

2025

COMPANION MAGAZINE **JANUARY**





The Law of Vibration: Finding Harmony in Mental Well-Being

In the intricate symphony of life, we often find ourselves searching for answers, seeking happiness, and longing for a sense of purpose. This journey leads many of us to the realm of universal laws, where the Law of Vibration shines as a guiding light, distinct yet interconnected with the more famous Law of Attraction. In this article, we embark on an enchanting exploration of the Law of Vibration and its profound impact on our mental well-being.

Harmony in Vibrational Frequencies

Imagine life as a vast, pulsating orchestra, with every thought, emotion, and action playing a unique note. The Law of Vibration asserts that everything in the universe vibrates at a specific frequency. This includes our thoughts, feelings, and intentions. It's a beautiful cosmic dance where like attracts like, much like musical harmony.

Our mental state, often influenced by external factors, creates vibrations that resonate with similar frequencies in the universe. Positive thoughts and emotions emit higher, more harmonious vibrations, while negativity resonates at a lower frequency. Recognising this interplay can lead us to a profound understanding of our mental well-being.

The Nexus of Thoughts and Emotions

Now, let's distinguish the Law of Vibration from the Law of Attraction. While the latter focuses on attracting what we desire through our thoughts, the former delves deeper, encompassing our emotions and actions. The Law of Vibration teaches us that our vibrational state is not only defined by our thoughts but also by the emotional energy we infuse into them.

For those navigating the complex terrain of mental health, this distinction is pivotal. It means that it's not enough to merely think positively; we must feel those positive thoughts deep within our core. Authentic emotional alignment with our desires amplifies the vibrational frequency and, subsequently, our ability to manifest them.



Embracing the New Year: A Holistic Journey to Self-Empowerment

The dawn of a new year carries an undeniable energy of renewal and possibility. It's a time to pause, reflect, and purposefully step forward. This year, let's go beyond the clichéd resolutions and embrace a holistic approach to self-empowerment—one that nurtures the mind, body, and soul.

Mind: Cultivating Clarity and Growth

The foundation of self-empowerment lies in a clear and focused mind. Start your year by setting intentions instead of rigid goals. Intentions align with your values and create a sense of purpose, allowing flexibility and growth.

Journaling for Clarity: Begin each day by journaling your thoughts, dreams, or gratitude. Writing helps declutter the mind and fosters creativity.

<u>Mindful Learning:</u> Commit to learning something new, whether it's a skill, language, or subject. Growth isn't just about achieving; it's about discovering.

Meditative Practices: Even five minutes of daily meditation can help you find inner peace and resilience in the face of challenges.

Body: Honouring Your Physical Self

Your body is the vessel that carries you through life, and treating it with care is an act of empowerment. This year, prioritize nourishment, movement, and rest in ways that resonate with your needs.

Intuitive Eating: Listen to your body's cues. Nourish it with wholesome foods while allowing occasional indulgences without guilt.

occasional indulgences without guilt.

<u>Joyful Movement:</u> Exercise doesn't have to feel like a chore. Find activities you enjoy—dancing,

Rest and Recovery: Sleep is a cornerstone of health. Create a calming bedtime ritual, perhaps with herbal teas or soothing essential oils, to ensure quality rest.

hiking, yoga, or even a brisk walk.

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My Son As the dawn of a new year approaches I'm beginning to see the world in the eyes of my son. To him our world full wonder and exploration He doesn't notice the changes that's happening around him His smile, while cheeky in nature kind of reminds me of the younger me I used to be able keep up with him but now he runs too fast.

Is it me that's growing older? Or is he just full of energy?
Back in the day I watched ITV, while he just fell asleep after watching YouTube. Whenever I feel sad he holds my hand and transforms my thoughts into poetic masterpieces
While life may be different and full of uncertainties watching my son grow makes it all worth while So from us both wishing you all A Happy 2025.

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New Year, New Support

RECOVERY LOUNGES

As this new year begins, a fresh chapter has also opened for mental health support across Bedfordshire, with the introduction by ELFT and Mind BLMK of Recovery Lounges. These replace the Crisis Cafés, following a review of the service, which included feedback from its users - who even helped choose the new name.

