

COMPANION MAGAZINE

JUNE 2024

Being alone doesn't need to be
lonely



TALK TO US

elft.befriendingservice@nhs.net

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Celebrating Pride Month with the NHS

As the vibrant colours of the rainbow flags wave proudly in the breeze, the streets come alive with the joyous celebration of Pride Month. This June, the NHS stands in solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community, recognizing and honouring the diverse identities that make up the fabric of our society. Pride Month is not only a time for celebration but also a moment to reflect on the progress made towards equality and the ongoing journey to ensure that everyone, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, receives the respect and care they deserve.

Embracing Diversity and Inclusion

The NHS has long been committed to providing compassionate and inclusive healthcare for all. This commitment is evident in the way our staff, from doctors and nurses to administrative personnel, work tirelessly to create an environment where everyone feels safe and valued. This year, our Pride-themed uniforms are a symbol of our dedication to celebrating diversity and fostering an inclusive atmosphere within our healthcare system.

Healthcare and Pride: A Perfect Partnership

During Pride Month, our involvement goes beyond merely supporting the festivities. We recognize the unique health challenges faced by the LGBTQ+ community and are dedicated to addressing them. From mental health services to sexual health clinics, the NHS is here to provide specialized care tailored to the needs of LGBTQ+ individuals. Our healthcare professionals are trained to offer support that is both respectful and affirming, ensuring that no one feels marginalized when seeking medical attention.



JUNE IS MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

YOU'RE NOT ALONE MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS



June is Men's Mental Health Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about the mental health challenges faced by men and encouraging them to seek help. Despite societal progress, many men still struggle with the stigma surrounding mental health, often feeling pressure to appear strong and stoic. This month aims to break down those barriers, promoting open conversations about mental well-being and highlighting the importance of mental health care. By fostering a supportive environment, we can help men feel comfortable seeking the assistance they need to lead healthier, happier lives.

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80%

MEN ARE 4X MORE LIKELY TO COMMIT SUICIDE, MAKING UP NEARLY 80% OF ALL SUICIDES



40%

40% OF MEN HAVE NEVER SPOKEN TO ANYONE ABOUT THEIR MENTAL HEALTH



10%

1 IN 10 MEN EXPERIENCE DEPRESSION OR ANXIETY, LESS THAN HALF RECEIVE TREATMENT





Understanding Loneliness: Being Alone Doesn't Have to Be Lonely

In today's bustling world, with cities that never sleep and screens that constantly beckon, one might wonder how it's possible to feel alone. Yet, the sensation of loneliness isn't solely tied to the absence of people around us. It delves deeper, into the realms of emotional and mental connection. Often, this can mean feeling isolated in a room full of people. It's crucial to understand that the key to dispelling loneliness lies not in seeking companionship externally but in fostering it within us.

The Myth of Companionship

We often weave dreams of the perfect companion who would understand our silences and make us feel whole. But sometimes, amidst these dreams, we forget that the heart's most profound conversations are the ones it has with the soul. Before seeking to be understood, perhaps it's time to understand oneself first.

The age-old myth that a companion is necessary to eradicate loneliness often leads us astray. Yes, human connections and relationships can be profoundly enriching. They offer joy, understanding, and a shared journey through life's ups and downs. But it's essential to realise that others can't fill the void of loneliness we might feel. Only we hold that power.

Being Your Own Companion

The concept of being your own companion isn't about rejecting social connections or endorsing isolation. Instead, it's about developing an enriching relationship with oneself. It's about understanding one's desires, dreams, fears, and joys. It's about becoming comfortable in one's skin, enjoying one's own company, and engaging in activities that bring individual joy.



