

Its been a busy couple of months! May was M.E awareness week so we all tried to wear something blue and we supported the Millions Missing campaign by sending in photos of our shoes and making a poster. This was then displayed on the dept of health Facebook page and Millions Missing website. Thank you for those who were able to send in photos, it is a really powerful message. You can see the poster on page 5. The missing millions campaign is a world wide Campaign to raise awareness for M.E. The June meeting was informal as our guest speaker had to cancel due to a virus. We hope to rebook Jannah later in the year.



For the May meeting One of our members did card making with some of us. Thanks Maureen for a lovely session and all the preparation. We really enjoyed it. X



Please help us by completing a survey

We have an online survey for our members and we would really appreciate if you could complete it. This helps us look at our services, what your needs are and evidence for funding. It is ten questions and is anonymous. This will be sent out in a separate email Thanks



Setting up a Library in memory of Markus Leibich

Markus Leibich peacefully passed away on 8th April 2017. His sister Marion and partner Sheryl contacted our group as he had M.E as does Marion and knows how helpful and supportive a group can be. He was part of North Hertfordshire Group before it finished, Because of this she decided to choose our group for donations and after chatting we decided to set up a library in his memory. It will be much appreciated by us all and thank you for supporting us. Our love goes out to his partner, family and friends.

If you have any enquiries or want to share something in the newsletter email:stalbans.m.e.group@gmail.com

News, information, dates and a blog are also available on our website: stalbansmegroup.org.uk

An evening out!



Harry organised a lovely meal out which coincided with Jacky's birthday so a great evening had by all. The next morning we were all a bit hung over from being out, not alcohol! We missed those who who couldn't make it so thought we would share a photo. Harry is hoping to organise a Christmas evening out but we will still be having our Xmas meeting in the day with food etc. Okay lets stop talking Christmas the sun is still out!

Tea, Cake and a Visit?



Harry had a great Idea of a couple of members going to visit those who couldn't attend. An email has been sent out to everyone asking who would like to be visited and who would be interested in visiting. If you haven't responded yet and would like to be involved please email.

stalbans.m.e.group@gmail.com

Meeting Dates, Guest Speakers and Events

Venues

Meetings and Mindfulness/Discussion Group is held at London Colney Community Centre, 29 Caledon Rd, London Colney, St Albans AL2 1PS

Yoga is held at Jersey Farm Community Centre, 66 Harvest Ct, St Albans AL4 9QY.

JULY

Meeting: Wed 12th July 11am to 1pm No guest speakers, an informal meeting. Refreshments provided £2

Mindfulness/Discussion

Group: Wed 26th July 11am to 12.30pm £2

AUGUST

Yoga: Sat 5th August 11.30am to 12.30. Seated or bring a mat £2

Meeting: Wed 9th August 11am to 2pm Summer BBQ/Cook up. Family and friends welcome £3 per person all food included.

Mindfulness/Discussion

Group: Wed 30th Aug 11am to

SEPTEMBER

Yoga : Sat 2nd Sept 11.30am to 12.30 Seated or Bring a mat £2

Meeting: Wed 13th Sept, 11am to 1pm This will be an Open day. So members of the public who are interested in joining can come along. Funders, organisations and partners. We will also be exhibiting members artwork. No charge.

Mindfulness/Discussion

Group: Wed 27th Sept 11am to 12.30pm £2

Transport

Some members car share with each other to get to meetings, Our Facebook page is a good place to check if anyone can car share. Other transport options for meetings and other things like shopping, appointments etc are

Hertfordshire Dial a ride £1.90 for the first mile then 45p per mile after.

01992 556771

Welwyn and Hatfield Community Car Scheme 50p per mile

01707 273875

St Albans Good Neighbours (Transport, gardening, befriending etc)