Opened in December, Recovery Lounges provide safe, welcoming spaces close to local communities to make it easier for adults (18+) to find out-of-hours, in-person mental health support when they need it most. The service rotates across the county, and anyone from Bedfordshire and Luton is welcome at any location.

Recovery Lounges offer:

- a free drop-in service for which an appointment is not required. a supportive and safe
- environment in which to decompress, find some quiet time, chat, or connect with others. a one-to-one session with a trained mental health worker. support to identify positive mental health
- coping strategies, including on other available services.

Mind BLMK Recovery Lounges are open between 5 and 11pm as follows:

Mondays & Tuesdays (LEIGHTON BUZZARD)

The Lighthouse, Whichello's Wharf, The Elms, Stoke Road, Leighton Buzzard LU7 2TD

Wednesdays & Saturdays (LUTON)

Luton Wellbeing Centre, Dumfries Street, Chapel Langley, Luton LU1 5BP

Thursdays (BEDFORD)

Bedford Wellbeing Centre, 3A Woburn Road, Bedford MK40 1EG

Fridays (BIGGLESWADE)

The Lawns Mental Health Resource Centre, The Baulk, Biggleswade SG18 0PT

Sundays (BEDFORD)

Florence Ball House, Kimbolton Road, Bedford MK40 2PU

** NOTE ** The Crisis Café in Milton Keynes continues to operate as before, every day between 5 and 11pm, at: The Queensway Clinic, Milton Keynes, MK2 2TE

JANUARY: WARM SPACES, GOOD FOOD, GREAT COMPANY

As the festive sparkle fades and January's chill sets in, it can be rather tempting to hibernate. However, unlike bears and badgers, we humans can't snooze our way through winter, and we can end up feeling isolated, especially if we live alone or are managing on a tight budget. Whether you're craving coffee, conversation, or simply a change of scene, there are plenty of cosy spaces this January offering warmth, good food, and friendly faces. Here are some ideas for connecting with your community to check out this New Year.

Langar at Your Local
Gurdwara Langar is a
cornerstone of Sikhism,
promoting equality and
community by offering meals
to everyone, whatever their
religion, age, or background.
Check if your local Gurdwara is
hosting events like Luton's
Sikh Soup Kitchen, which is at
6-7pm on Sundays.
www.lutonsikhsoupkitchen.co.
uk



Coffee & Scrabble at
Homerton Library, E9
6AS Relax with a hot drink
and a friendly game of
Scrabble. Open to
everyone 18+. Mondays
(until 27 Jan) 10:30 am-12
noon
www.lovehackney.uk/hom
erton- library



FoodCycle: Free Meals

Enjoy a hot meal, warm space, and good company. No booking needed – just turn up!
Find out more at www.foodcycle.org.uk/find-a-meal for these locations:

Bow Road: Fridays at 7pm

East Ham: Tuesdays at 7pm
Hackney: Thursdays at 12.30pm
Luton: Tuesdays at 6pm
Plaistow: Wednesdays at 7pm
Stepney Green: Mondays at 1pm
Walthamstow: Thursdays at 6.30pm



Mickey's Café at Church of the Transfiguration, 132 Bedford Rd, Kempston Hot lunches, drinks, and a food pantry – all free. Dogs are welcome too! Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12–2 pm www.transfiguration.org.uk/ mickey scafe



Mindful Dining at
Plaistow Fire Station, E13
8RY A meal, a hot drink,
and lots of interactive
activities like fitness, art,
and games. Sundays, 12–4
pm
www.wellnewham.org.uk/e
vents/ mindful-dining

A RIVER OF FABULOUS FESTIVITY

LONDON'S FROST FAIRS



Just before Christmas 1607, the Thames froze solid. London's bustling maritime trade halted: boats were locked in ice, workers left idle, and the river transformed into a broad icy boulevard, nicknamed 'Freezeland Street'.

It was an extraordinary moment, emblematic of the severe winters that marked the Little Ice Age in Northern Europe, the climatic era which peaked during the 17th and 18th centuries.