Here are a few ways to foster this relationship:

1. **Self-reflection:** Take time daily, even if just for a few minutes, to introspect. Understand your emotions, aspirations, and motivations. Journaling can be a helpful tool in this journey.
2. **Self-care:** Physical health often mirrors mental well-being. Engage in activities that nourish both your body and soul. This can range from reading a book to taking a spa day or just enjoying a quiet walk.
3. **Pursue passions:** Reconnect with hobbies and activities that you love. Whether it's painting, writing, dancing, or hiking, doing something you're passionate about can make you feel fulfilled.
4. **Mindfulness and meditation:** Grounding oneself in the present can significantly reduce feelings of loneliness—techniques like meditation, deep breathing, and yoga help cultivate a sense of inner peace.

The Beauty of Solitude

The distinction between being alone and feeling lonely is vital. One can be alone and yet feel content, while people might surround another but feel incredibly isolated. Embrace moments of solitude, as they offer an opportunity to recharge, reflect, and understand oneself better. Life is made up of beautiful moments, some shared with others and some spent alone. While shared moments create wonderful memories, solitary moments help us discover ourselves. So, the next time you feel lonely, remember that you are never truly alone. Your heart, soul, and essence have always been with you, waiting for you to find them. Life is a journey that we all undertake, and while it's great to have companions along the way, it's important to understand and comfort ourselves when we need to. Cherishing moments of solitude, embracing self-growth, and remembering that we are our own best companions is essential.

Bedford River Festival 2024

By our
talented
Befriender
Deanna

Bedford River Festival takes place in July every other year, and will next be held on the 20th & 21st July 2024. As always, the River Festival is a community event which is free to attend and offers something for everyone, including live entertainment and activities, a funfair, raft and dragon boat races, the Sports Island and water sports area. There are fireworks on Saturday evening which are free to watch.

It is held on the banks of the river the great Ouse

History of Bedford River Festival

The Bedford River Festival has been an important part of the fabric of Bedford for 45 years.

Founded in 1978, to celebrate the completion of a navigable route by water, between Bedford and The Wash, it was originally an annual event held on the late May bank holiday before becoming a biennial festival in July.

It's said to have been the second largest free outdoor event in the United Kingdom, after the Notting Hill Carnival, attracting up to 300,000 people over the weekend.

While the festivities centred along Bedford's Embankment, recent years included live music and events on St Mary's Garden, Riverside North, the High Street and the town centre.

A street carnival and parade were also a regular fixture of the event for many years but were scaled back and gradually replaced with other events.



By our talented

Befriender

Deanna

DELICIOUS PANCAKES

INGREDIENTS:

For 1 serving:

6 egg whites
125g Fat Free Cottage Cheese
35g oats
2 tsp sweetener
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 tsp cinnamon (optional)



METHOD:

In a blender, mix all of the ingredients until the mixture is smooth.

Heat a good, non-stick frying pan or pancake pan and spray with frylight.or
virgin olive oil

Use a cup measure to pour half a cup of mixture into the middle of the pan.

Allow to sizzle until the top of the pancake is just starting to firm, and the
bottom of the pancake is golden brown.

Spray the top side of the pancake with frylight and flip over. Cook until the
bottom of the pancake is golden brown.

Repeat until you have used all the mixture, this will take about 5 minutes.

Serve with fresh or frozen berries, banana or any fruit you fancy.

Bedfordshire and Luton- Eat Feast

By our
talented
Befriender
Paola

Do you love food? Do you love trying different cuisines? Do you always find it hard to settle on what to eat for the day?

Well here's something I think you'll enjoy! Eat Feast is back this year throughout the spring and summer months bringing along a fantastic opportunity to get out, eat some tasty food and relax in a chilled out atmosphere.

So what is Eat feast? Well, once a month in select locations throughout Bedfordshire some of the finest food stalls and street food traders gather together (including an on the go drinks bar and dessert stand!) to serve their tastiest and most mouth-watering feasts!

Whether you are craving a Mexican banquet fit for a king or want to travel the globes tastiest meals from Italy to China all from the comfort of your own home-town, Eat Feast was made for you!