01727 830713

Watford Community Car Scheme 45p per mile

01923 216955

Community Action Dacorum 65p per mile , min £6

01442 212888

Hertsmere Community Car Scheme Potters Bar and Borehamwood 45p per mile

020 82075055

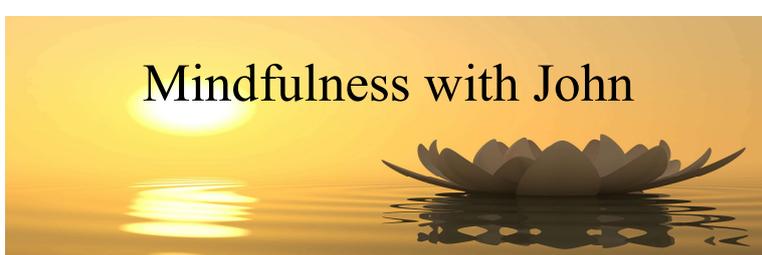
Stevenage Community Transport

01438 724911

The Community Car Scheme for East Herts 45p per mile

0300 123 1677

Mindfulness with John



Take a few deep breaths. Close your eyes, or if you prefer, keep them open or half way open. What ever is most comfortable for you. Feel your body sink down into the floor, become totally relaxed, breathing deeply. Surrender and feel your body getting heavier and heavier. Allow your body to rest.

For the moment let your mind rest from all of your thoughts and concerns and worries and if they persist, become the observer of your thoughts, images and memories and just observe them as they pass across your mind as if you are watching a film. Be detached. Just let them have their space and let them go.

Do not try to force thoughts out of your mind. Gently accept them as they come and gently let them pass, as a passing cloud. They are just thoughts. They are not you. You are not your thoughts. So for the moment, find a space between your thoughts; that tiny empty space. Stop there and breathe. Feel the peace of emptying your mind. Feel the freedom of not having to be ruled by those thoughts. Your mind is free. You feel light and at Peace, Let the warm sun melt away your sorrow and let go. Let go of everything. Let go of any fear, anger or anxiety. Let these feeling gently dissolve with the warmth of your own acceptance, You accept yourself as you are in this moment, You have come along way.

Feel yourself now as if you are gently floating in an endless space where nothing matters as your mind drifts in a different dimension. Listen to the rhythm of your breath and become at one with it, Be aware of your breath, separate from your body and listen to your heart. Rest in the stillness of your being and, in that state, remember who you truly are. A being of love and peace. May you be safe. May you experience tranquility. Let go, let go, let go of everything.



Time to get arty and share!



In September we have our Open Day and we would love to exhibit your work both at the Open day and on an online Gallery. We would like to show how we can find ways to express ourselves, tell a story and be creative. Let your imagination run wild it could be a collage, a written statement, painting, knitting... the list goes on. I am afraid we cant accept any animals like cows cut in half though!...There just isn't the space! Saying that I think a bed with us all in would be a great statement but its bigger than a cow! Maybe a photo of the bed then! :)

Last year we had paintings, poems, drawing and photography. It was amazing to see what talented people we have in our group. You don't have to be a professional artist . Its all about sharing something you have created. Something as simple as a photo selfie to a portrait of your pet with oils!

There are several ways to get your work to us:

Bring with you to the Open Day

Take a Photo of your work and Email it to stalbans.m.e.group we will then print it off and exhibit

Arrange for us to collect it or drop it off to myself if you cant go to the Open Day.

At the open Day we will take pictures and put them in an Online Gallery on our website with your first name.

Part 3 of Sandy's Story “The road to recovery”

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY ACCEPTANCE



“It may look as if the situation is creating the suffering but ultimately this is not so .. it is your resistance to it”. Eckart Tolle

When you are first diagnosed with ME it's easy to try to do everything you can - often all at once - to try to get better as quickly as possible.

Stress and anxiety in themselves do not cause ME, but if you are stressed and anxious and pushing your body to the limit in whatever way, you weaken your immune system and make yourself vulnerable to illness and disease. So in that way it is a

factor. But I've seen people with ME frantically searching for cures, getting incredibly stressed, anxious and worn out focusing all their efforts on that one goal. Sometimes your body is just asking for a rest. But do you give it a rest ? No, you just keep on wearing it out in your quest for the remedy that will instantly cure you. You are in a constant state of indecision. Does this help ? Is this making any difference. ? Do I feel better today than I did yesterday .. or worse ? Shall I try this diet or that ? Sadly there is no magic pill out there. And what helps one person to improve may not help another. It's ridiculously difficult and you can easily get into the state I call 'analysis paralysis'. Thus, if you can afford the help of a practitioner to mastermind your recovery that is a big help. This is also where mindfulness and CBT come into their own as they allow you to step back.