At the time, the Thames was broader and shallower than it is today. The closely spaced piers of the medieval London Bridge trapped ice and slowed the river's flow, aiding its freezing. These icy episodes disrupted daily life, with tradespeople unable to work without running water, and fuel both scarce and expensive. The city shivered under layers of frost and a choking smog from burning coal, yet—in true London style—the frozen river provided the perfect opportunity for some fun, games, and a little commerce.

The Birth of Frost Fairs

Out of hardship grew festivity. Ever-resilient Londoners made the most of the river freezing for weeks—and months—at a time and set up carnivals which came to be known as Frost Fairs.

Although wintry fairs seem to date back to 695AD, the first recorded London Frost Fair on the surface of the Thames took place in early 1608. Over the next 200 years, seven more were held during deep freezes.

The Thames came alive with artisan stalls, food vendors, horse and coach racing, skittles and ice skating,

jugglers

and strongmen, football, bowling, gambling and puppet shows—even the outlandish spectacle in 1814 of an elephant parade to test the strength of the ice. Fires burned within makeshift inns on the ice, warming both traders and revellers.

The most famous Frost Fair, known as The Blanket Fair, was held during the Great Winter of 1683-84, when the seas of southern Britain were frozen solid up to two miles from shore. An ox was roasted near Whitehall, and King Charles II partook in the feast. The diarist John Evelyn was prompted to write: "Coaches plied from Westminster to the Temple, and from several other stairs to and fro, as in the streets; sleds, sliding with skeetes (skates), a bullbaiting, horse and coach races, puppet plays and interludes, cooks, tipling (drinking) and other lewd places, so that it seemed to be a bacchanalian triumph, or carnival on the water."

North of London, the River Great Ouse and the heavily industrialised Lea also froze, and there are anecdotes of lively festivals where locals would skate and celebrate winter's icy hold on their lives while they were laid off work.

Frost Fairs weren't just a British phenomenon: communities across Europe faced similar winters, and the frozen waterways tempted locals out to play. Their revelries inspired some of the greatest artists of the time: Dutch painter Hendrick Avercamp painted A Winter Scene with Skaters near a Castle (left), the same year as London's first Frost Fair.

Bygone Era

By the early 19th century, the tides of change—both natural and man-made—had turned.

As winters grew milder, engineering innovations like new bridges and embankments improved the Thames's flow, stopping it from freezing.

And so ... the Thames's last Frost Fair was held in 1814.

The days of buzzing taverns and chestnuts roasting on brightly coloured stalls on the frozen Thames may be long gone, but their spirit lingers.

Winter's Legacy on the Water Modern festivals, such as the revived Bankside Frost Fair and winter markets, celebrate this frosty heritage. Guided walks at Walthamstow Wetlands and skating at the Lea Valley Ice Centre blend seasonal charm with connecting communities to each other, to the season, and to nature. Conservation efforts help to ensure these waterways remain vibrant year-round, providing a haven for winter wildlife and quiet reflection ...

... and on crisp, frosty mornings by the Thames, it's just possible to sense the whisper of its richly storied past, when icy New Years saw it transformed from trade route and lifeline into a jubilant winter playground for all.







Cultivating Green Spaces: Indoor and Outdoor Gardening for the Start of 2025

The cold and often bleak months of winter may seem like a time when gardening takes a back seat, but these months are surprisingly productive for both indoor and outdoor gardeners in the UK. Whether you have a sprawling garden, a compact balcony, or a cosy windowsill, there are plenty of opportunities to nurture and grow your green spaces. Here are some tips on how you can make the most of these winter months.

Outdoor Gardening: Preparing for the Year Ahead

Winter is the perfect time to lay the groundwork for a flourishing garden come spring. While frost and low temperatures might limit planting, there are still essential tasks to tackle:

- 1. Tidy Up and Plan: Use this time to clear away debris, prune dormant trees and shrubs, and remove any weeds. A clean garden is not only visually appealing but also prevents pests and diseases from overwintering.
- Protect Your Plants: For those with delicate or semi-hardy plants, such as agapanthus or potted herbs, ensure they are protected from frost.
- 3. Sow Hardy Seeds: For the ambitious gardener, January and February are excellent months to sow hardy vegetables like broad beans, onions, and garlic. These can be planted directly into the ground if conditions are not too frosty or started in trays indoors for later transplantation.
- 4. Prep Your Tools: Take advantage of the slower pace to clean, sharpen, and repair gardening tools. A well-maintained spade or pruning shear makes work significantly easier when spring arrives.