So how does Eat Feast work? Throughout the month there is a ready set schedule of locations that the Eat Feast food festival goes to. Currently these include Henlow, Biggleswade, Ampthill, Stotfold and Bedford.

The Eat Feast Facebook page will post with details of each upcoming event, signalling the location it is taking place in, the date, time and most importantly, which vendors will be taking part. Each festival has different vendors and the rota switches constantly, so it is worth keeping an eye out for what kind of food you want and what will be there on the day.

Moreover, what is so fantastic about these Eat Feast events is that they celebrate the foods of local established businesses, so going along is a great way to learn about new places in your area, whilst also supporting local. Depending on the location of the Eat Feast taking place you can also expect music, great scenery, child friendly atmospheres and also food catered to vegan, vegetarian and even gluten free lifestyles. No one is left out when it comes to celebrating and enjoying tasty cuisines!

CALENDAR

1ST FRIDAY - HENLOW/STOTFOLD

2ND FRIDAY - AMPHILL

3RD FRIDAY - BALDOCK & ARLESEY /
FLITTON & UPPER CALDECOTE

LAST FRIDAY - BEDFORD

SHEFFORD
FRIDAY 24TH MAY
SATURDAY 6TH JULY
FRIDAY 23RD AUGUST



If you don't feel like cooking one day, check out the Eat Feast schedule and head down to the nearest one to you.

You won't be disappointed!

Don't forget! Eat Feast Takes place outside so plan for any kind of weather- whilst delicious food is a guarantee, unfortunately sunny skies aren't!

Be quick! Some stalls are super popular and food can sell out quickly! If there is something you really want to try, get there quickly and avoid the queues.

Admission:

FREE ENTRY

(Food prices are dependent on sellers)

Schedule (each month):

- 1st Friday of the month: Henlow/ Stotfold
 - 2nd Friday of the month: Ampthill
- 3rd Friday of the month: Baldock & Arseley/ Flitton & Upper Caldecote
 - Last Friday of the month: Bedford
 - Select dates for Shefford

Times:

Most events usually take place from 4pm-9pm. Please check each time online depending on location as this is subject to change per month/per venue.

Locations: (subject to change, please check beforehand)

- Arlesey- Arlesey Village Hall Playing Fields
- Upper Caldecote- Upper Caldecote Playig Fields
 - Baldock- High Street, Baldock
 - Bedford- Riverside Square, Bedford
 - Ampthill- Ampthill Great Park
 - Henlow- Henlow Park