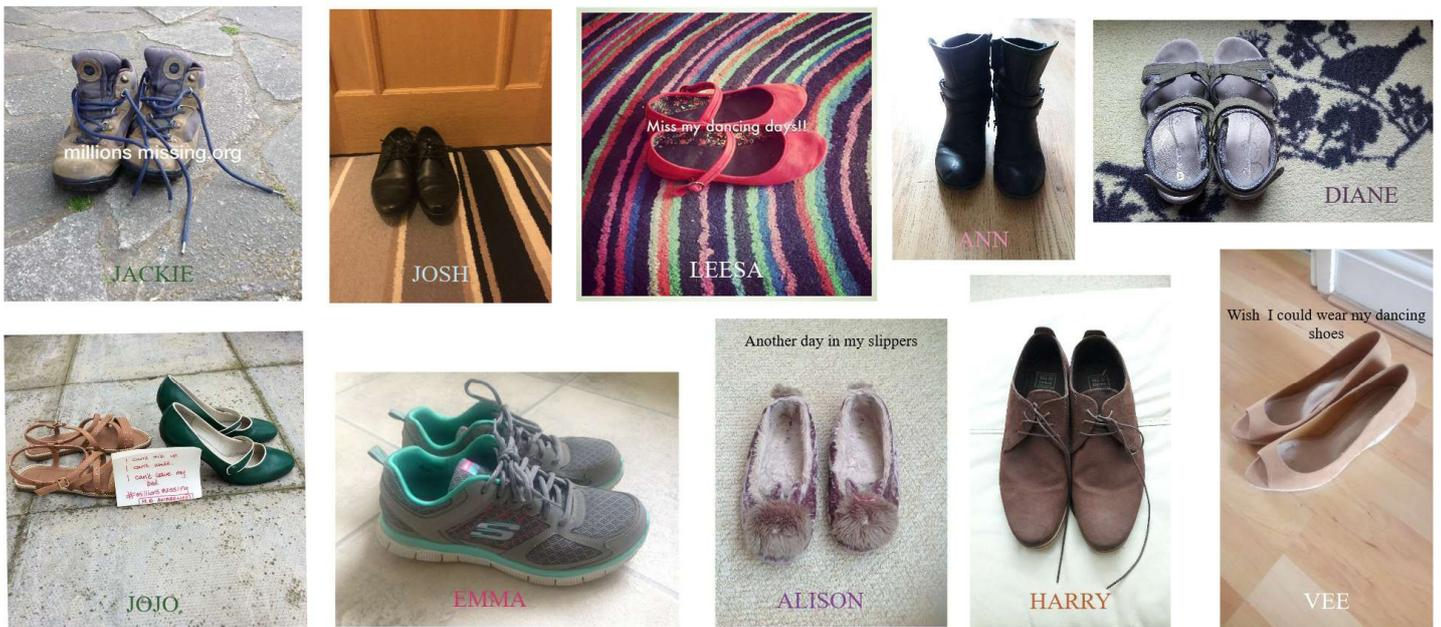
I have often thought that when I finally crashed into a state of total mental and physical collapse, the result of battling for years against what was later to be called ME, stubbornly refusing to slow down, thinking I could outwit this stupid illness, blaming my failing body - what might have happened if I had been allowed to remove myself from my surroundings and responsibilities completely, and spend some time (as much time as it took) relaxing by a lake in Switzerland? Hotel du Lac. I remember suggesting it at the time ... But the expense ! The amount of time spent away from home .. a month, two months?! How would they manage without me and how would I manage without them? In fact it could have been a much easier, much shorter and definitely cheaper option.

ME most commonly affects highly capable and very active people – the 'doers'. One of the things that weakens our immune system is 'when our inscape does not match our landscape'. We need to have inner space to counteract our over-busyness of trying to reach all sorts of expectations.

