

Mental health awareness

We have finally made it to term 6.

Many of you will be feeling relieved but for older years the next few weeks might appear to be stressful due to upcoming exams. In regards to school, one of the many concerns during the 1st lockdown was the effect of the pandemic on education; how would education and exams take place for students? And what will the impact on students' mental health be like after spending 6 months at home.

One in three adolescents (31.9 percent) will meet the criteria for an anxiety disorder by the age of 18. A new poll finds many teens show signs of anxiety and depression. The restrictions of the pandemic have been felt across the board. For us, restrictions have meant months of virtual learning, more time isolated from friends, and the cancelling of important social activities like sports, school performances, graduations, and proms.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has meant living through multiple crises, here we are gathered as a student body surrounded by friends, teachers learning in school again and slowly but surely becoming familiar with routine. We have come a long way not just as students and teachers but as people who have adapted their lives to the conditions we faced whether that be mentally or physically. Things are far from perfect and I will not deny the negative impacts the pandemic has had on many of us. But it's taking the small steps; meeting up in the cafe that opened up again with friends, talking about the way I felt with those I trusted. Going back to the things I used to love was what made me see what felt like a dead end in a new light, a way to open up and become hopeful.

So as we go on to finishing the final term of school, I urge for us all to be mindful of mental health awareness; creating safe spaces within groups for students to comfortably communicate and be expressive about how they're truly feeling, as we can all agree checking up on someone goes a long way. The little things matter and it's those things that will better us all as not only as students, but as people.

By A. Elias

Opinion: Israel-Palestine

The Israeli-Palestinian situation is one of the most controversial yet brutal conflicts the current generation have faced, reaching 53 years now. The conflict is between Arab Palestinians and Jewish Israelis, the disagreement has faced many years attacking and killing innocent lives on both sides. The dissension has involved many countries and states such as the US, Lebanon and many others to take matters into their own hands, providing economic help and varieties of weapons. The conflict's main reason is the right for 'land' and 'territory', which can be agreeable in terms of what's theirs. The conflict began in the early 20th century; many people believe that this conflict is due to the hatred between Islam and Judaism, however they have been coexisting in the same region peacefully. The recent conflict began when Israeli soldiers evicted and demolished Palestinian homes. There is a concern among some that Palestinians are being targeted day by day.

By S. Wahedi 8N

‘Mindwriting’

As I am sure many of you are aware, there have been huge breakthroughs in technology and AI in recent years. Well-known examples include self-driving cars, digital money, renewable energy systems, and even something called the Human Genome project where scientists managed to map out the entirety of genes in the human genome (coding regions of DNA). A man going by the name of ‘T5’ who has been paralysed from the neck down since a spinal cord accident in 2007 has made a life-changing discovery for some in the early days of May this year. He has found a system that helps him to write on a computer without any subtle movement of his body to be necessary. Stephen Hawking used a more painstaking method created by himself for communication. He had motor neurone disease, which causes the degeneration of the motor system, and he developed a system with a screen and a cursor that would move over the alphabet. Stephen would then tense his cheek to select the letter needed for the word he wanted to say. This was a much longer process compared to T5’s where it was possible to write 90 characters (18 words) per minute with a 94 % accuracy and with autocorrect this figure increased to an impressive 99 %. In comparison to an

studying him found that his brain managed to make distinct patterns even after not having written for so long. The algorithm has some flaws as some letters require similar movements such as ‘r’, ‘h’, and ‘n’. In other languages that have more complicated systems and similar letters, the algorithm may not produce as accurate results, and of course, it may take some time for the algorithm to be perfected and ready for wider use. For example, experiments have been made on self-driving cars since the 1920’s - a whole century ago. They are only now starting to be more recognized, used, and accepted by countries globally.

Focusing on the positives, this discovery could lead to those with conditions that prevent communication to be able to interact with their loved ones once more. This is truly heartwarming and encouraging for those in this situation as they will not feel as isolated and excluded from the world.

It is only now that we realize the gift of communication and one of the aims of this article was to show that you should be fully aware of this gift because without it we would be truly lost.

K. Callanan

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able-bodied person, they can type 23 words per minute on their phones which is significantly close to 18!

