

# Resources for People Supporting Loved Ones with Depression and Notes on Relevant Museum Initiatives

## 1. Intro

This is a summary of the responses I received to my enquiry on the GEM discussion list, posted in January 2018. It is not exhaustive, and I'm sure there are many more fantastic organisations and initiatives going on than are listed here. Please feel free to add to it with anything relevant. (I have included everything on here which was suggested to me. If I have missed anything out, please don't be offended as I received rather a lot of messages and may have got muddled!)

## 2. Visual resources about depression

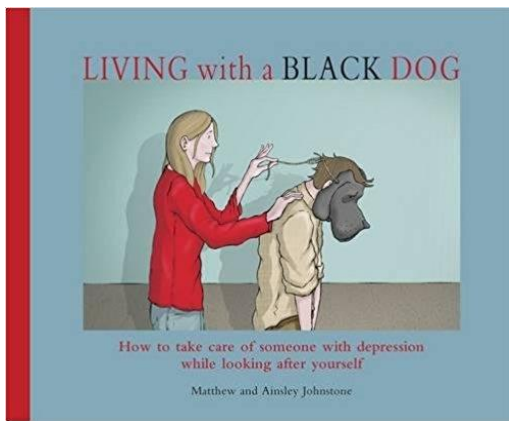
COMIC STRIP/BLOG/BOOK: [Adventures in Depression](#) and [Depression Part 2](#) by Allie Brosh



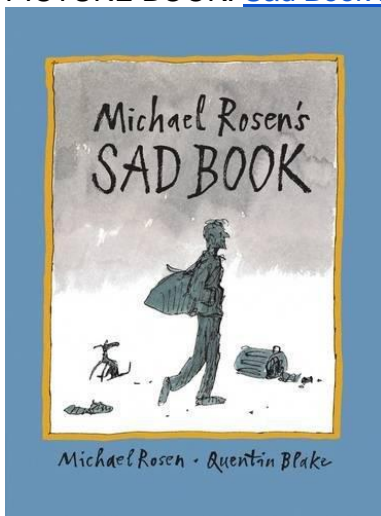
ANIMATION: [I had a black dog, his name was Depression](#) (based on book by Matthew & Ainsley Johnstone)



PICTURE BOOK: [Living with a black dog](#) (picture book by Matthew & Ainsley Johnstone)



PICTURE BOOK: [Sad Book by Michael Rosen](#)



### 3. Help for those with depression and their families

The Samaritans

Call 116 123 (24 hour phone service, calls are free) - [What happens when you call us?](#)

SANE ([website link](#))

*Info from website*

SANE is a leading UK mental health charity. We work to improve quality of life for anyone affected by mental illness. SANE Services offer emotional support and information to *anyone* affected by mental illness, *including family, friends and carers*.

- [SANEline](#): Available on 0300 304 7000 from 4.30pm to 10.30pm every evening.
- [Textcare](#): Allows you to arrange for messages of support at times that are right for you.
- [Support Forum](#): Available 24 hours a day to share your experiences with other members and give and receive mutual support.

[Depression Info Sheet PDF](#)

## Tips for talking about mental health

[Tips for talking about mental health \(Time to Change website\)](#)

Books on prescription scheme ([website link](#))

*Info from website*

Reading Well Books on Prescription helps you to understand and manage your health and wellbeing using self-help reading. The scheme is endorsed by health professionals and supported by public libraries.

## 4. Training (professional AND personal)

Mental Health First Aid Courses ([website link](#))

*Info from website*

We all have mental health, just as we all have physical health. Mental ill health can strike at any time and can affect people from all walks of life.

Although things are improving, stigma still exists around mental ill health. As a society, we don't tend to know how to take care of our mental health like we do our physical health. This means that people may not know how to support a friend, family member or colleague experiencing a mental health issue, or where to go for support with their own mental health.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is a training course which teaches people how to identify, understand and help someone who may be experiencing a mental health issue.

MHFA won't teach you to be a therapist, but it will teach you to listen, reassure and respond, even in a crisis – and even potentially stop a crisis from happening.

You'll learn to recognise warning signs of mental ill health, and develop the skills and confidence to approach and support someone while keeping yourself safe.

You'll also learn how to empower someone to access the support they might need for recovery or successful management of symptoms. This could include self-help books or websites, accessing therapy services through their GP, their school or place of work, online self-referral, support groups, and more.

What's more, you'll gain an understanding of how to support positive wellbeing and tackle stigma in the world around you.