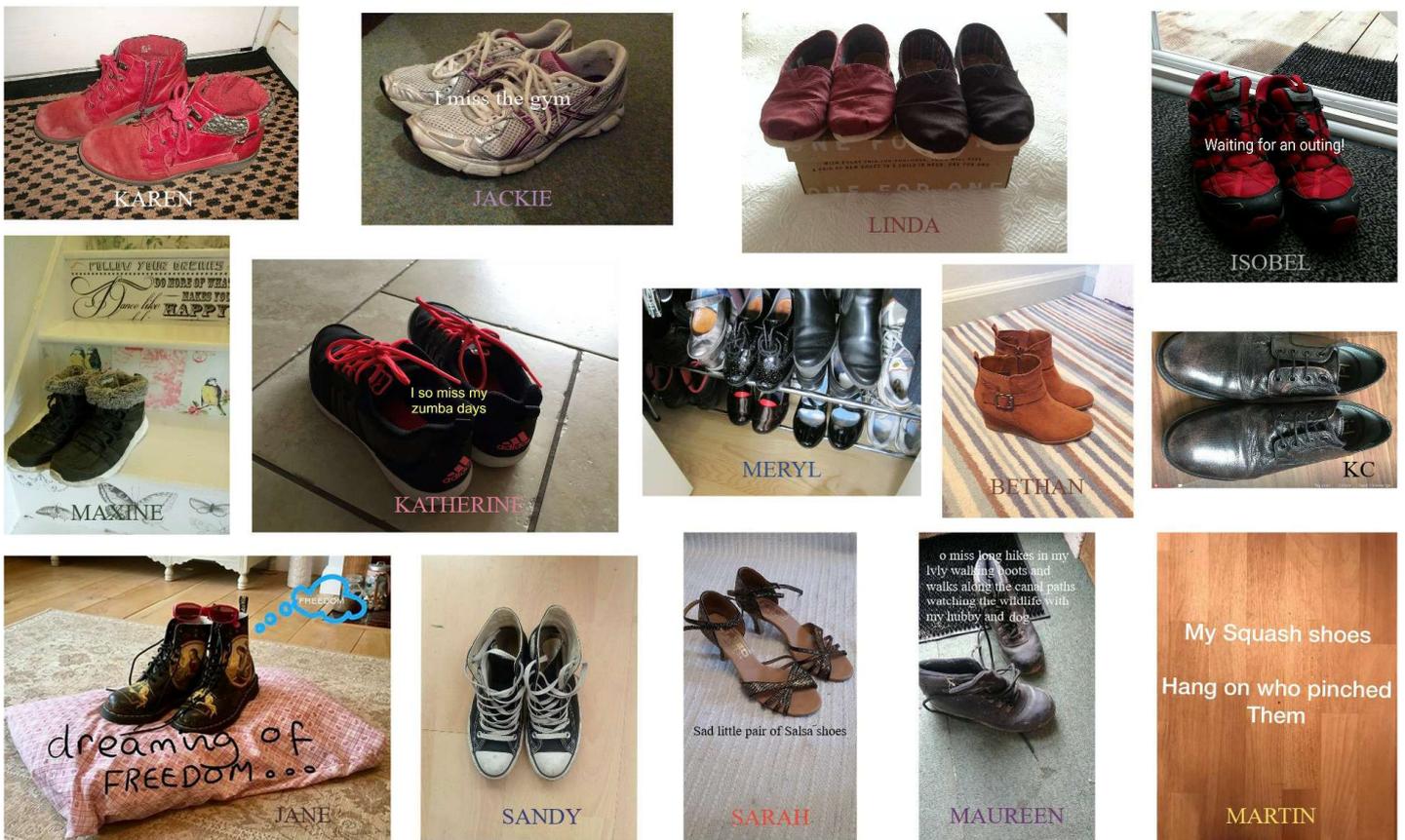
So, make a plan but just do one thing at a time. Don't expect miraculous results. Go slowly. Don't think that doubling the dose of pills or supplements will double the recovery speed. Learn to pace those fluctuating energy levels. Learn acceptance and keep as calm as possible. Your recovery will take as long as it takes. Think of a rosebud: You can't force it to flower, but if you give it all it needs ... warm air, sunshine, protection from strong or cold winds, nutritional soil and adequate water ... it will in its own time open up and blossom into a beautiful flower.



ST ALBANS M.E GROUP



SUPPORTS #MILLIONS MISSING



#MillionsMissing is a movement to raise awareness for M.E., an under funded and ignored disease. They ask for increased government funding for research, clinical trials, medical education and public awareness. 20 million people worldwide missing from their lives because of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (M.E)/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, a debilitating and often disabling disease.