. She serves as Assistant Pastor @ Royal City, Sevenoaks.



Celestina Omolaja

Celestina Omolaja holds degrees in Microbiology, Mental Health and Biomedical Sciences. She is currently studying for an MSc in Clinical Embryology and Assisted Reproduction Technology (IVF). She works as a Mental Health Nurse. She loves listening to music, watching documentaries and

sports. She serves as Head of Children Church @ Royal City, Sevenoaks.



Nkiru Orazulume

Nkiru Orazulume is legal practitioner. She currently works as a Mental Health Nurse. She is passionate in providing support to people with mental health problems and integrating them back into the community. She loves travelling; she is an active donor and volunteer for charitable projects

focused on poverty alleviation. She serves as Head of Welfare @ Royal City, Sevenoaks.



Abi Oriri

Abi Oriri is a Human Resources and Marketing consultant. She is a passionate advocate against various forms of injustice and oppression. She loves singing and swimming. She serves as Head of Royal Reach (Outreach) @ Royal City, Sevenoaks.



Adeoluwa Adeyemi

Adeoluwa Adeyemi is currently studying for a degree in Biomedical Sciences. He is passionate about photography and plays the guitar. He serves as member Heads Up (Youth Church) @ Royal City, Sevenoaks.



Oreoluwa Adeyemi

Oreoluwa Adeyemi is currently studying for a degree in Architecture. He is passionate about music and regularly leads worship. He serves as member Heads Up (Youth Church) @ Royal City, Sevenoaks.



Ifeoluwa Adeyemi

Ifeoluwa Adeyemi is currently studying for a degree in Economics. He is passionate about music, plays the keyboard and regularly leads worship. He holds musical events for Youths and Young Adults. He serves as member Heads Up (Youth Church) @ Royal City, Sevenoaks.



Tolu Akinyode

Tolu Akinyode currently works as a Support Worker in Mental Health. He loves football and swimming. He serves as member Logistics Team @ Royal City, Sevenoaks.

CONTRIBUTORS



Gabriel & Florence Ogunbiyi

Gabriel & Florence Ogunbiyi are the Resident Pastors at The Redeemed Christian of Church, Rivers of Living Water, Thamesmead where

they host the regular monthly interdenominational programme 'Hour of Glory' a programme design to equip and empower the saints. They are the Author of the book, 'What Do You Want?' They are blessed with four wonderful children.



Ade Awonaiké

Ade Awonaiké is the Pastor of RCCG, Royal City, East Grinstead and has overall responsibility for the Church. He is a prolific teacher of deep truths of God's life changing word with great insight and simplicity. He is also a course facilitator at the Kingdom Life Bible Institute, London.

He has served in various capacities within the body of Christ over the years as Sunday School teacher, Youth Leader, Head Steward to name a few. Ade is a Geographical Information Systems and Data Consultant by profession and also pursuing a doctorate degree in Data Science. He is married to Funke and they are blessed with two adorable children. He can be contacted via Email: ade@rceg.church



Christy Iyaniwura

Christy Iyaniwura is a medical doctor. She is passionate about providing practical solutions to alleviate public health issues in the community. She is a lecturer in Further Education Colleges, teaching science, health and social care.

She holds a Masters in Public Health from London School of Tropical Hygiene.



Tolu Akinyemi

Tolu' Akinyemi was born in Akure, the sleepy capital city of Ondo State, Nigeria.

His writings have appeared in a number of notable anthologies such as 'Verses From The Sun', an Association of Nigerian Authors anthology, 'A Way With Words' (2014 & 2016), a Great British Write Off Anthology and other printed and online outlets. His poetry play 'The Big Society'; written

for The Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust, London was performed at The Greenwich-Lewisham Young People's Theatre, London. In 2017, he was named on the 'Nigerian Writers' Awards' list of '100 Most Influential Nigerian Writers under 40' and also won the 'Poetry Writer of the Year' Award.