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

"I'd say MHFA is a great baseline training, if you do frontline work (even education type work in museums counts) you might get it free through your local Mind"

## 5. Groups/Networks

[National Alliance for Museums, Health and Wellbeing](#)

"The National Alliance for Museums, Health & Wellbeing is a place where information about museums and health can be shared; to improve existing practice, help build resilience and provide resources and support for those individuals and organisations working in this area of activity."

[Link to join Jiscmail list](#)

## 6. Events that museums could get involved with

Time to Talk Day 2018 ([web link](#))

*Info from website:*

Today is Time to Talk Day. It's a chance for all of us to be more open about mental health - to talk, to listen, to change lives. Find out what people are doing, and have your own conversation about mental health today.

Organised by [Time to Change](#) ("the growing social movement changing how we all think and act about mental health. Still too many people are made to feel ashamed or isolated because they have a mental health problem but we're here to change that")

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

Search #TimetoTalk to get an idea of what was done this year.

Third National Museums and Wellbeing Week ([web link](#))

12-18th March 2018

*Info from website:*

The National Alliance for Museums, Health & Wellbeing is coordinating the third National Museums & Wellbeing Week from 12-18 March 2018. This will be an opportunity for museums to showcase their health & wellbeing offer and raise awareness of this valuable area of work.

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

THERE IS A LOVELY LONG LIST OF EVENTS [ONLINE](#) - HAVE A LOOK!

## 7. Specific Projects/Sites/Museums/Organisations

Manchester Art Gallery ([website link](#))

Manchester, M2 3JL

*Info from website:*

We all have mental health; sometimes it's good, sometimes it's not so good. Like when we're stressed or busy many of us neglect to actively look after our mental health. Good health and wellbeing is cultivated over time and with regular care. And it doesn't have to be life-changing or time-consuming, small changes can make a big difference. Come to our beautiful galleries and cultivate wellbeing with us.

Manchester Art Gallery is a place where you can go to look after your mental health. Yes, you. All of us. There's something on every week at the gallery to help you cultivate good mental health and wellbeing.

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

Wellbeing sessions and tours, some events weekly, for example Take notice, de-stress with art, Mindful marks, The art of wellbeing tour. See page [here](#).

## The Whitworth ([website link](#))

Manchester, M15 6ER

*Info from website:*

The Whitworth has won two [Royal Society for Public Health](#) awards for innovative and outstanding contributions to arts and health practice and research. Our current focus is exploring creativity, ageing and dementia. [Coffee, Cake and Culture](#) is a programme specifically designed for people living with dementia and their carers.

Find out more about our [Health and Culture programme](#), including our ArtMED training and workshops, which are delivered in partnership with Manchester hospitals.

We have been working with stroke survivors, carers and clinicians for the last 18 months, for example, to explore the role of [art in stroke recovery](#). In May 2015, in partnership with [Stroke Association](#) we launch the first ever Stroke Café in a gallery.

We also run [Culture Shots](#) which is a week-long series of free events, planned to fit around a busy working day, offering health and social care professionals an opportunity to be enthused by culture in the hospital environment.

[Not So Grim Up North](#) is a 3 year research project funded by Arts Council England. Researchers at University College London are working with the Whitworth, Manchester Museum and Tyne and Wear Archives & Museums to investigate how museum and gallery activities can make a difference in terms of health, and in terms of wellbeing.

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

## Art and Soul ([website link](#))

*Info from website:*

For almost 20 years Art & Soul has used creative activity and positive community engagement to support emotional and mental wellbeing for individuals and groups living in South West London. In June 2017 we became a registered charity (1173268) and welcomed Sir Vince Cable as our patron.

Art & Soul's programme includes weekly arts and wellbeing workshops, outreach and taster sessions, pop-up exhibitions and a biennial exhibition of artwork created by both our main group and extended network of members. Our programme of arts and wellbeing workshops is delivered by our partners at Collective Arts ([www.collective-arts.org](http://www.collective-arts.org)).

Workshop sessions take a positive psychology approach to well-being. This means they focus on identifying strengths as well as using creative activity to build resilience, self-efficacy and personal resources. Based on the outcomes of the UCL Museums Wellbeing Measures ([ucl.ac.uk/culture/projects/ucl-museum-wellbeing-measures](http://ucl.ac.uk/culture/projects/ucl-museum-wellbeing-measures)) these workshops boost positive emotions by 29% and reduce negative emotions by 48% over the course of a session.

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

Work with Orleans House Gallery

## The Wellbeing Journal ([website link](#))

The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

*Info from website:*

Patients at Addenbrooke's hospital in Cambridge have helped design a unique journal to allow people maintain a sense of calm. The Wellbeing Journal is a diary filled with inspiring images from the Fitzwilliam Museum collection, has spaces to write, 12 encouraging quotations from great thinkers down the ages and a meditation CD.

