



Welcome to the Vision Support newsheet. We've added a bit of fun to our logo this month by making it look like a Christmas pudding! Christmas is going to feel and look very different to a lot of people this year and could be an isolating and lonely time. So over the next few pages we have put together some tips for looking after yourself over the festive season, audiobook reviews of titles we think are well worth a listen, good news stories and some helpline numbers that might come in handy over the winter months.

We would like to take a moment to say the news of the death of Phil Rigby was received with a mixture of shock and great sadness by all at Vision Support. Phil was a valued member of our Board for many years, indeed he was the Chair for some of that time. He and his wife Anne have always been active supporters of this charity and Phil will be very much missed. Our condolences and thoughts are with Anne at this sad and difficult time.

You may recall hearing about the funding we had earlier this year which we publicised in our news sheet back in May. We've had some great feedback and we'd just like to share one of the thank you letters we received with you:

"When I received the letter from you, I thought it was a scam, however, when I applied I found that the letter had been to inform me that your charity had some funding given you, and to my amazement on Friday afternoon when the post man in all that awful rain rang the door bell and handed me a package. On opening the parcel I found the device that I'd asked for. How delighted I was to receive something that I wanted but couldn't afford. In this time of uncertainty with people feeling frightened, scared, lonely and sad. So I'm writing to thank you so very much." - Service User, Cheshire

Winter Wellbeing

Five Ways to Look After Yourself Over the Festive Season

Plan ahead! Whether it's phone calls with family and friends, trying your hand at tactile Christmas crafts, or simply curling up with a good book for a few hours, make sure that you know you have something to look forward to each day during the festive season if you can. We know that for many people, Christmas will be a particularly difficult time this year, but giving your day a structure can make a big difference.

Remember that there is no wrong way to feel about this Christmas. For some people, it may be providing something to look forward to. For others, it may be an isolating time. Whether you are someone who is finding comfort in the festive season, or someone who is finding it particularly hard, your feelings make sense and matter. You don't need to feel guilty for wanting people to just stop talking about Christmas, or for wanting to focus on something warm and comforting in the midst of everything that's happening.

Return to old favourites! Whether it's a nostalgic movie you haven't seen in ages, that well-loved book you've been meaning to re-read, or a family tradition such as a favourite trivia game, this is a great time of year for revisiting the things you love and indulging in some cosy reminiscing. Whether you're by yourself or surrounded by family, there's something very comforting about returning to things that you know you love.

Get outside if you can. We're not suggesting that you run a marathon this Christmas, but going for a walk to a local park or even just around the block can break up your day and make you feel a little better. If you have a garden, wrap up and get out there for a little fresh air. If you can't go out, you could bring the outside in by decorating with festive greenery or flowers.

Talk to people. Whether it's a family member, a friend, or a telephone befriender or listening service, try to keep in regular contact with other people. You don't have to talk about your feelings—although that can be helpful for your wellbeing. Sometimes just telling someone about your day or talking to a friend about something you watched on TV last night can lift your mood. Remember that during the run-up to Christmas, we at Vision Support are still available at **01244 381 515** if you would like to talk.

Christmas Support

It's good to have someone to speak to over Christmas. With local lockdowns and changing guidelines it's hard to know what the Christmas period will be like this year. If you want to reach out for some support or even just a chat over this time, below are some numbers which are available 24/7 over the Christmas season.

Samaritans provides emotional support to anyone in emotional distress, struggling to cope in England and Ireland - **116 123**

The Silver Line is a free confidential helpline offering information, friendship, advice to older people 24 hours a day. - **0800 4 70 80 90**

National Domestic Abuse Helpline call for free and in confidence, 24-hours a day. - **0808 2000 247**

Shout It is free to text Shout on **85258** from all major mobile networks in the UK. They can help with a range of issues including anxiety, depression, relationship problems, or if you're feeling overwhelmed.

One of our service users in Vale Royal has had a piece of artwork submitted for a digital artwork show this year. Jon Westerby submitted a piece called 'Java The Last Tiger'. We are pleased to



report it has been sold on eBay and raised a whopping fifty seven pounds for charity which is excellent news. We look forward to seeing more art work from Jon in the new year!

Image description:
bright lively abstract painting of a tiger in the jungle.

Audiobook Corner

Like a lot of other people at the moment, I haven't been taking trips to my local library as I normally would, but I have still been using my library to download audiobooks via the library app **BorrowBox**.

One of my favourite audiobooks this year has been *The Starless Sea* by Erin Morgenstern—a work of fiction full of mystery, twists and turns! It's well worth a listen if you feel like trying a new author this month. If you'd be interested in using an app to download and listen to your audiobooks, or are just interested in audiobooks in general but aren't sure where to start please get in touch with us on **01244 381515** or email us at **Information@visionsupport.org.uk**

Book Review: The Whisper Man, by Alex North

This book was probably one of my favourite reads of 2020. Chilling, and written with an economy of language that was refreshing and effective. Although this is a story about a serial killer, it is also about the fraught relationship between Tom Kennedy and Jake, his autistic 6-year-old son. Beautifully written.” - Gary Twigg

Audiobook Review: *Lady in Waiting: My Extraordinary Life in the Shadow of the Crown*, written and narrated by Anne Glenconner

(Released by Audible 17/10/19 and will keep you absorbed for a whole 9 hours and 8 mins.)

“This audiobook is an account of a remarkable life of a lady in waiting to Princess Margaret . It is an amazing life story marked by deep tragedy along the way. The author who was the eldest child of the 5th Earl of Leicester, describes a childhood living at Holkham hall in Norfolk, her turbulent marriage to Colin Tenant Lord Glenconner who becomes the owner of Mustique and life in court up until the death of Princess Margaret in 2002. The book is fascinating, funny and warm. The author narrates her own book beautifully.

Well worth a listen if you like autobiographies.” - Mim Jones