

Mental Health Carers Newsletter

We support people who care for family, partners or friends who struggle with their mental health. Our Service is a partnership between Bromley Well and Bromley, Lewisham & Greenwich Mind

Supporting you in Summer

A snapshot of our events over summer...

Our events are free for carers registered with Bromley Well.

To register and book your place, email MHcarers@bromleywell.org.uk or call Bromley Well Freephone on 0808 278 7898

Supporting someone experiencing Psychosis

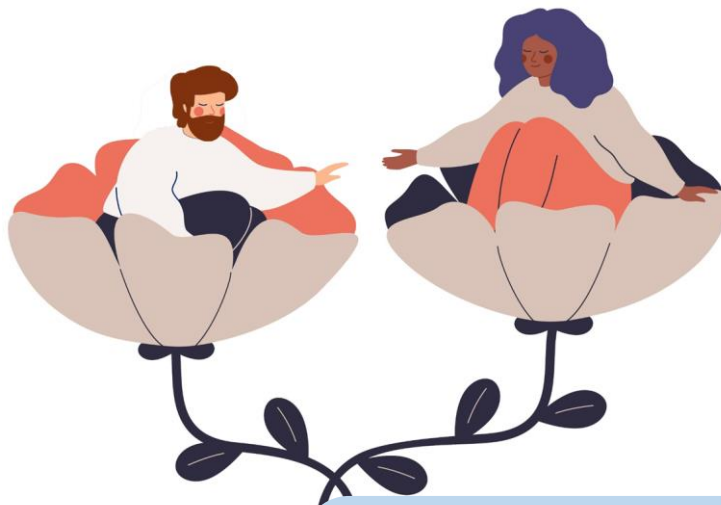
21st June 2pm – 4pm
5 Station Road, Orpington

