

 **Bath** Mind Bath**FREE**

Wellbeing

Bath and North East Somerset

**ART AS
THERAPY**

Creativity to
support
your wellbeing

**EASY LOW
COST RECIPES**

from Food for Thought

**MINDFUL
COLOURING**

from Toogood Tattoo

Image by Jack Duplock

“Creating art is such a great mental distraction, it gives us a break from our usual thoughts. You don’t have to be creative, it’s just the process of creating makes you switch off and is almost like a form of meditation.”

Emma Taylor, Artist

www.bathmind.org.uk

Get creative to support your wellbeing

Creativity comes in many shapes and forms. It doesn't require any special skill, training or tools. Creativity is available to all, we just have to take the step to give it a try!

Creativity is a form of self-expression, it allows us to feel free and to live in the moment, aiming to focus on the creativity alone. This can benefit our health and wellbeing, as it allows our mind to relax, reducing stress and 'being in the moment'.

If you're not sure where to start, we have some great colouring pages in this issue, from Toogood Tattoo. Colouring is a helpful way to increase focus and start practising mindfulness. Try to focus on the activity - study the shapes, think about the colours, see the image come together as you progress.

There are many other opportunities to add creativity to your daily life - here are some you could try.

Try creative writing.

Write a poem or a short story.

Revamp an old item of clothing, or a sofa cushion.

Doodle, sketch, draw, paint or colour.

Cook something new and think about how you present it when you serve it.

**Get musical!
Play an instrument or sing along to your favourite music.**

Craft something knit, sew, crochet or make something from clay, wood, paper or recycled materials.

For lots more creative wellbeing activities, visit Bath Mind's website www.bathmind.org.uk/resources/wellbeing-activities/

ART as THERAPY

Exhibitions curated
by Jason Dorley-Brown



Artist and Bath Mind Ambassador, Jason Dorley-Brown, has curated a stunning exhibition, with the purpose of raising awareness and much needed funds for the incredibly important work that BathMind do for the local community.

The exhibition is a group show with 52 artists, most of whom are local, exhibiting an eclectic mix of artistic mediums from the written word, through painting, illustration and photography to sculpture and much more.

“Achieving positive mental health is a challenge that many of us face, and artists are no different in that respect.

“Each artist that has contributed work to this exhibition has shared their own experience of mental health issues, with a written statement alongside their work describing their personal understanding of the connection between their art practise and positive mental health.

“We do hope that you enjoy the art and that maybe one will bring a smile, or possibly inspire you to consider your own creative outlet. Hopefully this exhibition will help promote conversations concerning ‘Art as Therapy’ as well.

Each artist has generously donated 30% of the proceeds from sales to Bath Mind as awareness of the wonderful work of Bath Mind, and the support they offer.

Although affiliated to the national Mind, Bath Mind are run and funded entirely independently. They rely heavily on local fundraising, such as this exhibition, to help support people in need throughout our community.”

We share some of the images from the exhibition here, along with some of the artists’ experience of mental health issues and their thoughts on how they feel art supports their wellbeing.

All exhibited works are for sale.

**Exhibitions run until the end of April at:
Milsom Place, Bath
RUH Bath - Art at the Heart**



Siena Barnes



break the glass

“Art is both malady and cure. Art offers a way out of my melancholia and a way into a world that I struggle to understand. On my worst days I paint myself into existence. Art reminds me that I am a creator, I believe we all are, crazily making our collective mark on the world. Art bestows me with a magic I wouldn’t otherwise possess... Every artwork is a reclaiming the self. I paint to reclaim my mind, body and soul.”

“Art helps to take me away from the chronic pain of arthritis and during the lockdowns it helped to ease the heightened sense of anxiety and threat of Covid. Outdoor spaces calm me, and flowers bring me joy so by using them as inspiration, letting myself paint the colours and ink their shapes in a mindful abstract way, I feel peaceful and in a happy place.”

Mel Brooke



Jason Dorley Brown



“My art practice, as a creative outlet, is a tool that allows me to create and maintain a positive mental state. For me the process of creating art is far more important than the end result. It is the process that allows me to focus on the positivity needed to fight my demons, to silence the black dog.”

STEWIE



“Creating important contemporary and historical figures in a public space allows instant accessibility in a medium of graffiti/street art that encourages immediate conversation and debate across a multigenerational audience.”