Indoor Gardening: Thriving in Warmth

Indoor gardening offers a fantastic way to stay connected to nature when outdoor conditions are less than hospitable. From lush greenery to fresh herbs, here are some tips for cultivating your indoor sanctuary:

- 1. Choose the Right Plants: Winter months mean reduced light, so select plants that thrive in lower-light conditions. Snake plants, pathos, and peace lilies are excellent choices for rooms with limited sunlight. For brighter spots, consider succulents, spider plants, or orchids.
- 2. Start a Herb Garden: Growing herbs like basil, parsley, and mint on your windowsill is
 easy and rewarding. Use small pots with good drainage and ensure they receive
 adequate sunlight—a south-facing window is ideal.
- 3. Experiment with Propagation: January and February are perfect for experimenting with propagation. Snip healthy stems from plants like pathos, philodendrons, or succulents and place them in water or soil to encourage root growth. This is a fun and cost-effective way to expand your indoor collection.

Seasonal Highlights: What to Enjoy Now

The UK winter landscape offers its own unique beauty. Outdoors, admire the resilience of snowdrops and winter aconites, which herald the coming spring. Indoors, enjoy the vibrant blooms of amaryllis or the cheerful yellow of narcissus bulbs forced into early bloom.

Gardening Tips for the Season

- Monitor Weather Conditions: Frost can be unpredictable, so keep an eye on forecasts
 and protect vulnerable plants accordingly.
- Plan Your Spring Garden: Use the downtime to sketch out garden layouts, order seeds, and research companion planting for optimal growth.
- Engage with the Community: Many gardening clubs and online forums offer winter workshops and discussions, providing inspiration and advice.

Conclusion

The winter might not be peak gardening months, but they are crucial for preparation, maintenance, and indoor gardening joy. By embracing the season's unique opportunities, you'll be well on your way to a thriving garden—both indoors and out—as the year



Ezogelin Corbasi

TURKISH SPICY LENTIL SOUP

Ingredients

200g red lentils, rinsed

40g rice

50g bulgur (fine or coarse, whichever you have)

1 medium onion, finely chopped

2 cloves garlic, chopped or crushed

1 tablespoon tomato puree

1 teaspoon paprika

1 teaspoon chilli paste/chilli flakes for some heat (optional)

1 teaspoon dried mint

2 tablespoons olive oil

1.5 litres chicken or vegetable stock

Salt and pepper to taste

Lemon wedges for serving

Instructions

- Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat.
- Add the finely chopped onion and sauté until softened.
- Add the chopped garlic and cook gently for a minute.
- Stir in the tomato paste and paprika (and/or chilli).
- Cook for 2-3 minutes, stirring frequently.
- Add the rinsed lentils, rice, and bulgur to the pot; mix well, pour in the stock and bring the mixture to a boil.
- Reduce the heat to low, cover the pot, and let it simmer for 25-30 minutes, or until the lentils, rice, and bulgur are tender.
- Stir in the dried mint, salt, and pepper. Simmer for another 5 minutes to let the flavours mingle.
- If the soup seems too thick, gradually add some hot water to achieve the desired consistency.
- Remove from heat. If you prefer a smoother texture, you can blend the soup.

Serve

Garnish with lemon wedges to squeeze into your soup. Delicious sprinkled with some more chilli paste/flakes, a few cumin seeds warmed in a glug of olive oil, chopped parsley/mint, or toasted seeds.

Serves 6 as a starter, 4 as a main meal Prep time 15 mins | Cooking time 45 mins

Soups hold a special place in Turkey's enormous cuisine: Anatolia's soupmaking traditions reflect a diverse heritage which has been shared through the centuries and across the entire Middle East, blending flavours, textures, cultural influences, and easily found ingredients to inspire kitchen legends which evoke folklore and collective community spirit.