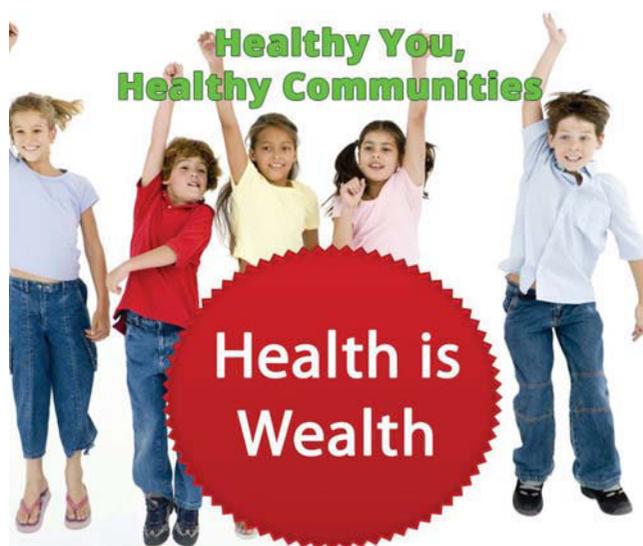
You can find Tolu on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter (@poetolu). He believes in 'The Big Bang Theory' TV Show, Google and Jesus. Tolu currently lives in London, England.



Bebe Clement

Bebe Clement is a Speaker, Trainer and Business Consultant. Her motto is 'Put your signature on life' She has just written her first book, "How to go from employee to entrepreneur" – a 'must have resource for anybody looking to set up a small business. She can be

contacted via Email: bebe@bebeclement.com Twitter: @bebeclement



VENUE: Sevenoaks Community Centre, Cramptons Road, TN14 5DN
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ADVISORY TEAM



Obi Orazulume

Obi Orazulume is a Medical Practitioner. He is an Evangelist and a Kingdom Treasurer by calling. He is the author of *Overcoming Financial Barriers*. He believes everyone has the potential to become a kingdom wealth practitioner. He is passionate about using innovative strategies to raise kingdom treasurers to support the kingdom

business. He is the CEO/Founder of Kingdom Treasurer Club, an organisation that is focused on nurturing, supporting and releasing kingdom treasurers. He is the Chair, Board of Trustees @ Royal City, Sevenoaks



Dupe Adeniran

Dupe Adeniran is a Nurse/Midwife. She has extensive experience working in hospitals and medical outreach projects for international organisations including WHO. She currently works in a Nursing and Care Home for the Elderly. She is working to develop her interest in leadership training. She is an Elder @ Royal City, Sevenoaks.



Bunmi John

Bunmi John is an ardent believer in Christ Jesus. She is growing in Christian Maturity by attending the "School of obedience and absolute surrender". She currently works as a Careers Adviser with the National Careers Service. She is a Member, Board of Trustees @ Royal City, Sevenoaks.



Sandy Cottington

Sandy is a consultant in personal beauty and grooming; she has extensive experience working in retail, events, facials make-ups and aromatherapy. She is passionate about supporting others to find their calling in life. She is an Elder @ Royal City, Sevenoaks.



James Olaleye

James Olaleye is a Lawyer, Teacher and a Community Leader. He has vast experience in building relationships and handling mediation. He currently works in Management in the social enterprise sector. He is a Minister of the Gospel and serves as trustee for charitable organisations. He is a Member, Board of Trustees @ Royal City, Sevenoaks.



Ben Irvani

Ben Irvani is a multi-talented and resourceful person; he was an active DJ for many years. He has vast experience in facilities management and customer service; he currently works in a Garden and Nursery Centre. He serves as Head of Facilities @ Royal City, Sevenoaks.



Sam Olusanya

Sam Olusanya is a retired Accountant; he is an Alumnus of School of Discipleship. He was an active sportsman as a young adult. He serves as Director, Sunday School and Head of Finance at RCCG, Royal City, Sevenoaks. He is an Elder @ Royal City, Sevenoaks.



Jide Arowolo

Jide Arowolo holds BSc & MSc degrees in Agricultural Economics. He is a certified Cisco Security engineer and currently works as a Business Analyst. He is a multi-talented music artiste and producer. He has a vast experience of leading worship, song writing and music performance. He is a prolific songwriter, minister, teacher and conference speaker. He serves as Director of Music @ Royal City, Sevenoaks.