Garett Morlan



“Making art is my Zen and absolutely a daily therapy and creative outlet, the process of making it is almost more enjoyable than the final product. It is my safe space and allows me to decompress and find inner joy and tranquillity. In my art, I can find a true meditative state that helps relieve stress and it brings me so much peace and joy. Sharing my art is the icing on the cake, watching people react and enjoy my art is a therapy in it of itself. I feel so fortunate to have had a place to find an outlet and a career in something I truly love.”

Rick Guest



“Art is a way of expressing the non verbal, on my own personal journey this has been invaluable way to access parts of my unconsciousness. What I make is then a reflection of my internal world, by looking at what I make I see myself! It is a way of stepping on the healing journey within.... Making art for me has been a healing tool and now I guide others, I believe we are here at this time to be creative and to dream a new word into being. “

Sibylle Henning



Often my drawings and paintings are the result of an experience or observation sometimes painful, sometimes joyful, or intriguing and yielding an insight: all that precipitating in a visual image. For me this is one way of dealing with perceived reality - a catharsis, often therapeutic in its positive effect on my state of mind. They present a kind of working through a particular problem - not only pictorial.”

Mark Johnson



“I have always loved art and since I was young have both drawn and painted. ... about 20 years ago (I) became sick and had to review my life. I spent five years without a single replenishing sleep while fighting severe Restless Leg Syndrome and Generalised Anxiety Disorder. My life was falling apart! I needed something to take me out of the downward spiral that my life was following. I started drawing and found I still loved it... My art has helped me to get through the most difficult time of my life and 20 years on, it's still a big part of my life.”