By our
talented
Befriender
Jan

Here Is Your

Intergalactic Quiz

Use The Force To Unscramble Them

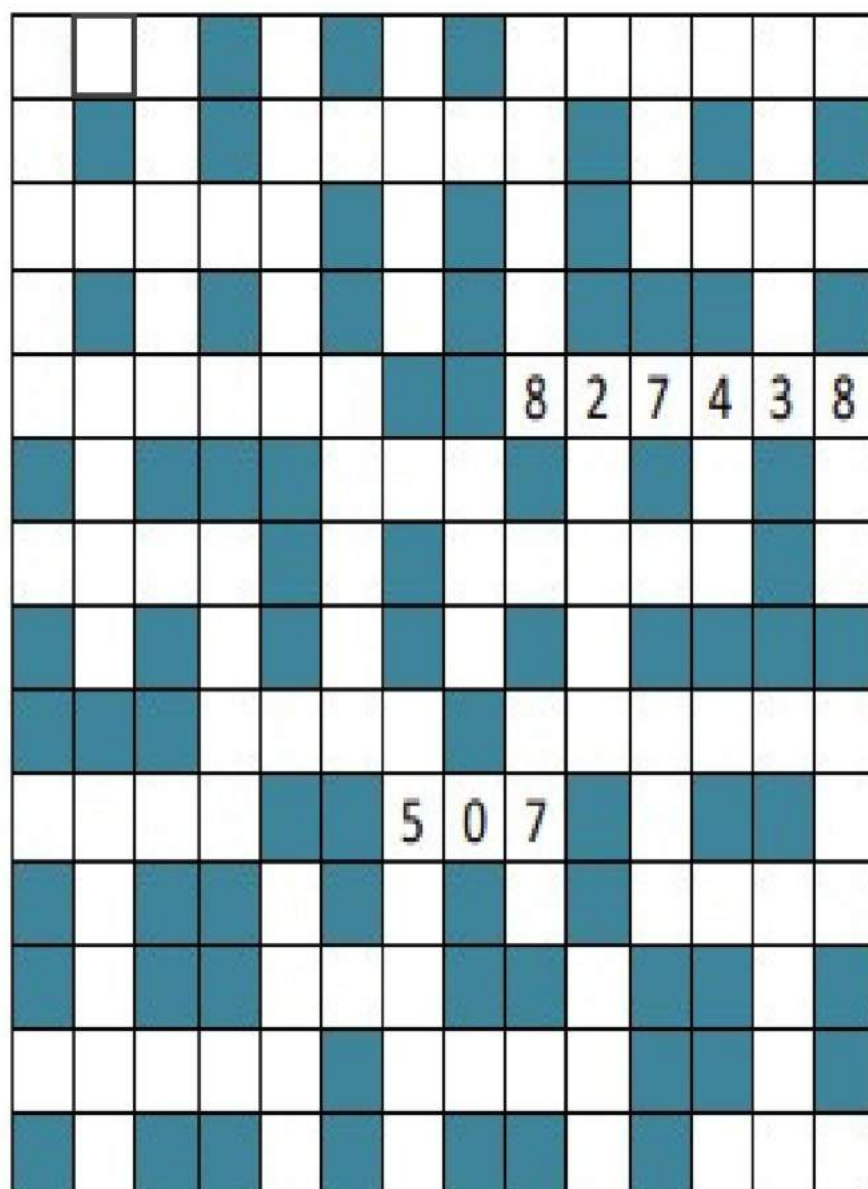
- | | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 RAJ JRA BSNKI | 2 OALND | 24 THE DILORONMNA |
| CLIRNSIAAS | 3 AIRNTK | 25 IDJE |
| _____ | 4 BOAB ETTF | 26 IEMERP SSKETIR |
| _____ | 5 ONGJA ETTF | 27 KBAC THE FREOC |
| _____ | 6 WACACHBEC | 28 KOWEOI |
| _____ | 7 REVIUGSO | 29 ATWIENTTO |
| _____ | 8 AJBUB HET HTU | 30 DR22 |
| _____ | 9 IBO ANW ONKIB | 31 LRAANAED |
| _____ | 10 TDHRA MUAL | 32 PCO3 |
| _____ | 11 UKEL SRLKKYAW | 33 DTAHE RSAT |
| _____ | 12 NINKAA LRAEKKWSY | 34 SAJWA |
| _____ | 13 NHA LSSO | 35 PEERIM |
| _____ | 14 AYDO | 36 X GNWI |
| 15 DNPAE AALMADI | 16 | 37 LMAPEIIR TRPOOS |
| RIPSSEC LAIE | 17 GNRAD | 38 OADNR |
| _____ | 18 LEBRE EANILELC | 39 LGRNEAE UHX |
| _____ | 19 TUCON OUODK | 40 ESPDE NICRGA |
| _____ | 20 NBOAO | 41 MORTS ERSROPOT |
| _____ | 21 EOGRDE | 42 GTHLI EBASR |
| _____ | 22 THE ATMPNOH CANEME | 43 OHHT |
| _____ | 23 IUQ OGN NJNI | 44 APTNRUCSC |
| _____ | | 45 OERND |
| | | 46 SOM IELESY |