Bisi Adeniran

Bisi Adeniran is a retired Teacher and a Chartered Accountant. He currently works as a Support Worker in Mental Health. He loves reading and going for walks. He is working to develop his interest in writing. He is an Elder @ Royal City, Sevenoaks.



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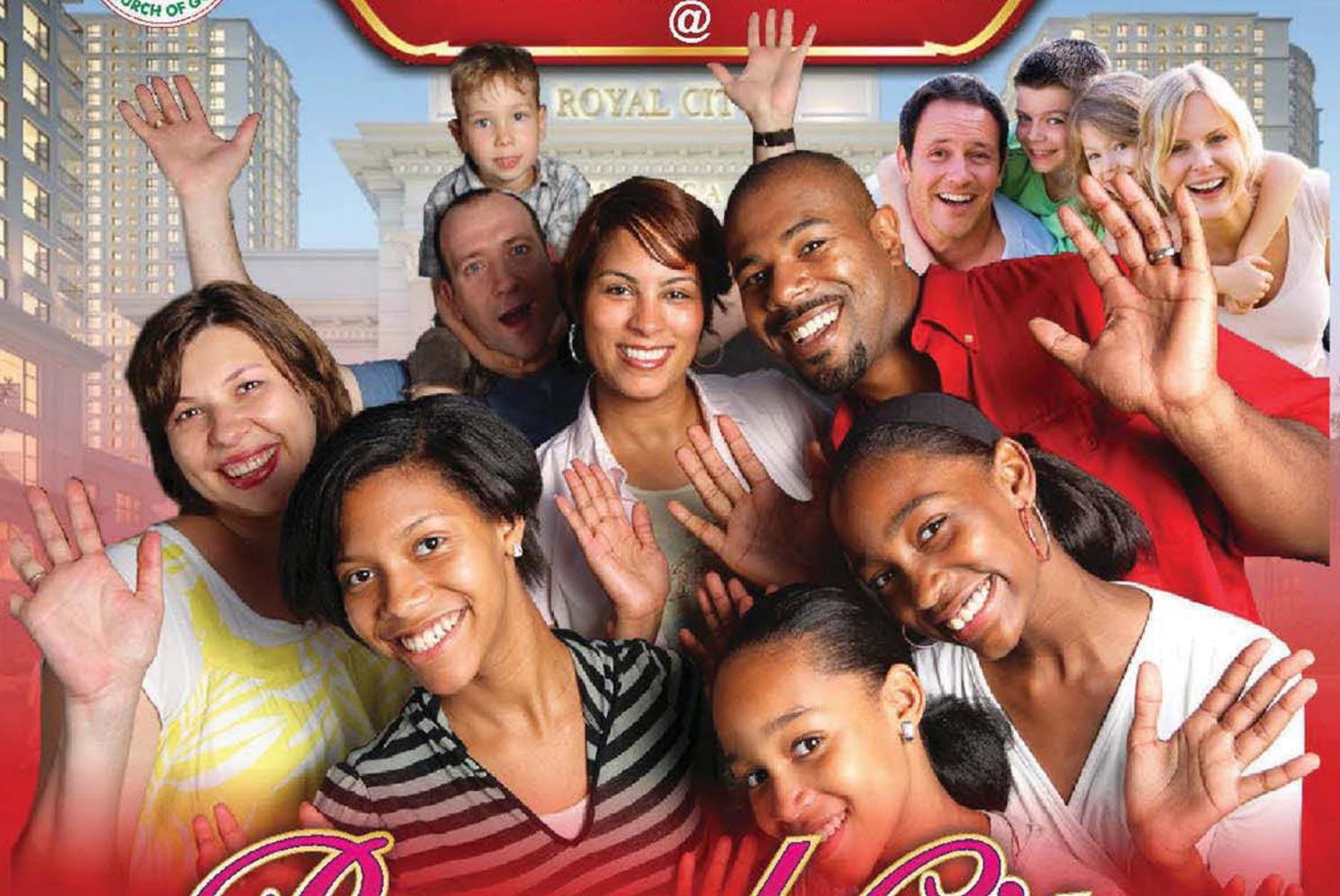
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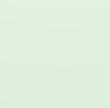
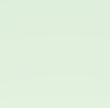
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