Steve Nichols

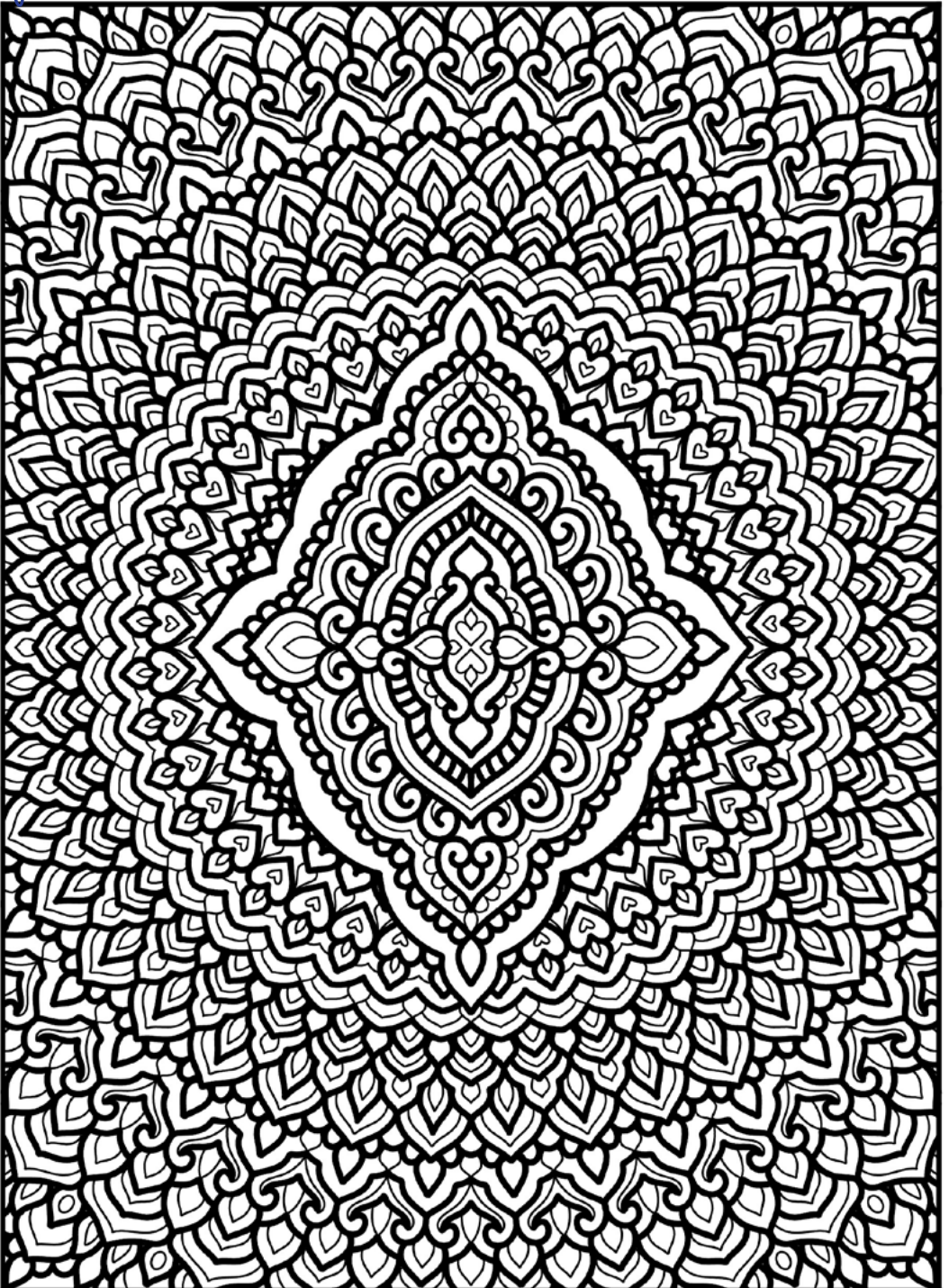


“I am a great believer in ‘laughter is the best medicine’ it keeps me very level, I try to find humour in most situations.”

Eleanor Tasker



“There’s something undeniably powerful, and well documented, about tasks where the hand, eye and mind are able to be completely absorbed in the pursuit of creating something new, that perhaps, not surprisingly, can offer a much needed ‘balm’ for the mind.”



Nicola Davis



“I am a self-taught artist and have been painting on silk for 9 years. I first learnt this technique during my A-Levels and then had to take a gap year whilst recovering from anorexia. I painted almost every day and as my mental health improved, I realised that I wanted this to become my full-time career. I am now recovered and an ambassador for Beat, the UK’s leading eating disorder charity. Whilst I still struggle with depression and anxiety, I use my art to share my story and to inspire hope in others who may be going through similar experiences.”

Phil Cloak



“I love the ocean. Grew up there and my heart never left. Never feel more at peace than when I’m in it, on it or near it... Something about the sheer scale of it and how small and insignificant we are that puts all of life’s problems

Andy Goodman



“Light-heartedness and humour have always been key in my creative process. These elements help me stay in the sunshine and it’s always rewarding to pass this on to others.”

Tracy Reece-Olivierre



“Art therapy to me is the quiet expression of the self through a medium that does not need to make sense to anyone else.”

Lizzie Dowling-Nash



“Nature is a way to connect to the earth, to regain the feeling of living and growing.”

Jack Duplock



“Thinking about the connection between my art practice and positive mental health. I believe in the power of creativity as a positive, performative process of self-discovery. Though sometimes making art can be a struggle for me. I have moments of anxiety caused by the fear of failure, failure in my work but also failure as an artist. I’ve managed to control this through embracing failure as an integral part of the process of discovery, often leading to unexpected paths in the journey of development. I’ve found the ritual of walking in nature as a positive way of maintaining a sense of wellbeing. That is one reason why I’m drawn to nature as a motif in my work.”

Joe Short



“Having had moments away from art when working on other projects, I feel at first-hand how therapeutic all art practice can be. For me simply taking time to immerse yourself in an activity with no answers or necessary requirements means your mind is free from any of the constraints experienced outside of it. It is a crucial tool in my well-being tool kit.”

Kelly Preedy



“No matter how much I moan about the process, or how much the process makes me suffer physically, the overwhelming sense of peace, calm, comfort, and completeness I feel when lost in making my art, is worth it.”

Fiona Smith



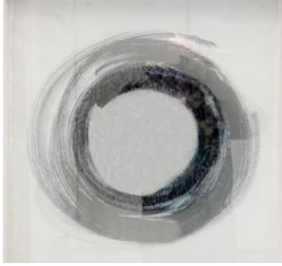
“Art and walking go hand in hand for me giving me a passion and purpose in life. Both give me much needed calm to reprogram my brain and space to be emotional if I feel like it. I also find the more I concentrate on the beauty around me the less headspace I can give to negative thoughts and anxieties....”