Understanding Depression

A Wednesday in August
Date TBC soon

Summer Picnic for carers

6th June
1pm onwards
Church House
Gardens
Bromley



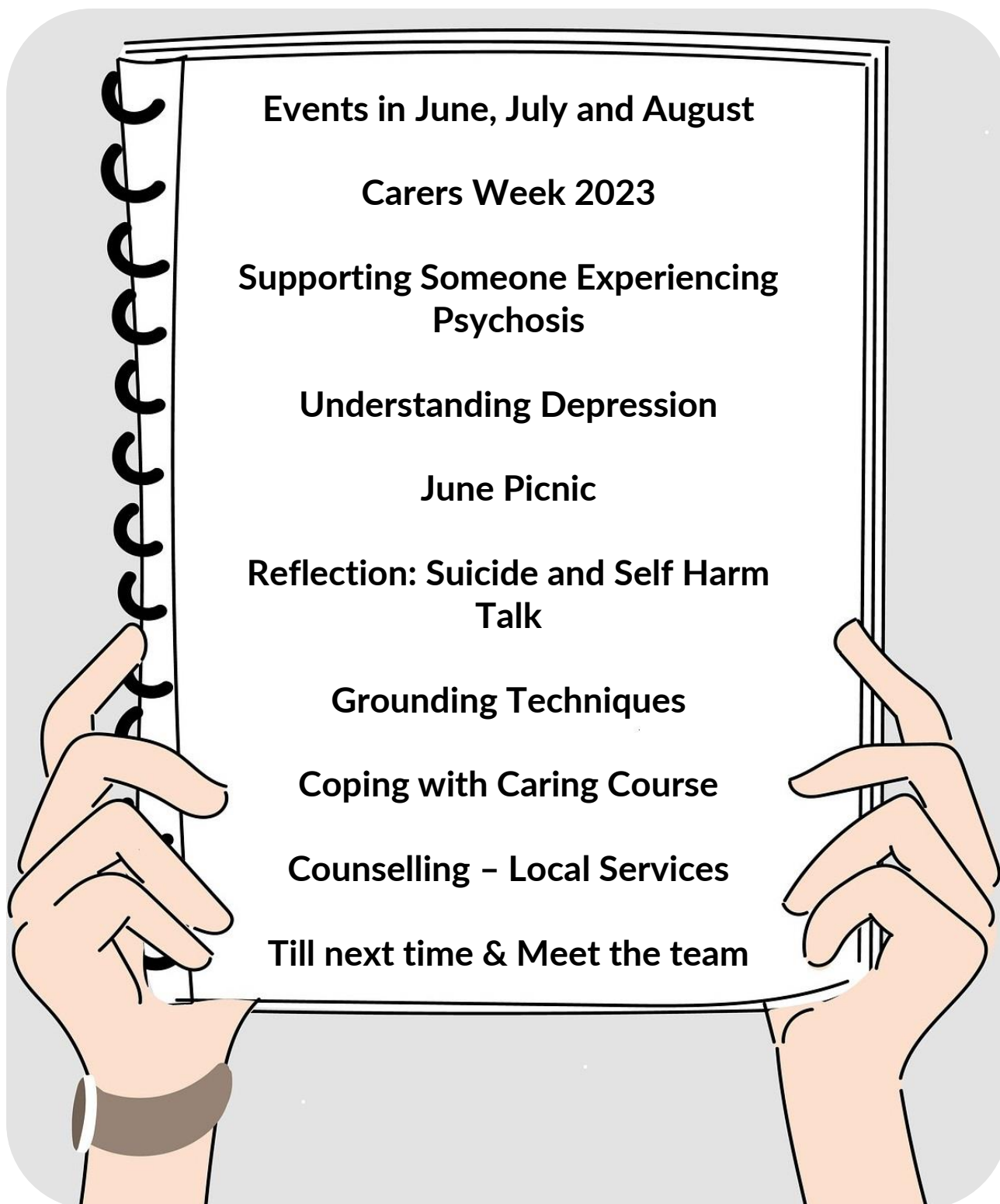
Carers Drop-In Zoom

Every Wednesday at 3pm, join for a safe space to chat to fellow carers. Contact us for the zoom link to attend!

Coping with Caring

Our 6 week course for mental health carers is taking a break over summer. Next course starts 5th September!

Inside this issue



If you are seeking support, wish to sign up to one our events or have any questions please refer to us by emailing MHcarers@bromleywell.org.uk or by calling Bromley Well Freephone 0808 278 7898 and asking for mental health carers

Carers Week 2023

starts June 5th



Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring and help people who don't think of themselves as having caring responsibilities to identify as carers and access much-needed support.

We know that many carers have trouble seeing themselves as carers. We so often hear how they're 'just doing what any parent, partner or friend would do'.... **But you do so much and you deserve to be seen and to get support for yourself.** Previously we shared the words below by carer Ya. Her words are so eloquently and powerfully stated.

If you could share a simple sentence or statement with the world about what it means to be a carer, what would you say?

If you wish to share, contact us with your thoughts and we'll include them in anything we do to fight for support for you.



“Being seen as a carer is healing in itself. Otherwise the pain is invisible.”



Supporting someone experiencing Psychosis



On Wednesday June 21st we're joined by Clinical Psychologists in training from the ADAPT (Anxiety, Depression, Affective disorders, Personality Disorders and Trauma) team in Oxleas NHS.

They will be joining us for a workshop, which will include how we can understand psychosis and discussing ways in which we can support someone experiencing psychosis.

If you would like to join us for this event, please RSVP to book your place by emailing us at MHcarers@bromleywell.org.uk

21st June

2pm - 4pm

**5 Station Road
Orpington**



'Psychosis (also called a 'psychotic experience' or 'psychotic episode') is when someone perceives or interprets reality in a very different way from people around them. They might be said to 'lose touch' with reality.

The most common types of psychotic experiences are hallucinations, delusions and disorganised thinking and speech.

Psychosis affects people in different ways. Someone might experience it once, have short episodes throughout life, or live with it most of the time. For some it can be an experience that happens on its own, and for others it can be part of a diagnosis such as schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder, severe depression and others.' – mind.org.uk

Understanding Depression

In August we will be joined by Lead Clinical Psychologist Kim Griffiths from the ADAPT (Anxiety, Depression, Affective disorders, Personality Disorders and Trauma) team in Oxleas NHS.

Kim will be joining us for a talk on understanding depression.

Kim is passionate about supporting carers and his previous talk for us on understanding personality disorders in April was insightful and really helpful.



Coming on a Wednesday in August

Date and Venue to be announced soon!



If you would like to join us for this event, please RSVP to book your place by emailing us at MHcarers@bromleywell.org.uk

Summer Picnic

You're invited to join us for a summer picnic, to chat with other carers, relax and have some tasty treats in the sunshine

June 6th
1pm onwards
Church House Gardens, Bromley

Meet us in the park,
Spot us by the bunting!



This is a free event to celebrate Carers Week 2023! Please RSVP to book your place by emailing us at MHcarers@bromleywell.org.uk

Reflection: Suicide and Self Harm Workshop

Last month, Clinical Psychologists in training Bobbi Scott, Latoya Idele and Molly Heeger joined us for an insightful workshop on understanding suicide and self harm.

