

Wellspring News



Bill Oddie's Top Comedy Moments

See page 4 for details

Welcome and Intro

Welcome to our 'new look' newsletter for 2012 updating you on our recent activities and forthcoming events.

Wellspring continues to provide a professional counselling service to people who live in Nailsea and the surrounding villages and in 2011 provided 2,215 sessions in total working with 266 people. We would like to thank all our funders and supporters including The Nani Huyu Trust, Nailsea Town Council, Backwell Parish Council and local churches for their commitment and for seeing the value of Wellspring and the service it provides year on year to the local community.

I hope you enjoy this edition and we would welcome any comments or ideas for future articles.

Chris Daniels

Director, Wellspring Counselling



Free Youth Service

Wellspring is delighted to have completed the second year of a three year Children in Need funded free counselling service for young people aged between 11 and 18.

This provides free professional one-to-one counselling sessions and a counselling 'drop-in' service at Nailsea's Tower House Medical Centre on Wednesday afternoons. The aim is to improve self-esteem, confidence and general wellbeing for those young people who are disadvantaged by mental health issues and challenged by adverse circumstances. We have been very pleased with recent feedback received in year two of this project as young clients have been telling us what impact their counselling with us has had on their lives.

We developed a Wellbeing Evaluation Wheel for the purpose of assessing the success and effectiveness of our youth counselling. The difference between the initial form results and the one completed at the end of sessions allows us to evaluate and monitor change in the young people. The feedback process has shown that there is, on average, a 30% increase in self esteem and confidence and a 35% improvement in the feeling of low mood. These initial results have been encouraging and we will carry on seeking ways to continue funding this invaluable service beyond 2013.



Counselling is a Process of Listening to Yourself

People often ask us at Wellspring 'what is counselling?' so Mariza, one of our counsellors has written the following:

'This is such a broad question but I would like to share with you what my experience of counselling is from my own perspective as a counsellor. To do this I would like to start with a quote from the founder of Person Centred Counselling Carl Rogers:

"As therapy proceeds, he finds that he is daring to become himself... Involved in this process of becoming himself is a profound experience of personal choice.

- On Becoming a Person, 1963.

What I experience with people when I first meet them is often a loss of sense of who they are and where they are in their lives. It is through the counselling session that they really get to hear their thoughts,

feelings and understand how this impacts on their behaviour and lives. Counselling is like holding a mirror up to someone and asking them to take the time to have a really good look at who they are. As the counselling progresses the mirror reflects the different angles of who a person is and enables the reflection to become clearer.

What changes would you see in a mirror if you looked at yourself over time? Would you learn to see yourself more clearly and in so doing would this enable you to view yourself and your life differently? Counselling is a process of listening to yourself. When we truly listen to ourselves we learn to know and understand our thoughts, feelings and behaviours in a way that enables us to see our choices. As self awareness is raised people become more aware of themselves and their choices and as time progresses they

become more accepting of themselves and of all the richness that their lives have to offer.

Counselling is not easy. Looking directly in a mirror for a sustained amount of time is difficult and at times very uncomfortable. It takes courage. As a counsellor I walk alongside those I see as they take the time to look, challenge and explore who they are. I give them the space to explore, the compassion to understand and the challenge to move forward to a place where they can know and understand themselves in a more confident and accepting way.

I am privileged to meet many different people and work creatively with each individual, respecting who they are and all that they bring.'

Jo's Story...

I used to think it was a failing to be seeing a counsellor, like you had to be crazy. It was a last resort, I had failed at my life and now needed professional help. It felt shameful. But now I have come out the other side, my whole view on counselling has totally changed. I would not hesitate a minute in asking for more if I felt I would benefit from it again, and now see that as a strong point to myself, I can see I need help and don't feel ashamed to ask for it.