Jo Nye



“The unloved & broken are welcome in my world! In 2015 my elderly father was becoming increasingly ill and as the only remaining family member, I was in charge of his care situation. I found this an extremely difficult situation to navigate at the time for various reasons and looked to art as a coping mechanism. It started with a Mexican folk art style piece and luckily the idea unexpectedly took off and Tin City then became an absolute focus for dealing with anxiety. It also gives me great joy & happiness and a sense of wellbeing to see the smiles on people’s faces when they look at my work and that is a wonderful feeling!”

Carole Waller Kate Davies



Carole's husband, ceramicist Gary Wood, once said 'Carole is only completely in the moment when she is painting'.



"My work has always helped me to keep on top of things emotionally. The subject matter is warm and cheerful, colourful, and positive."

Emma Taylor



"Creating art is such a great mental distraction, it gives us a break from our usual thoughts. You don't have to be creative, it's just the process of creating makes you switch off and is almost like a form of meditation."

Janice Fisher Heidi Laughton Sophie Davis



When creating her artwork, Jan finds that whales, water and often an air of weightlessness and grace can engage a serenity and positivity.



Focusing in on a painting is an escapism which brings her peace in an otherwise hectic world.



"Being present in the moment, closely observing and recording the beauty of nature brings many positive benefits for my mental health and brings a sense of calm amid the chaos of life."

Helen Stanfield

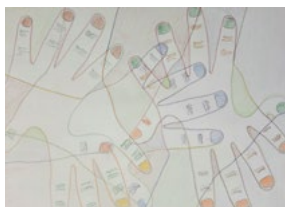


"...it always provides me with a sense of quiet and calm that pushes everything else away for a while, and almost resets my sense of what's important and what can wait."

Polly Gough



"...I developed a love of printmaking and find the process both mindful and meditative. My creative practice remains an essential part of maintaining mental wellbeing."



“I love being creative. It helps having the stencils as a structure but it’s also nice to freestyle. I like the use of colour and the way it can make a picture happy. I feel happy when I draw”

“I find it very calming to sit and use the shapes to create something. I find it therapeutic to focus on the colours. I got lost in it and it took my mind off other things which was calming and therapeutic too.”

“Drawing makes me feel relaxed. I get more confident when someone says my picture is good. When I draw, it comes from the heart.”

“I get totally lost in the drawings. It gets me away from reality. It feels like I’ve had a break after doing some drawing. It gives me a sense of fulfilment. The fact I produce something is a nice feeling.”

“I find drawing takes my mind off things that are happening. It allows me to focus on something different. Colouring in feels natural and calming. I lose track of time”.

“When I’m doing the drawing, I’m just doing it without thinking and it’s a chance to be spontaneous. I try to be creative. I followed some guidance and saw what others were doing. It’s the first time I’ve done anything like this since I was at school over 60 years ago”

Visit Bath Mind’s website to find out about groups and courses.

www.bathmind.org.uk

Lentil Dahl

RECIPE

Ingredients

(Serves 4)

250g red lentils
1 teaspoon ground turmeric
3/4 teaspoon fine sea salt
2 tablespoons sunflower oil
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 onion, thinly sliced
Small bunch of parsley/coriander, chopped



Method

Put the lentils in a pan with 800ml cold water and bring to the boil. Skim off any scum, then stir in the turmeric and salt.

Lower the heat and simmer, uncovered, for about 15 minutes, stirring until the lentils have broken down completely and you have a puree – the consistency of a thick soup or thin porridge.

You can whisk in a little hot water from a just-boiled kettle if you need to thin it a bit. Keep warm in the pan.

When the dahl is just about done, heat the sunflower oil in a frying pan over a medium heat. Add the cumin seeds and fry for a couple of minutes until browned and fragrant. Add the onion and fry fairly briskly for 5-10 minutes until golden brown, even just a smidge burnt.

Tip the mixture on to the hot lentils in the pan, cover and leave for 5 minutes, then stir the onions and cumin.

Taste and adjust the seasoning.