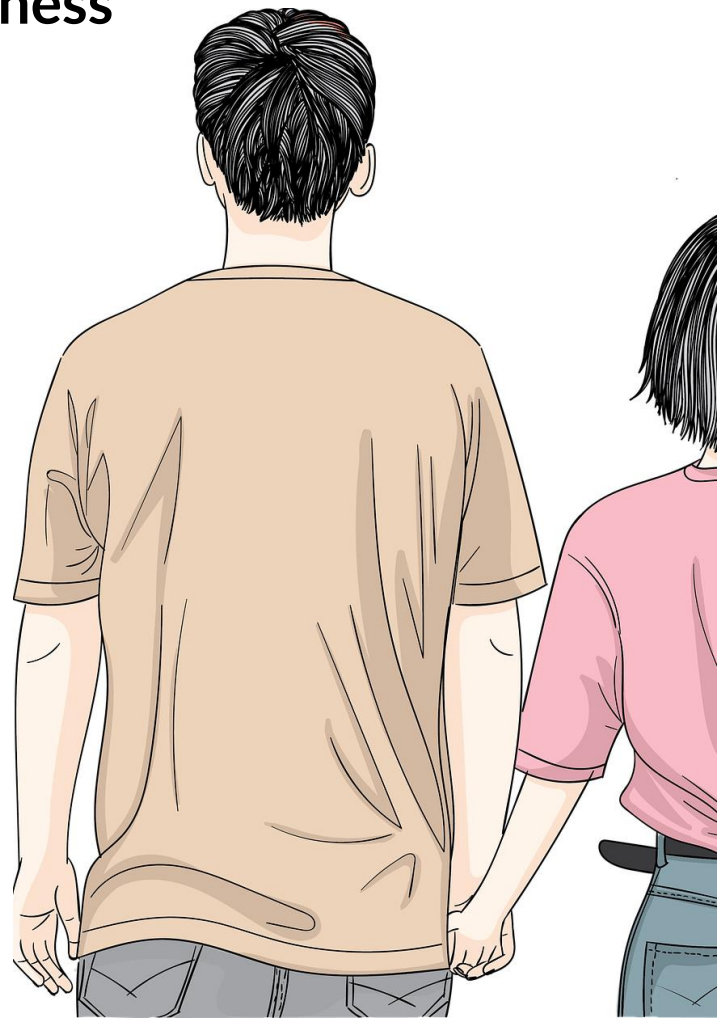
Bobbi, Latoya and Molly covered many interesting areas, including myths and facts about suicide and self harm, techniques to support the one you care for if they are feeling this way and safety planning.

Overall a theme on 'sitting with suicidality' surfaced; how having an empathic witness to your suffering, being believed and being listened to helps. Metaphorically holding someone's hand in the darkness can help so much.

**'Hold someone's hand
in the darkness'**

If you missed the talk and would like to hear about the techniques and safety planning, do get in touch and we can provide the slides from the workshop.

Oxleas
NHS



Grounding

One of the techniques spoken of during the workshop was grounding.

Grounding is a self-soothing technique for times of high anxiety, stress and overwhelming emotions. It uses your basic senses to 'ground' yourself back into the present moment, to stop your emotions spiralling and calm your nervous system.

The 5-4-3-2-1 grounding technique is simple to use wherever you are, for both you and the one you care for in times of high emotion.

It's as simple as observing your environment and finding and naming (either out loud or just acknowledging to yourself)...

*5 things you can see
4 things you can touch
3 things you can hear
2 things you can smell
1 thing you can taste*

You can also just use one sense if that works best for you, for example someone having a panic attack may find one sense works best (such as touch) to ground themselves and distract themselves away from panic so may be able to touch a wall or nearby hand rail to ground themselves.

Some people who self harm have found strong sensations like ice water or sour sweets help.



Grounding

From where you're sitting you might be able to name that you can see a cloud through the window, an armchair, the wood of the floor, an open door, a newspaper near you.


You may be able to feel the fabric of the cushion beside you with your hand, the breeze on your face from the open window, the palm of your hand cupping the other and your feet on the floor.

You may be able to hear the noise of a train in the distance, a conversation overheard outside or a bird outside.


You may be able to smell something cooking from a neighbour's house, or someone's perfume.

You may be able to taste the flavour of something you just ate. You may have a drink beside you to take a sip of, or sweet or fruit.


Noticing all these small things and taking a moment to take them in can help you step away from the high emotion you're currently feeling and soothe your nervous system.




5 things
you can see




4 things
you can touch



3 things
you can hear



2 things
you can smell



1 thing
you can taste



Coping with Caring Redesign

Last year our course for mental health carers underwent a redesign. We want to share more about the six sessions with you...