I can now say that I am proud of myself, a word I could not use about myself or hear others say. It was hard work, with loads of tears and not how I thought it would be at all. I thought I would tell them the problems I could see and they would tell me how to fix them. They would tell me why I felt like I did, what it meant and how to change; in truth I didn't think they could fix me (I saw my head and mind as being broken). I was so wrong, I just talked and talked and talked. It was just so easy and more and more came out. No-one judged me or my feelings and no-one looked at me like I was stupid. They understood, they cared and could see the hurt and pain for what it was.

I am so grateful for the skills these people share and just knowing these people are there if I should need them again is such a comfort. I am such a happier, confident person these days and I owe so much thanks to my counsellor for that.

Many, many thanks,

Jo x

(A Wellspring Client).



Chris Serle Becomes Wellspring Trustee



Chris (pictured left) was born and brought up in Bristol and is probably best known for reporting on the BBC programme 'That's Life' with Esther Rantzen and making three series of 'In at the Deep End'. Chris has always been in the public eye through presenting either on the television or the radio; he presented Radio 4s 'Pick of the Week' for 7 years and a daily live show on BBC Radio Bristol for 3 years.

Chris has already been involved with Wellspring Counselling by leading a fundraising event in which he and Tim Brooke-Taylor (also a supporter of Wellspring) had an evening's conversation 'Parkinson style'. He has now agreed to become a Trustee and says:

"I'm proud to be a new member of the excellent team that runs Wellspring. It provides such an important service

to hundreds of people in the area who, for one reason or another, need counselling. A few sessions can make a huge difference to a person's life. Wellspring does its job supremely well and I hope I can, in some small way, help it continue its important work."

It goes without saying we are delighted to welcome Chris on board.

Other Trustee News

Rupert Ridge, long serving and highly regarded Chair of Wellspring and Trustee has stood down from the Trustees to continue his other charitable projects. We're sorry to lose Rupert but are grateful for his wise stewardship and his commitment to serving Wellspring. We wish him the very best for the future.

Men and Counselling

Even today in the 21st Century, there can still be a stigma attached to men reaching out for help with emotional issues and attending counselling sessions for support. Though in more recent years the stigma of mental health has been dramatically reduced for both men and women, many men still feel that it would be a weakness to acknowledge a mental health issue and either mask their problems or fail to recognise the symptoms.

According to a recent study published by the National Men's Health Forum, 'Men's mental and physical health in the UK is unnecessarily poor'. 40% of men still die prematurely (before the age of 75), men visit their GP 20% less frequently than women and one in eight men is dependent on alcohol. Mental health services fail to reach many of the groups where there may be men with mental health difficulties. On average men suffer from depression more frequently and are three times more likely to end their own lives than women, with the peak difference occurring between ages 30 – 39. Locally, in North Somerset men are over-represented in the suicide statistics.

But it's not all bad news. Men are increasingly feeling more confident in approaching mental health and counselling services for support and Wellspring has been working with more men in recent years who are now accessing our services. If you are a man who has been thinking about asking for help but you haven't known where to go or what to ask for do call us at Wellspring and we will discuss accessing counselling support with one of our sixteen counsellors.

In the next issue: Adrian, one of Wellspring's counsellors writes about his experience as a client, training to be a counsellor and why some men may still find it challenging to ask for help with mental health issues.

Past Fundraisers

We are delighted that the ladies at the InShape gym in Nailsea chose Wellspring Counselling as the charity they would like to support. They took part in a 12 hour non-stop spin bike challenge on 3rd October 2011.

Gym members were asked to challenge their fitness level by pledging the minutes they could cycle, and sponsorship was obtained for each minute completed. Their efforts raised a fantastic £491 and we are sincerely grateful for their support. Well done to those who took part, and a big "Thank You" to everyone involved.

Wellspring May Cabaret

A great time was had by all at last year's Wellspring May Cabaret. Tim Lewis, a well-known local performer kicked off the evening with his amusing take on 'Wind in the Willows', followed by Nailsea Irish Session, playing traditional music at its best. Backwell's singing sensations, Las Chicas joined the line up, getting a tremendous response from the audience. Dave Shattock was splendid as MC and ensured the smooth running of the evening. A big thank you to all our 'artistes' and those who came along and supported the event.