Dr Sara Booth, Honorary Consultant for the Breathlessness Intervention Service at Addenbrooke's says: "During research with patients testing the breathlessness service, we discovered people like to focus on the things that are working in their lives, even when everything else seems really tough. Very simple things could change the way they perceived their day. This journal is designed to help facilitate that.

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

## Bethlem Museum of the Mind ([website link](#))

Beckenham, Kent, BR3 3BX

*Info from website:*

The Bethlem Museum of the Mind records the lives and experience and celebrates the achievements of people with mental health problems.....The museum cares for an internationally renowned collection of archives, art and historic objects, which together offer an unparalleled resource to support the history of mental healthcare and treatment.

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

## Mental Health Museum Wakefield ([website link](#))

Wakefield, West Yorkshire

*Info from website:*

The Mental Health Museum is a unique museum in the heart of the Fieldhead site in Wakefield. It is run by South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.

The museum houses a remarkable collection of mental health related objects that span the history of mental health care from the early 19th century through to the present day.

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

"on the Fieldhead hospital site, it has an amazing collection and is used by hospital users for wellbeing"

[Wakefield Museums](#) did a collaboration with the Mental Health Museum where they made a display around the theme of men's mental health including depression. Wakefield Museums also have a display to do with LGBT+ people and mental health.

## Headtrip: Hearing Depression ([website link](#))

Research/experimental audio project by Side Projects and King's College London's Department of Health Services & Population Research

*Info from website:*

Without ever experiencing a mental health condition, like depression, it can be difficult to understand what the sufferer goes through, it can also be difficult for someone to explain their experience in words. The Headtrip team has attempted to bridge this gap, by creating a 10-minute audio experience, co-created with nine people who have 'lived experience' of depression.

We are continuing our research and therefore temporarily sharing the audio created for this pilot.

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

You can read feedback and LISTEN TO THE AUDIO (temporarily, for the time being) on the website.

## Museum Mentors

Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

"Members have complex needs in both mental health & learning disability. It is an incredibly popular and supportive group, which has been going for a number of years, taking referrals via a number of pathways. We have separate groups, one for mental health and one for learning disabled. Members use the collections to inspire their artwork, and are supported by qualified group leaders and assistants and trained volunteers. They have been involved in a range of projects with us, from doing small sales to putting on an exhibition. "

## Public libraries (e.g. Norfolk)

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

"Some public libraries (eg Norfolk) offer activities to support people with depression (eg "colouring me calm" sessions)."

[Web link to article about Norfolk's award-winning Healthy Libraries initiative](#)

## Health and Wellbeing Evaluation of Volunteer Programme ([link to PDF](#))

Kirklees Museums and Galleries

This report presents a summary of key findings from the first year of an evaluation programme exploring the potential health and wellbeing impacts of volunteering at Kirklees Museums and Galleries (KMAG).

## Past in Mind project ([link to report](#))

Herefordshire Mind

*Info from website:*

The purpose of this paper is to give an account of the Past in Mind project, an innovative project run by Herefordshire Mind and funded by the Heritage Lottery which explored the relationship between the disciplines of archaeology and mental health recovery. It aimed to use that unexpected connection to offer



new perspectives on the interpretation of the past, to combat stigma associated with mental illness, and to support participants' personal journeys to better mental health.

## The Dragon Cafe ([website link](#))

London, SE1 1JA

*Info from website:*

The Dragon Café is the flagship project of Mental Fight Club. As such, it aims to be an open, welcoming group which puts on exciting, well-organised and inspirational creative events and programmes as well as simply being a place to be. It is a highly effective antidote to the loneliness and isolation which is so often prevalent in those who have been affected by mental illness.

A relaxing café and imaginative space, open to all, the Dragon Café is located in Borough and open every Monday from 12 midday to 8.30 pm.

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

## Go with the Flow Project, Coventry ([website link](#))

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust

*Info from website:*

The Go with the Flow Project in Coventry is all about getting people out and active in green spaces – from working on allotments, growing vegetables to hedge laying, litter picking and pulling out invasive Himalayan Balsam. The project, and the wonderful volunteers it has engaged, work on sites in Spon End, Stoke Aldermoor and Wood End/Bell Green in Coventry and it is funded by Public Health. What has been amazing to see, in the 8 months the project has been running so far, is the incredible difference it makes for the volunteers mental health.

[Testimonial from a volunteer who was signed off work with depression](#)

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

## Lindengate ([website link](#))

Buckinghamshire

*Info from website:*

Lindengate is a mental health charity that offers specialised gardening activities to help those with mental health needs in their continuing recovery. Our services, known as [Social & Therapeutic Horticulture](#) (STH), use the healing power of nature and the outdoors to improve mental wellbeing, boost self-esteem & social inclusion and encourage long-term recovery. STH is recognised to be beneficial for a wide range of mental health needs including anxiety, depression, loneliness, as well as for people with autism (ASD), dementia and head injury.