Introduction and The Emotional Impacting of Caring

Getting to know each other and thinking about the complex nature of being a mental health carer

The Body Keeps the Score

Looking at how the body holds stress, anxiety and overwhelm and techniques to manage the physical effects of this; including mindfulness, grounding and muscle relaxation that we'll practice together throughout the course

Coping with Distressing Conversations and Situations

Discussing the nature of mental health and what recovery means to individual people. Exploring different communication ideas, de-escalation techniques and the complex area of boundaries. We'll look at the emotional impact of distressing situations and explore together ways to cope and look after your own wellbeing

Carrying What Can't Be Fixed

Using acknowledgement, self-compassion and realistic self-care. We'll explore creative ways to cope and express yourself and how to build a self-care toolkit

Growing Your Life Outside of Caring

Exploring how many carers find they're feeling a loss of identity, as feelings become intertwined with the one you care for and it's hard when you take on their emotions too. We'll explore how to grow your life outside of caring and create a balance between your caring and your own life

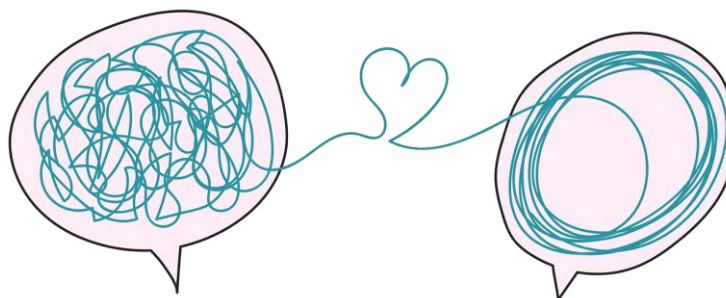
Looking Forwards

Looking at what the course has covered and how to bring the techniques practiced with you moving forwards. Here we will also look at future planning (for you as a carer and the one you care for) and navigating the mental health system, as well as advocacy and carers' rights.

Counselling – Your Guide to Local Services

If you're seeking counselling, it can be confusing finding out what is available and what might be the right fit for you.

Below we outline the local NHS counselling service available as well as the two low cost counselling services for Bromley.



Talk Together Bromley is the free NHS talking therapy support in Bromley. This is part of the NHS Improving Access to Psychological Therapies service (IAPT) and free to those living in Bromley.

They offer talking therapies for people experiencing depression, general anxiety and worry, health anxiety, panic attacks, social anxiety, traumatic memories and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).

They offer Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), guided self help, computerised CBT, therapeutic CBT based workshops, employment coaches and counselling. They usually work on a 6 sessions basis.

If you're aged 18 or over and registered with a Bromley GP, you can self refer to Talk Together Bromley by calling 0300 003 3000 or completing their form online. For more information on what support they offer and self-referral, visit their website at www.talktogetherbromley.co.uk

If you are looking for a counsellor from an under-represented community please try the [Black, African and Asian Therapy Network](#), [Metro](#), or [Pink Therapy](#)

Counselling – Your Guide to Local Services

Westmeria Counselling offers a low cost counselling service, whereby they ask clients to make a contribution towards the cost of their counselling. This amount is set by you at the start (minimum fee for each session is £10).

They offer up to 24 sessions and they have also just started a range of workshops each month for £15 (on topics such as anxiety, menopause and more).

All of their counsellors are members of the counselling governing body BACP. You can self refer by calling 0208 467 9693 or through email - enquiries@westmeriacounselling.co.uk

For more information on what support they offer and self-referral, visit their website at www.westmeriacounselling.co.uk



Bromley Community Counselling Service offers a low cost counselling service, whereby they ask clients to make a contribution towards the cost of their counselling. This amount is set by you at the start (minimum fee for each session is £20).

They offer up to 24 sessions and offer psychodynamic therapy, psychological therapy, humanistic therapy, gestalt, transactional analysis and existential.