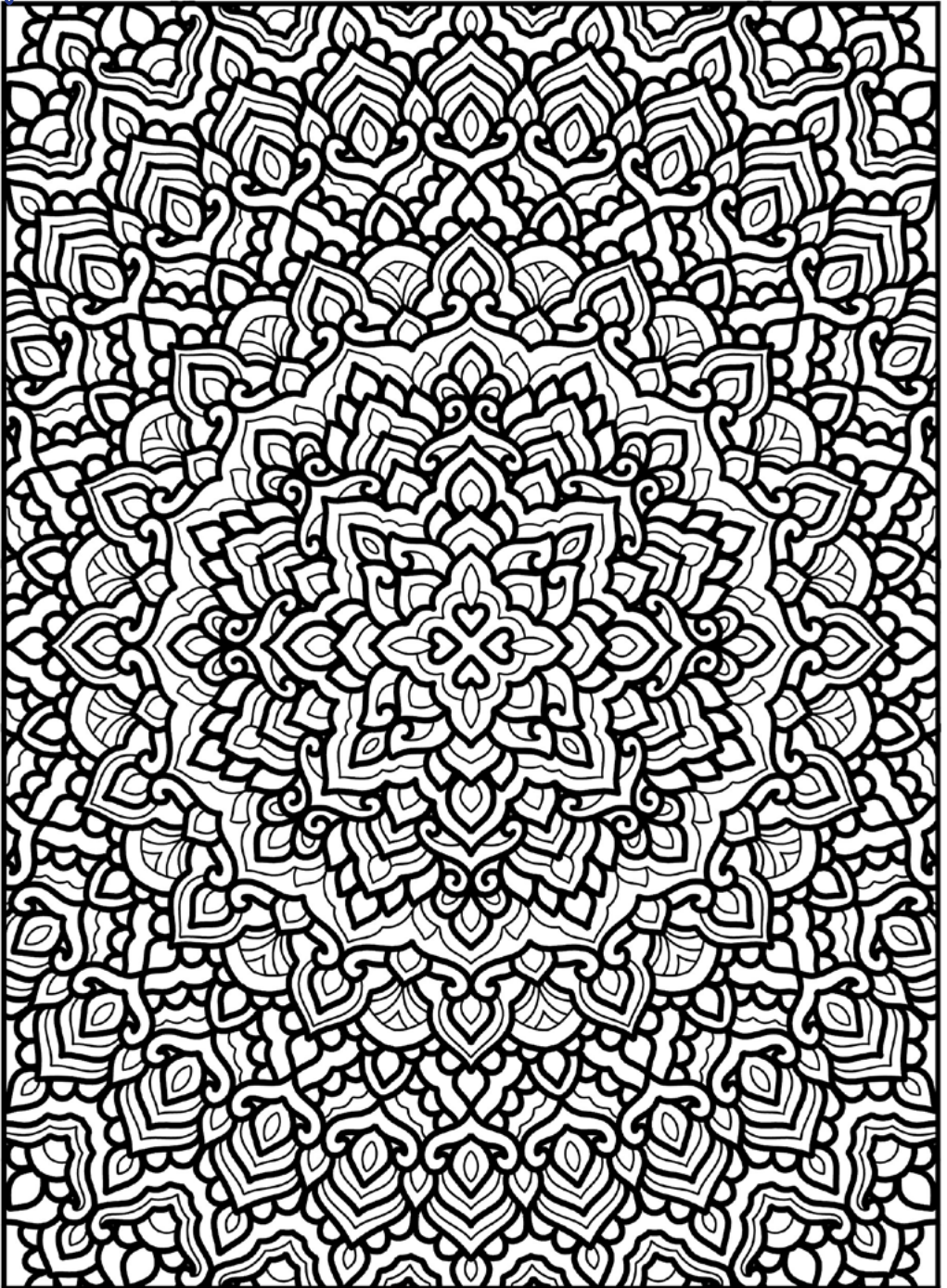
This is very good with coriander, parsley or mint sprinkled on top – but that's not essential.

This is a great low cost meal which can be served alone, with rice or with flatbread, such as nann bread.