Web link here.

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

## Care Farming UK ([website link](#))

Numerous farms across the UK, [Care Farming UK](#) is the umbrella organisation.



*Info from website:*

Aim/description: "Care farming is the therapeutic use of farming practices. Care farms provide health, social or educational care services for individuals from one or a range of vulnerable groups. Provide health, social or educational care services for individuals from one or a range of vulnerable groups. Includes people with mental health problems, people suffering from mild to moderate depression, adults and children with learning disabilities, children with autism, those with a drug or alcohol addiction history, disaffected young people, adults and people on probation." [Further explanation here.](#)

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

## InsideOut Cymru ([website link](#))

*Info from website:*

Inside Out Cymru is an Arts and Mental Health charity delivering arts workshops and activities across Gwent.

Our aims are to:

- Provide creative arts workshops in a safe, friendly environment, facilitated by professional artists.
- Break down barriers to opportunities and to encourage access to the arts and creative expression to promote mental health and well-being.
- Co-produce specialised arts projects focusing on the identified needs of target groups and individuals.

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

"At Monmouthshire Museums we have recently started working with them (InsideOut Cymru) and use our collections as stimulus for a number of different forms of creativity - participants find their own level and are encouraged and supported to do what they can.

It is led by an experienced community artist and is very loose and informal. We are on to our second term and have attracted a number of people back again. The course seems to be enjoyed very much by our participants who are very supportive of each other.

We do not expect full commitment in terms of attendance (although many of our participants completed all sessions of the first 10 week course) as we appreciate that the nature of some participants illnesses mean that it is not always possible for them to come.

In addition, some also come with a care giver - be it a formal care giver or a friend or family member. My impression is that they gain a lot from the course to as it enables a different relationship with the person they care for and also a little time for themselves."

## National Parks

*Info from website:*

The Notes section at the bottom of [this National Parks England press release \(Sept 2017\)](#) contains brief descriptions of National Parks doing specific health-related projects/initiatives.

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

“The North Yorkshire Moors National Park team have been doing a big project on health and access to parks and might be able to tell you more.”

## 8. Articles

[Museums' Association - Addressing mental health in museums \(advice and case studies\)](#)

[The Guardian - It's time to recognise the contribution arts can make to health and wellbeing \(newspaper article\)](#)

[Natural England - Connecting with nature offers a new approach to mental health care \(report from study published in 2016\)](#)

## 9. Conferences

Growing Better Lives conference ([website link](#))

Tuesday, 24 April, 2018 - 09:30 to Wednesday, 25 April, 2018 - 17:00

\*Growing Better Lives – Joint conference\*

Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens with Care Farming UK

A conference exploring and celebrating the links between community growing, care farming, health and wellbeing.

This Can Happen conference ([website link](#))

20th November 2018

*Info from website:*

This Can Happen is an innovative and solutions-led conference for companies who recognise that staff need support to deal with mental health issues affecting them, their colleagues or their families.

The conference will take place in London in 2018 and aims to engage companies to become part of a bigger movement of mental health awareness and action across the UK, whilst meeting corporate objectives and looking after their workforce in a meaningful way.

*GEM member(s)' comments (if any):*

Very expensive!

## 10. General advice/comments

- Just getting outside amongst trees
- I would recommend that anyone with depression should spend as much time as they can in the open air walking, ideally to a high place or viewpoint, nothing too strenuous, and ideally in the company of a friend. This releases endorphins and can bring a sense of calm and wellbeing.

- If you're very worried about your friend then do take it seriously, make sure they have someone with them and set up a network of care between trusted friends and family.
- Idea of sharing a quiet space with some beautiful thought-provoking things being beneficial.
- I do know from working closely with volunteers in various sectors that outdoor volunteering has a positive impact (gardening, tree planting, helping wildlife trusts etc.), while also helping in the community and providing support for others can also have a good impact on the volunteer.
- I think anything that involves being part of a team or network of people (perhaps feeling the same way), can be useful.
- Try a serotonin-rich diet (pineapple is great – but ask him first if there are any foods he is craving and then google the serotonin foods list – if he craves any of them that may be what is triggering the depression in part). Depression can be caused by fluctuations in serotonin levels.
- Vitamin D also really helps and unless your friend spends much of the time standing in a field with his arms exposed he needs to take a daily supplement, especially through the winter. If he has just changed jobs to a role where he is more indoor than outdoor or more sedentary than active, that can have an impact.