This spicy lentil soup is one of my favourites; it's soothed me through winter sniffles, professional angst, and a broken heart. It's fibre- and protein-rich, easy to make, and rather moreish. Named after Ezo, a homesick bride (gelin) from Eastern Turkey who created it to impress her new Syrian in-laws, Ezogelin soup has come to symbolise her resilience and love for her culture. It also freezes well, so you could make a big batch to store up for a comforting, instant lunch or supper with a hunk of crusty bread.



Karen





Navigating the Digital World: A Fun Guide to Well-Being

Welcome to the vibrant digital age! Technology and social media shape our lives in exciting ways, but they can also pull us in different directions. The NHS ELFT Companion Magazine is here to explore this modern paradox, highlighting how our online interactions impact mental health and offering tips for achieving digital well-being. Let's find that sweet spot between connection and solitude!

A Double-Edged Sword

Connectivity is amazing! We can connect with friends and family worldwide. But beware—sometimes this digital world can feel lonely, with pressures to seek validation and compare ourselves to others. As our online networks grow, we might lose touch with real-life connections. So, let's tread mindfully in this digital landscape, balancing the good with the potentially harmful.

The Social Media Mirage

Social media is like a funhouse mirror, reflecting perfect lives that make ours feel inadequate. It's easy to fall into the comparison trap! Remember, those highlight reels are just snippets of someone's life, not the full story. Recognize this illusion, and reclaim your self-worth!







Embrace a Digital Detox

Instead of ditching technology entirely, how about a digital detox? This means setting boundaries to protect our time and mental space. Try tech-free zones, curate your social feeds, and engage meaningfully online—be intentional about your connections!