Visit Bath Mind's website for more recipes, and to find out about Food for Thought groups and courses.

www.bathmind.org.uk





Chickpea, Spinach & Potato Curry

RECIPE

Ingredients

(Serves 2-3)

1 large potato
1 tablespoon oil – sunflower/vegetable
1 finely chopped onion
2 cloves of garlic chopped or crushed
Pinch of salt
1 tablespoon curry paste
1 can chickpeas
250ml water or stock
1 tinned coconut milk
1 can tinned tomatoes
½ tablespoon chutney
Handful fresh or frozen spinach



Method

1. Peel potatoes and cut into bite size chunks
2. Heat oil in a saucepan or casserole dish, add onion, garlic and salt and soften for 5 mins
3. Stir in curry paste Add potatoes and chickpeas
4. Add tinned tomatoes, coconut milk, stock, chutney
5. Bring to boil and simmer gently for 20 mins
6. Add spinach, stir and serve.

Any vegetables can be used in this dish - whatever you have; frozen, canned, fresh and also leftover cooked vegetables from another meal.

Visit Bath Mind's website for more recipes and cost of living crisis support resources.

www.bathmind.org.uk



soundwell

music therapy trust

Soundwell provides music therapy for adults with a range of mental health issues, including those with high and complex mental health needs.

Singing for Wellbeing

Soundwell Music Therapy Trust has places available in its free Singing for Wellbeing group!

Held fortnightly on Thursday mornings the group is a great way to relax, with easy-to-sing songs and supportive conversations about the songs and lyrics.

There's no need to have sung in a choir before, and you can expect exercises to support breath control, posture, relaxation and vocal technique, all facilitated by Music Therapists.

New members are always welcome, and we'd love to hear from you especially if you're feeling low, anxious or lonely, and think this could be for you.

The group is held in central Bath at 10.30am, every other Thursday. There is no cost for the sessions, donations are welcome.

For more information or to join please contact: Duncan.stagg@soundwell.org.uk
Tel: 07423400655

Soundwell monthly Open Group

A relaxed environment, using musical instruments to support mental health. There is no need for previous musical skills, experience, or instruments (though you are welcome to bring any you have, if you wish).

This group is for anyone wanting to improve their mental health and wellbeing through exploring self-expression, creativity, and relaxation with music. You can expect supportive conversations, making live music together and music listening.

Sessions are held in central Bath on a Friday once a month at 11am, or an online option is available. There is no cost for the sessions, donations are welcome.

For more information or to join please contact: kim.roberts@soundwell.org.uk
Tel: 07938679667

Breathing to reduce stress



This calming breathing technique for stress, anxiety and panic, takes just a few minutes and can be done anywhere.

Make yourself comfortable. If you're sitting, place your arms on the chair arms; if you're standing or sitting, place both feet flat on the ground.

1

Let your breath flow as deep down into your belly as is comfortable, without forcing it.

2

Try breathing in through your nose, out through your mouth.

3

Breathe gently and regularly - some people find it helpful to count from 1 to 5 as you breathe in. You may not reach 5 at first, that's OK, just try to do what you feel comfortable with.

4

After breathing in, without pausing or holding your breath, let your breath flow out gently - counting from 1 to 5 as you exhale.

Practise this for about 3-5 minutes; make it part of your daily self-care routine, if you can.

You can perform this exercise as often as needed. It can be done standing up, sitting down, or lying down. If you find this exercise difficult or believe it is making you anxious or panicky, stop for now. Try it again in a day or so and build up the time slowly and gradually.

Bath Mind has created a Support Directory of services available across BaNES. If you're looking for support, this is a great place to start!

<https://www.bathmind.org.uk/service-directory/>

Mental Health & Wellbeing Support

Breathing Space - Evening Support

Telephone: 0808 175 1369

Email: breathingspace@bathmind.org.uk

This is a free service. Every day 5.30pm-11pm.

Access Community Mental Health

Telephone: 0808 175 1369

access@bathmind.org.uk

Self refer by phone or email.

This is a free service. Monday to Sunday 9am to 5.30pm

Befriending

Telephone: 0300 247 0050

befriending@bathmind.org.uk

Self refer by phone or email.

This is a free service.

Counselling

counselling@bathmind.org.uk

This is a chargeable, low-cost service.

Wellbeing Support Groups

Groups and activities

Self refer by phone or email.

wellbeing@bathmind.org.uk / 07538 113890

Suggested donation of £4 per session.

Safe Space Youth Group (age 16-25)

Telephone/Text: 07538 113890

email: wellbeing@bathmind.org.uk

Self refer by phone, text or email.

This is a free service.



For more information and opening hours
visit our website:
www.bathmind.org.uk/our-services/