Sue's Extraordinary Bike Ride



1100 miles in 19 days excluding two days of rest: 50-90 miles per day. Unsupported with tent for two weeks and supported at the end for one week.

I was travelling light without cooking equipment as well as frugally, so I ate a lot of cold sardines and baked beans. I never want to look another sardine in the eye!!! Some days were easy and went well. Some days felt hard and difficult because of the terrain or my own emotional state. It was interesting to see how I was when

all the usual supports were stripped away. One day when I found myself pedalling at 8 pm, still not having anywhere to sleep, I realised that I like knowing where I am going to put my head. After that I decided to book ahead and cope with the other difficulties and practicalities. The weather was variable but manageable most days although some times the head on wind felt as though it was blowing me backwards and the thing that caused me most fear was freewheeling downhill at 35 mph with sideways winds!

What warmed me a lot was how I was supported and sorted in most things by the shops and the community of Nailsea who wished me well, before I went, and welcomed me back wholeheartedly.

"Mary" really was the best bike ever and I was carried faithfully over many potholes and hills. I used minor roads and National Cycling Network routes which meant that

it was safer, sometimes more circuitous, but very beautiful. Travelling up the country also meant that I had the chance to see it unfold geographically as well as culturally. I met the most amazingly generous people, some of whom spontaneously donated to the charity such as the lorry driver at a burger van in Yorkshire who had never met me but donated to the charity. I even met people who had relatives in Nailsea and Backwell!

People were so kind as well. For example - the cycling commuter in York who took me from one side of York to the other to ensure that I made it through and gave me a guided tour on the way despite being on his way to work. Many shared a bit of their lives with me giving me a window on how others live.

THE FINAL AMOUNT SUE RAISED FOR WELLSRING WAS OVER £4,000!



Bill Oddie's Top Comedy Moments

Wellspring is thrilled to announce that Bill has agreed to take part in a conversational fundraising event with presenter, broadcaster and Wellspring Trustee, Chris Serle. A national treasure, Bill Oddie was one third of UK's top comedy hit of the 70s - The Goodies and the UK's favourite wildlife presenter regularly fronting Springwatch and Autumnwatch.

Witty, candid and unconventional, Bill invites you to join him as he recounts his working relationships with some of the greatest comic talents of his generation - including John Cleese, Jonathan Miller and fellow Goodies, whilst delighting us with his top onscreen musical comedy moments from the last century. You can expect Laurel & Hardy and The Marx Brothers but otherwise Bill is not giving anything away and we don't blame him! A fascinating insight into the comic influences of this unique comic performer.

Fri 23 Nov 2012 @ 7.30pm // Nailsea School
Tickets: £12 - Including canapés. (Available from the Wellspring Office or Nailsea Music Shop 01275 855021)



Bath Male Choir

We are very lucky to have booked the Bath Male Choir to perform at a fundraiser for Wellspring, on 9th March 2013 at Backwell School, so definite diary notes need to be made as tickets will go very quickly!

Bath Male Choir was started by Grenville Jones in January 2006. Its remarkable success proves, without doubt, that "men do sing!" In 2008, with 60 singers, Grenville entered his Choir for the BBC's Last Choir Standing series. The rest, as they say, is history! The Choir reached the top five and were supported by millions of viewers across the UK. One of the judges, Russell Watson, dubbed them, "The Wall of Sound" and concert requests flooded in. Since that time the BBC has shown the Last Choir Standing Series around the world and Bath Male Choir has supporters as far away as Australia and South Africa.

Look out for more details nearer the time.

A BIG THANK YOU...

to all of our
supporters.

Get In Touch:

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Become a friend
of Wellspring.

- £2 per month helps provide two sessions of youth counselling.
- £5 per month helps us provide a counselling room for 20 sessions.
- £10 per month will help provide counselling for 1 client (based on an average of six sessions.)

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