That 80's Quiz

1. Jessica Fletcher is the elderly character in what TV Show?
2. Which US TV show features an incredibly advanced military helicopter?
3. Which country's bobsleigh team became unlikely heroes at the 1985 winter Olympics?
4. What is the name of the "masters of the universe" hero?
5. Which rap band was blamed for the theft of thousands of VW badges from cars?
6. In the film "Dirty Dancing" what song is the last dance performed to?
7. In the film "Goonies" what is the name of Chunk's famous dance?
8. In which 1987 film does Michael Douglas play Gordon Gekko?
9. In which TV show did detective Sonny Crockett appear?
10. Name all four of the teenage mutant ninja turtles?
11. Which company produced their first portable CD player in 1982?
12. What was the first music video to be played on MTV in 1981?
13. In 1980, John Lennon was shot dead in which city?
14. The company 3M introduced what item of stationery in 1980?
15. In the 1980's which two formats competed in the videotape wars?
16. What is the name of the cat in "The Smurfs"?

Work out which of the numbers goes in each space in the puzzle below.

One of the numbers has been done for you.



3 DIGITS		4 DIGITS		5 DIGITS		6 DIGITS
182	620	2598	7481	23471	46128	152694
308	621	2965	7615	24963	52733	160952
374	729	3299	8945	25974	53875	347316
455	766	5071	9278	27048	84130	827438
482	824	5479	9420	32471	87526	914752
493	906	6391		34623	93428	
507						

