



Carers 4 Carers

Finding support through supporting each other

January 2017

January can be such a drab month, can't it. I couldn't help thinking the other day that it's quite amazing how such loveliness can come out of the darkness. I love singing and over the New Year I've been on a singing week. The words of one of our pieces have stuck in my head—"If winter's here, can spring be far behind". Yes, this week I spotted the first snowdrops in the grass in my garden, the real harbingers of spring.



Okay, so I've gone all poetic but it's true that if we look for it, we can usually find a silver lining. It can be really tough sometimes to find that lining when you're caring but it doesn't have to be a big thing to lift your spirits and of course, as a result, both you and the loved one you care for benefit.

Something else that made me think was a home décor panel I won in a raffle. "Do more of what makes you happy" it said. We're always so busy caring that we forget about ourselves. It's OK to be selfish if that's how you want to look at it. Many carers give up their interests and activities to care but it's been proven that having some 'me' time is important for both of you. I don't make New Year resolutions any more but one thing I am planning to do is allow myself time to do something that I really enjoy. How about you?

OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS

Carers4Carers' monthly meetings take place on the **fourth** Friday of the month. We meet at the Kineton Village Hall, Mill Street, Kineton, CV35 OLB between 10.30 and 12 noon. We always start with time for coffee and chat and then, if a speaker or workshop is scheduled, this will usually begin at about 11 o'clock. Come when you can and stay for as long as you are able.

Friday 27th January — "Looking after yourself" with Harm Gordijn from the rehab hospital at Heathcote. It's important that you look after yourself and keep well. Harm

will give us ideas for some gentle exercises that are easy to fit in in difficult situations but will help keep us moving. Please note—this is not a keep fit session so don't worry!

Friday 24th February—Karen Swan, who was the drama facilitator working with the team from NCS was to have been with us in October but had to reschedule. She's going to give us an opportunity to 'Let off steam!'

Friday 24th March - No speaker this month so time for coffee and chat and some of Anita's lovely therapies.

Carers 4 Carers is one of a network of Omega Care for Life Meeting Point Support Groups

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Let's talk about... Mental Health

Come and have a conversation with us on
Wednesday 1 February from 6.30pm - 8.30pm
 Stratford Samaritans Community Hub
 Tyler House, Tyler Street,
 Stratford upon Avon CV37 6TY

Do you use mental health services in Coventry and Warwickshire?
 Do you care for someone who does?
 Are you from an agency who supports people who do?



If you answer "yes" to any of these questions, you are invited to meet with clinicians and Senior Managers from local mental health services at our next accountability meeting. Here you will have the opportunity to ask questions about services and developments within mental health.

If you require any further information contact us on 024 7696 7872

When Heidi Portrey visited us last year she told us about the accountability meetings that are held throughout Warwickshire to give the public an opportunity to provide feedback on their experiences with mental health. A panel of managers from relevant services is on hand to listen and provide answers or guidance. Two of the questions raised at the last meeting in November in Coventry included topics such as 'Why is it the 'fast track' doesn't seem so fast track?' and "The Carers' pathway is complicated. What information is available to carers?". The first was answered with a promise to look into this and notes produced since the meeting show that progress is being made and the response to the second acknowledged the situation and confirmation that work was being done to improve things.

Service users in the Stratford area now have an opportunity to attend a similar meeting, to be held on 1st February. While health professionals are also welcome at the meeting, Heidi is anxious that carers and patients are encouraged to attend since they are the best people to 'tell it how it is'.


We recently held a planning meeting with volunteers of our group. We have planned our meetings and topics up to and including May. However, we always like to make sure that we plan what you want, which is why we don't book any further ahead. So, if you have an idea for a topic or focus for a meeting, please let us know. All suggestions are followed up and acted upon wherever possible.

DATES OF MEETINGS 2017

Are you the organised kind of person who likes to fill dates in your diary for the year? If so, here are the dates for our meetings in 2017.

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|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| January 27 | July 28 th |
| February 24 th | August 25 th |
| March 24 th | September 22 nd |
| April 28 th | October 27 th |
| May 26 th | November 24 th |
| June 23 rd | December 8 th |

Of course, August is our social meeting when we go out for coffee.



Warwickshire County Council

Carers4Carers is pleased to acknowledge grant funding from a number of sources including from Kineton Parish Council and our County Councillor.

“How do you spell love ? ” asked Piglet.
 “You don't spell it, you feel it,” answered Pooh.
 Pooh was so wise. When caring gets tough, remember you do it because you love the person you care for.