All of their counsellors are members of a nationally recognised professional counselling/psychotherapy register, such as those held by BACP, UKCP, BPS, or BABCP. You can self refer to by calling 0208 460 7711 or through email - contact@bccs.uk.com

For more information on what support they offer and self-referral, visit their website at www.bccs.uk.com

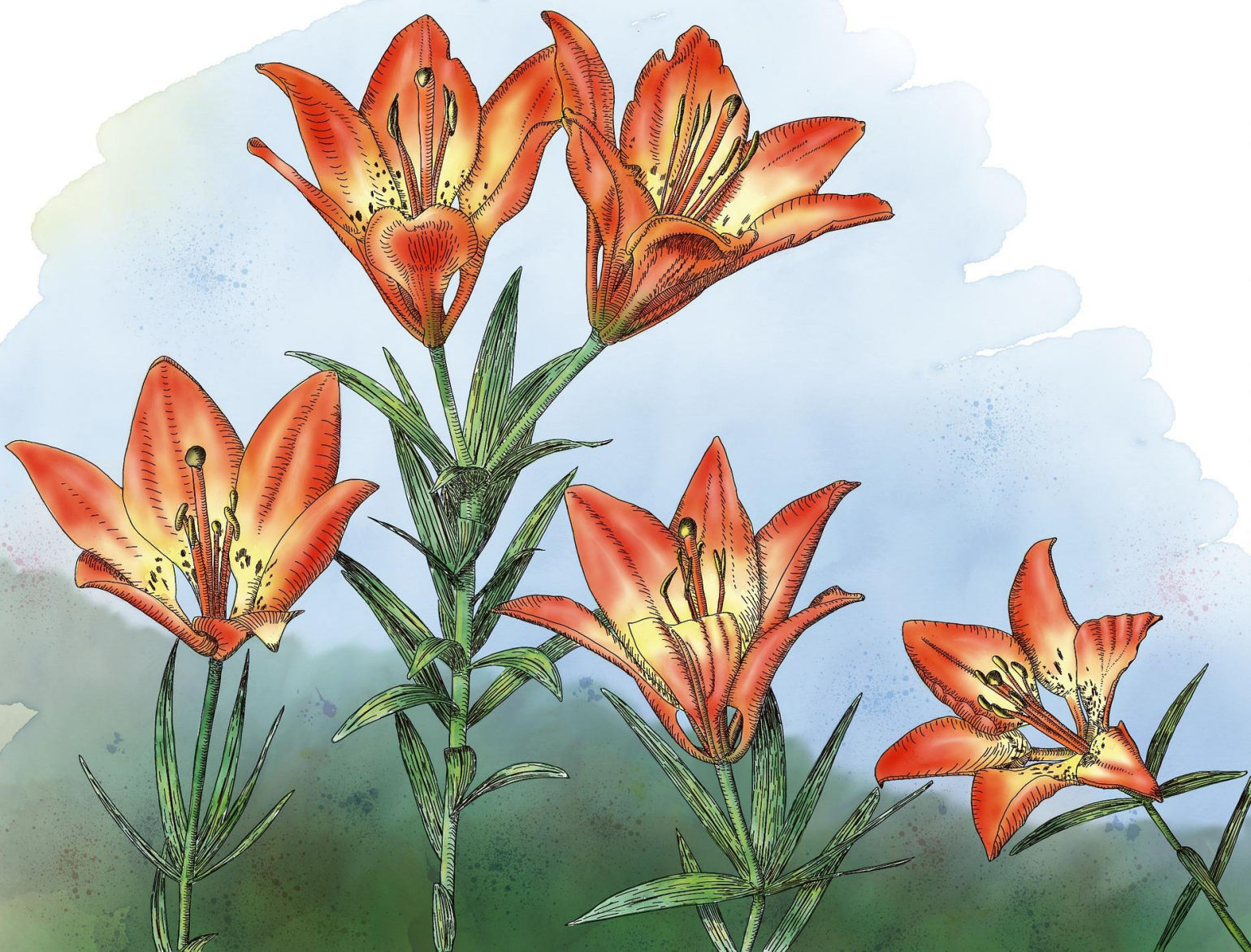
Till next time...

Your next newsletter will arrive with you late August and share news about the Autumn months ahead. Next season we will be holding more workshops from Oxleas Clinicians and self care and peer events for you.

We want to create a mental health carers service that has the voices and needs of carers at its heart.

Whether it's workshops from mental health professionals on specific subjects, peer support or self care and alternative therapies... What support would you like to see and what would help you the most?

Please let us know your views, ideas and any feedback by emailing us at MHcarers@bromleywell.org.uk



Meet the team



Lucy Blake



Aimée Roberts

We're a team of two mental health carers advisors and we're passionate about the support that carers deserve.

Our Service Provides...

Emotional support and a listening ear on the phone

Peer support groups in person and online

Information and Skills Workshops in partnership with Oxleas NHS

Wellbeing and Self Care Events

Coping with Caring – Our six week course for mental health carers

Wednesday Afternoon Drop-in Zoom to chat to other carers

Wellbeing advice and relaxation tips

Coping techniques for stressful situations

General mental health information

Information on further support services for support for yourself and the person you care for