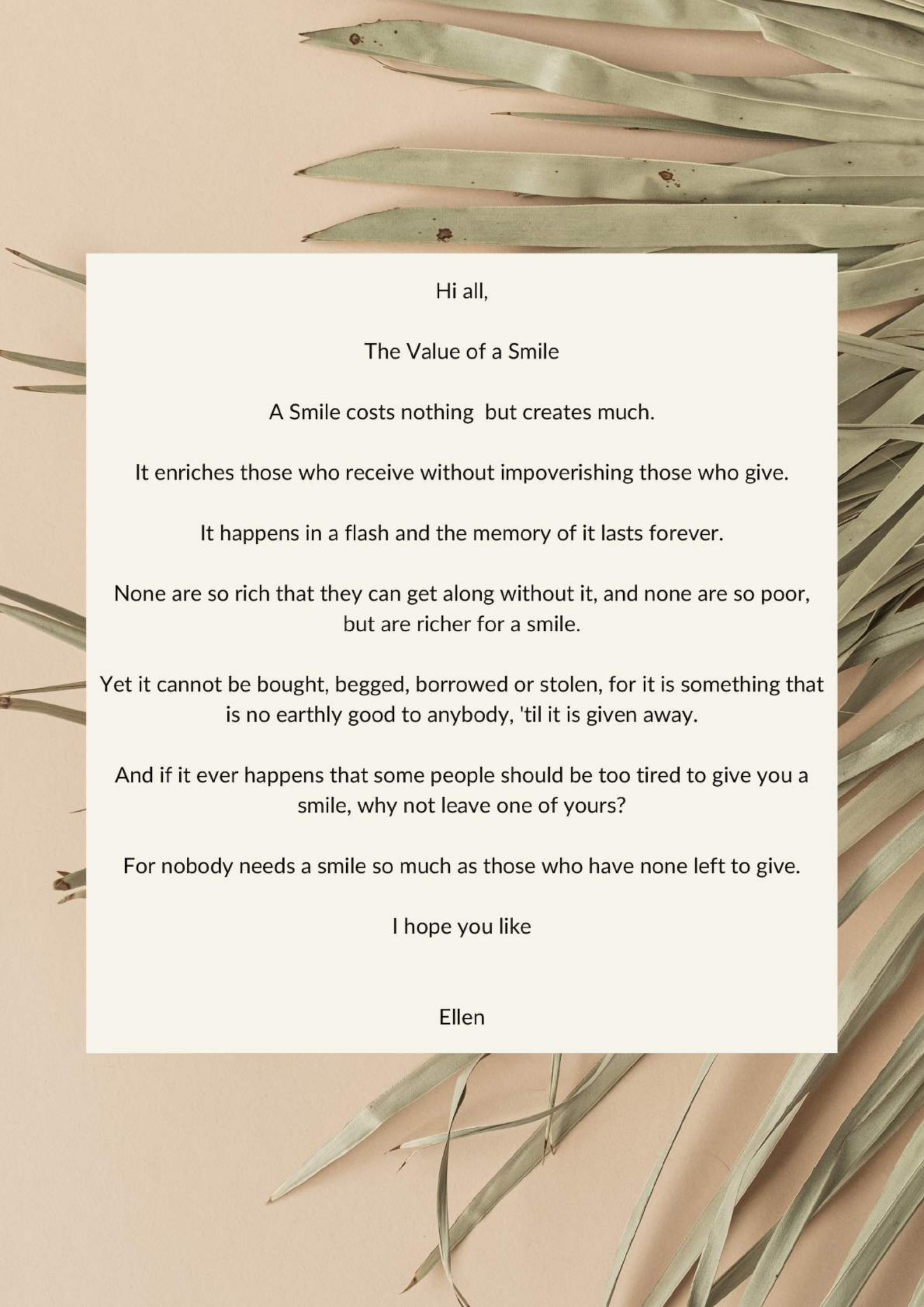
THAT 80'S QUIZ

1. Murder she wrote
2. Airwolf
3. Jamacia
4. He-man
5. The bestie boys
6. I had the time of my life by Bill medley and Jennifer Warnes,
7. Truffle shuffle
8. Wall street
9. Miami vice
10. Leonardo, Donatello, Raphael, Michelangelo
11. Sony
12. The Buggles – video killed the radio star
13. New York
14. The post it note
15. Betamax and VHS
16. Azrael

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1 jar jar binks | 24 the Mandalorian |
| 2 lando calrissian | 25 jedi |
| 3 tarkin | 26 empire strikes back |
| 4 boba fett | 27 the force |
| 5 jango fett | 28 wookie |
| 6 chewbacca | 29 tattowine |
| 7 grievous | 30 r2d2 |
| 8 jubba the hut | 31 alderaan |
| 9 obi wan knobi | 32 c3po |
| 10 darth maul | 33 death star |
| 11 luke skywalker | 34 jawas |
| 12 anakin skywalker | 35 empire |
| 13 han solo | 36 x wing |
| 14 yoda | 37 imperial troops |
| 15 padme amidala | 38 andor |
| 16 pricess leia | 39 general Hux |
| 17 dengar | 40 speed racing |
| 18 rebel allience | 41 storm troopers |
| 19 count dooku | 42 light sabre |
| 20 naboo | 43 hoth |
| 21 greedo | 44 coruscant |
| 22 the phantom menace | 45 endor |
| 23 qui gon jinn | 46 mos eisley |



3	0	8		5		7		9	1	4	7	5	2
2		4		3	4	6	2	3		5		2	
4	6	1	2	8		1		4		5	0	7	1
7		3		7		5		2				3	
1	6	0	9	5	2			8	2	7	4	3	8
	3				7	6	6		5		9		2
8	9	4	5		0		2	4	9	6	3		4
	1		4		4		1		7				
			7	4	8	1		3	4	7	3	1	6
3	2	9	9			5	0	7		2			2
	3			2		2		4		9	4	2	0
	4			9	0	6			1			5	
8	7	5	2	6		9	2	7	8			9	
	1			5		4			2		4	8	2

The background of the page is a light brown or tan color, decorated with several long, thin, dried green leaves that are scattered across the surface. The leaves have a natural, slightly curved shape and some small brown spots, suggesting they are dried plant matter.

Hi all,

The Value of a Smile

A Smile costs nothing but creates much.

It enriches those who receive without impoverishing those who give.