T5 managed to carry out this system by installing two sensors on the left side of his brain where the neurons that send signals to control the right hand are located. He then pictured himself writing a letter on a piece of paper and scientists

Mental Health Ambassadors

Hi everyone, we hope you all had a lovely half-term and are ready for the last term

of the school year! In this week's edition of the Mental Health Ambassadors' NewsTues, we will be talking about the concept of **Pressure**. Also included are all the submissions from our Mental Health Awareness Week Art Competition last term.

- **Myra and Zoya Soni.**

What is pressure?

Pressure is something we all have to deal with at times. Whether it comes from the people around us or ourselves, it is inevitable. Pressure can be the daily tasks we have to do, it could be the responsibility of having those tasks, it could be the responsibility of completing them. Pressure can be many things. It is defined as the force upon an object however when you think of it emotionally, pressure is the force on you in terms of expectations, rules or responsibilities.

What is the difference between stress and pressure?

Stress refers to the situation of too many demands and not enough resources – time, money, energy – to meet them. Pressure is a situation in which you perceive that something at stake is dependent on the outcome of your performance. There's no medical definition of stress, and health care professionals often disagree over whether stress is the cause of problems or the result of them. This can make it difficult

for you to work out what causes your feelings of stress or how to deal with them. But whatever your personal definition of stress is, it's likely that you can learn to manage your stress better by managing external pressures.

Myra S.

Dealing with pressure

When dealing with pressure it is important to identify your triggers, organise your time, address some of the causes and accept things you can't change.

Tips for dealing with pressure

As we have mentioned above, everyone has to deal with pressure. We can deal with pressure in different ways; so on behalf of the Mental Health Ambassadors, we wrote some tips to help you.

Here are some things that you might find helpful...

- Maintain a positive attitude so you can remove any negative thoughts.
- Talk to someone, it can be hard to deal with pressure alone. You can talk to your Head of Year, form tutor, Father Jack, your parents or your friend.
- Try not to do too much at once (multi-tasking) break it down into realistic steps/tasks.
- Make a list so you can organise what to do step-by-step.
- Take breaks and take things slowly so you can clear your mind and

relax. This will help you with your positive attitude.

- Another way to clear your mind is to meditate or do breathing exercises. You could try out the Headspace and Calm apps or even the Headspace series on Netflix. If you don't like mediation, then breathe slowly 3 times or more.
- Listen to music. This could be on youtube, Apple Music and Spotify.
- Try exercising. Your physical health affects your mental health.

Anahi B.

Thank you for reading this week's edition. We hope you found it helpful. Best of luck to anyone who has any upcoming exams or assessments, be proud of all the work you have done. Have a lovely week!

On the next page, you will find the submissions of everyone who participated in our Mental Health Awareness Week Art Competition! There is also some information on where to seek help and support on Mental Health, as well as some links to resources you might find interesting. Please also have a look at this week's 'Feel Good Challenges' below.

During Mental Health Awareness Week, we asked students to take part in an Art Competition on the theme of Nature. All the participants showed not only amazing talent but also great reflection on how Nature impacts mental health.

Our wonderful submissions from year



Michelle 7D

In year 8 we have:



"Look deep into nature and then you will understand everything better"

Yara 8B



Scarlett 8W

Nature is like god's birdsong
Harmonising me
Soothing me

Nature is a fountain of delight
Diversified blooming landscapes
Hot sunny days

Nature is the aroma of tranquility
The fragrance of ethereal flowers
The warm earthy smell of mother earth

Nature is the feel of comfort
The feel of dew on the grass
The touch of wonderfully rough bark

Nature is the taste of well-being

Nature is the security Mother Earth has given us

The Story of the Little Bluebird

He perches there, when I wake, when I sleep
Not a flinch or a twitch, not a word or a peep
I don't know what he wants, I don't know what he thinks
But somehow do I know, he likes where he is