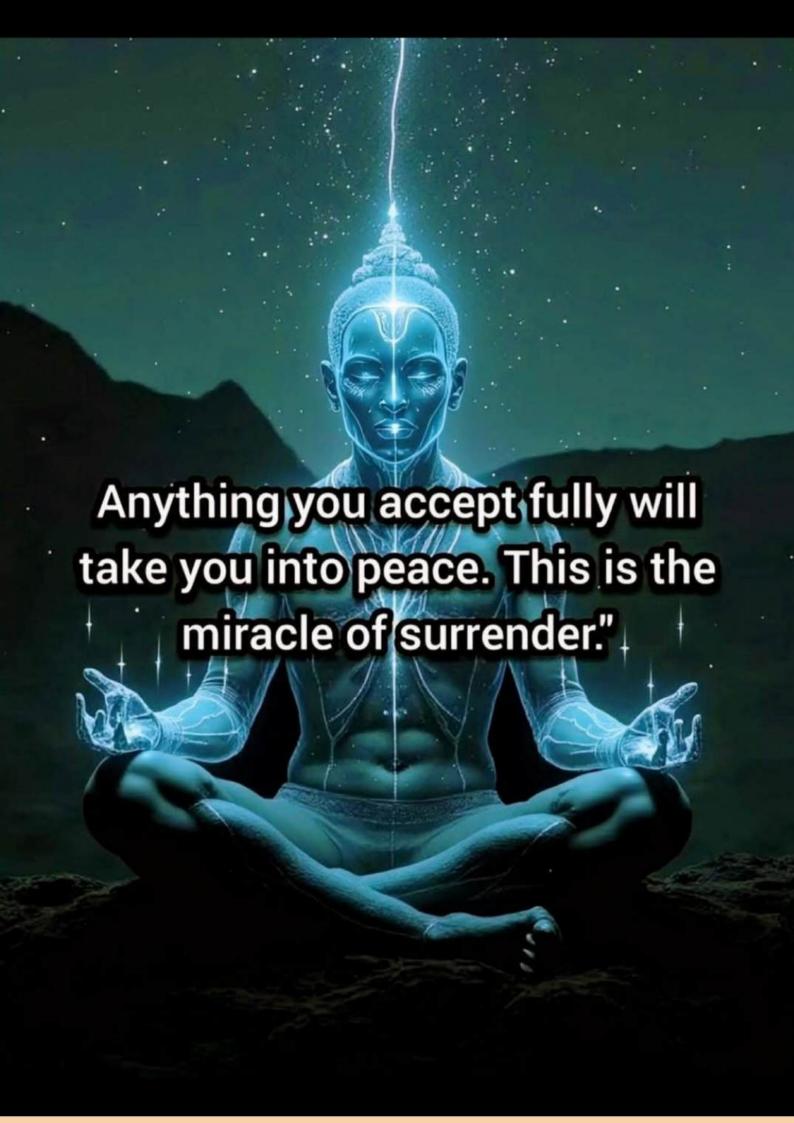
The Joy of Real-World Connections

Don't forget the joy of being present! Nothing beats face-to-face chats, handwritten notes, or enjoying nature. Life's best moments often happen away from screens, in laughter and shared experiences. Nurture those real connections to balance out your digital life.

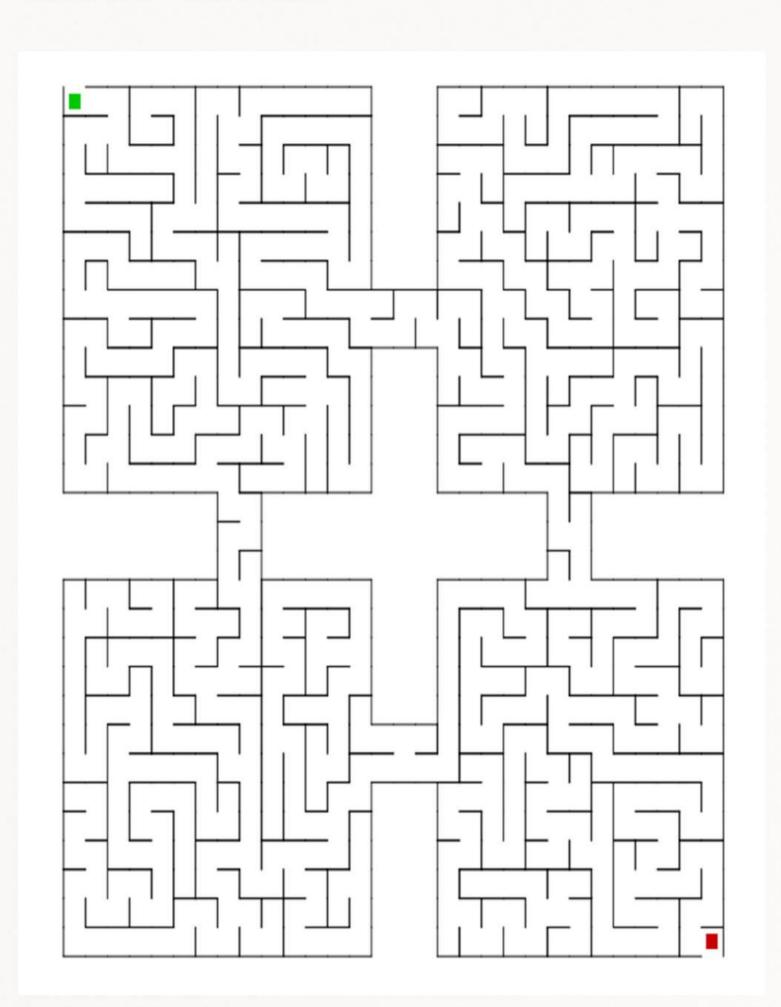
Digital Savvy

Be a savvy digital citizen! Understanding the algorithms and spotting misinformation helps you navigate the online jungle with ease. Engage with online communities thoughtfully and contribute positively to make the digital world a better place.

Finding Digital Harmony!



Welcome to the Four Room Maze, can you find your way out of this labyrinth. Start at the green and find your way as quick as you can to the red exit. Best of luck!!