It happens in a flash and the memory of it lasts forever.

None are so rich that they can get along without it, and none are so poor,
but are richer for a smile.

Yet it cannot be bought, begged, borrowed or stolen, for it is something that
is no earthly good to anybody, 'til it is given away.

And if it ever happens that some people should be too tired to give you a
smile, why not leave one of yours?

For nobody needs a smile so much as those who have none left to give.

I hope you like

Ellen

USEFUL CONTACTS

NHS SUPPORT

NHS	WWW.NHS.UK
ELFT	WWW.ELFT.NHS.UK
Befriending Service	ELFT.BEFRIENDINGSERVICE@NHS.NET
People Participation	ELFT.PEOPLEPARTICIPATION@NHS.NET

MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS LINES

Newham	0207 771 5888
Tower Hamlets	0207 771 5807
Hackney	0208 432 8020
Luton	01582 556971
Bedford and Mid-Bedfordshire	01234 315691

SUPPORT FOR ADDICTION

Talk To Frank	WWW.TALKTOFRANK.COM
Alcoholics Anonymous	WWW.ALCOHOLICS-ANONYMOUS.ORG.UK
Cocaine Anonymous	COCAINEANONYMOUS.ORG.UK
GamCare	WWW.GAMCARE.ORG.UK

SUPPORT FOR BEREAVEMENT

Cruse	WWW.CRUSE.ORG.UK
Bereavement Partnership	NATIONALBEREAVEMENTPARTNERSHIP.ORG
The Good Grief Trust	WWW.THEGOODGRIEFTRUST.ORG
At A Loss	WWW.ATALOSS.ORG

SUPPORT FOR CARERS

Carers UK	WWW.CARERSUK.ORG
Family Action	WWW.FAMILY-ACTION.ORG.UK

SUPPORT FOR DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic Violence Helpline	0808 2000 247
For men experiencing domestic abuse	0808 801 0327
Refuge	WWW.REFUGE.ORG.UK

USEFUL CONTACTS

SUPPORT FOR FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES

The UK Government	WWW.GOV.UK/OPTIONS-FOR-PAYING-OFF-YOUR-DEBTS
Step Change	WWW.STEPCHANGE.ORG
Citizens Advice	WWW.CITIZENSADVICE.ORG.UK
National Debtline	WWW.NATIONALDEBTLINE.ORG

SUPPORT FOR HOUSING PROBLEMS

Your local council	WWW.GOV.UK/FIND-LOCAL-COUNCIL
Citizens Advice	WWW.CITIZENSADVICE.ORG.UK
Crisis	WWW.CRISIS.ORG.UK/GET-HELP
Shelter	ENGLAND.SHELTER.ORG.UK
StreetLink	WWW.HOMELESS.ORG.UK

SUPPORT FOR LONG TERM CONDITIONS

The Patients Association	WWW.PATIENTS-ASSOCIATION.ORG.UK
Age UK	WWW.AGEUK.ORG.UK

EXTRA SUPPORT FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Hub of Hope	HUBOFHOPE.CO.UK
MIND	WWW.MIND.ORG.UK
Samaritans	TELEPHONE: 116 123
Young Minds	YOUNGMINDS.ORG.UK
LGBT+ Helpline	SWITCHBOARD.LGBT

SUPPORT FOR SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The Survivors Trust	WWW.THESURVIVORSTRUST.ORG
Rape Crisis	WWW.RASASC.ORG.UK
Survivors UK	WWW.SURVIVORSUK.ORG

EXTRA SUPPORT FOR SUICIDAL THOUGHTS

Papyrus	WWW.PAPYRUS-UK.ORG
Ripple Suicide Prevention	WWW.RIPPLESUICIDEPREVENTION.COM
Shout	GIVEUSASHOUT.ORG
Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide	UKSOBS.ORG
Campaign Against Living Miserably	WWW.THECALMZONE.NET