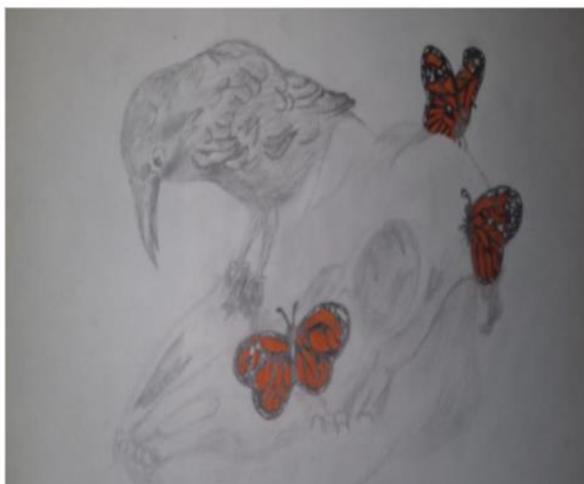
His small blue chest faces away from the Sun
The start of his day is still yet to come
I have no clue what he does on his daily commute
I don't know, but I'm sure he can tell you

I start, says the little bluebird, on my flight through the forest
each day That goes by, another young tree has died
I don't know how it happens, if I could stop it I would
So I sit there alone, as helpless as those pieces of wood

So I continue my day, ready for the iciest drop
Although this time, I don't have a certain spot
I watch the ice melt, each day quicker than the last
I see have the animals suffer, all it does is but break my heart

So I head home, as the Sun begins to set
I perch on the balcony, ready for bed
I see the girl who watches me each night
I wait for her to drift off, good night

Thalia 8B



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In year 9 we have



I decided to include a
helped me relax thro
still do. The dandelio
determination, which
helped me through q
Missi 9A



I wanted it to sort of show we're 'rooted'/
connected with nature even though we're
progressing as a society.

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Connie 9A



This is a painting of a swan. I go to Hyde park (my local park) ne me because there are so ma playing out between wildl fascinating if

'Nature is always there for us. It's in the wind that surrounds us on a cold day when you're walking home alone clutching your bag; it's in the local park we pass by every day to go to work or school. A majority of people imagine nature as the rivers that flow through the country and as the rocky mountains we visit during Easter break (if we're lucky enough) but in response to this belief, nature is everywhere rather than in our rural areas. In the city of London, it might be hard to believe that we are blessed with the beauty of it but in reality it is in everything we do. It's in our food and in the plants on our balcony barely clutching on to our buildings.'

Elizab



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So

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This is a t
whenever
caravan, a
silence to
or to just
think abou
what natu
to get som
about thin
stresses o
all.
Georgina

Winners:

Y7: Gabriella Y8: Yara Y9 : Elizabeth (Liz) Y

Overall winner: Connie 9A Congratulations
to all participants!!

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1. [Headspace on stress](#) - there are loads of other things on Youtube to explore if you don't have Netflix
2. [Guided meditation to build resilience](#)
3. [Resilience exercises you can facilitate](#)
4. Ted Talks - there are so many to choose from
5. Anna Freud website: suggestions for self-care stuff
<https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/>
6. Youngmind: general information about all related stuff
<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

Where to find support

Talk to a trusted adult:
Your **tutor** is always a good place to start. We also have counsellors, your Head of Year, your Director & Deputy Director of Sixth Form, Father Jack. If you need some support, you can talk to any member of staff.

Self Care: Check out the ideas on the **Anna Freud** website.

<https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/>

YOUNGMINDS
Fighting for young people's mental health

Text **YM** to **85258** for free 24/7 support across the UK if you are experiencing a mental health crisis.

All texts are answered by trained volunteers, with support from experienced clinical supervisors.

FRANK
0800 77 66 00 talktofrank.com
Friendly, confidential drugs advice

Talk to
0808 801

Helpline Open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm
Calls to Mermaids are confidential and are not shared with a third party. All staff, trustees and volunteers adhere to our Privacy and Confidentiality policies.

LGBT
foundation
WE'RE HERE IF YOU NEED US
0345 3 30 30 30 lgbt.foundation

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THE FEEL GOOD CHALLENGE

Pick one to do or try and do all three to be a feel good warrior. All three challenges are all on the theme of self-acceptance and self-love.



Make a list of any pressures that you feel about where they are coming from and how you can overcome them.



Write a list of all your goals. Have your goals changed? Have you already achieved any steps to achieve them.



From the tips we have given about dealing with stress, think which ones you think will help you deal with stressful things that don't work for you.

Please feel free to contact the Mental Health Ambassadors Team below if there are issues you want to learn more about or if you need support from the Mental Health Ambassadors Team or if you have any questions about the Challenge. Thank you!



c.martos@stmarylebo

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