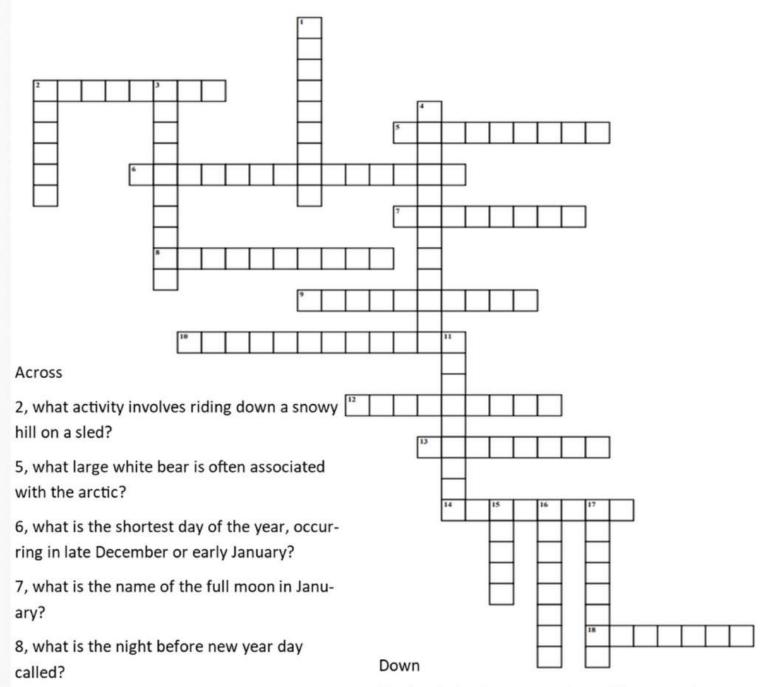


Happy Chinese New Year! Were you lucky enough to find the eight Lucky Lanterns?





Its all about January



- 9. what activity involves gliding on ice usings 1, what is the flower associate with January?
 - 2, what winter sport gliding down snow-covered slopes?
 - 3, what activity involves fishing through a hole in the ice?
 - 4, what warm beverage is popular during the winter months?
 - 11, What is a unique ice crystal that falls from the sky?
 - 15, what is a traditional snow house called?
 - 16, what is the Scottish celebration of New Years Eve called?
 - 17, What term describes the fresh layer of ice crystals that forms on surfaces during cold January mornings?

- 9, what activity involves gliding on ice usings shoes?
- 10, what shopping events often occur in late December or January, offering discounts?
- 12, what colourful events often occurs often seen in the sky during New Year's celebrations
- 13, what is a severe snowstorm with strong winds called?
- 14, What Christian feast day is celebrated on January 6th?
- 18, What is a common winter figure made from snow?

Solutions Page

8 LUCKY LANTERNS

Its all about January

Across

2, sledding

5, polar bear

6, winter solstice

7, wolf moon

8, new year eve

9, ice skating

10, January sales

12, fireworks

13, blizzard

14, epiphany

18, snowman

Down

2, skiing

1, carnation

3,ice fishing

4, hot chocolate

11, snowflake

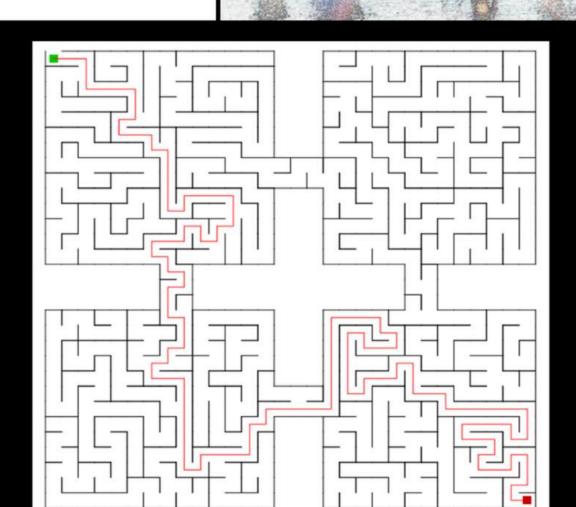
16, Hogmanay

17, new frost

15, igloo

Here is where to find them.







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 HEATH 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

EXTRA SUPPORT FOR SUICIDALTHOUGHTS

Papyrus WWW.PAPYRUS-UK.ORG

R;pple Suicide Prevention WWW.RIPPLESUICIDEPREVENTION.COM

Shout GIVEUSASHOUT.ORG

Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide UKSOBS.ORG

Campaign Against Living Miserably WWW.THECALMZONE.NET