

Self Management Week 2020

Let's Get On With It Together

LGOWIT

a partnership supporting self management

Welcome to Self Management Week 2020

This will be a very different week from our usual Self Management Week and our Boccia Tournament which I know many of you will be missing. This year has seen LGOWIT having to embrace online activities and meetings - a learning curve for us all. It's great to see so many of you able to join us online for the activities and coffee & chat sessions. It is more important than ever in these ever changing days when we are not able to meet in our groups to make time to relax, exercise and chat. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all you who completed the survey we sent out and all the wonderful comments you made - we have been humbled as team to read the responses.

For Self Management Week we have been exploring the concept of RESET and what it means in terms of Self Management. Living with long-term conditions we are all aware of what we need to do when our health changes or life throws a curve ball - we RESET. For me this would be resting, connecting with friends and family, stitching and joining the sound therapy sessions etc - you will have your own list. It's important that we remember, we are in control of our RESET button and can use it at any time and in any circumstance we feel we need it. During Self Management Week we challenge you to take 5 mins out of what you're doing grab a cuppa and think about what your RESET looks like. We have lots of great sessions planned for SM Week, so please join us if you can!

Joanne and the LGOWIT Team

Programme of Events

All events will take place online on Microsoft Teams - simply contact Kirsteen on lgowitkirsteen@highlandtsi.org.uk, if you wish to join in.

Monday 28 September

2.00pm - Coffee and Chat with Kirsteen (cooking/baking theme)

Tuesday 29 September

11.00am - Coffee and Chat with Charlotte (walking theme)

7.00pm - Coffee and Chat with LGOWIT Volunteers

Wednesday 30 September

11.00am - Coffee and Chat with Anne and Kate (gardening theme)

Friday 02 October

7.00pm - Fun Quiz with Roy

Saturday 03 October

11.00am - Tai Chi with Sandra

TOP SM TIP

Be Still

"I have for a long time struggled with time and health management and never getting a good balance. Always stressing about not doing enough, not getting the chores done, not feeling well and giving myself a hard time. In recent months I have slowly learnt to give myself permission to just be still, in body and mind. Actively using the quiet time to recuperate both physically and mentally, thinking about the future and how I want to feel and how I can cope with my condition to the best of my abilities.

By giving myself that permission I have learnt how to feel ok about the bad days, and take that pressure off myself for not doing anything. This has left me feeling so much more positive and capable on the days when I can do things."

Volunteer, Garance in Wick

How to Contact Us?

LGOWIT is a charitable project hosted by the Highland Third Sector Interface - SC 0043521.

Tel: (01349) 807061

Email:

lgowitadmin@highlandtsi.org.uk

LGOWIT Partner, Marion, Versus Arthritis

How long have you been aware of LGOWIT and how did this happen?

I was Information Managers for MS Society Scotland between 2011 and 2014 and at some point I remember we received a postcard about LGOWIT. When I moved back to the Highlands I found out more about it and first joined the partnership while working for Connecting Carers.

What is your current involvement with LGOWIT?

I am involved with the partnership, representing Scotland Versus Arthritis as a Senior Area Coordinator for the Highlands and Western Isles.

How would you sum up the contribution of LGOWIT in supporting self management?

LGOWIT is crucial in raising awareness of the benefits of self-management for people with long term conditions, and enabling a collaborative approach to embedding self-management resources throughout health and social care systems in the area.

In your view, what is the most satisfying aspect of your involvement with LGOWIT?

That would have to be the opportunity to collaborate with people who are passionate about self-management and recognise it as the key to improving health outcomes for people with long-term conditions.

Can you recall any amusing incidents concerning LGOWIT?

Last year's Living Well Conference was the most amusing because as well as representing Scotland Versus Arthritis, I was also performing with the Highland Voices Gospel Choir. As the conference was live streaming to satellite sites around the Highlands from a tiny stage in a church hall, we had to adapt our moves to the space and try to face the camera at the same time. I can only imagine what it looked and sounded like at the other end of the signal but I'm told it looked like I was going to fall off the stage at any moment.

Why is self management so important for someone living with a long term condition?

Self-management gives you the tools to establish the right combination of treatment, activity and support that works for you.



What LGOWIT Means to Me

"I joined LGOWIT at a very difficult time in my life. LGOWIT helped me cope, find new friendships and support, face fears and build confidence"

"It has made me realise I am not alone in dealing with my long term condition. I have learned lots of things and have had fun doing it."

"It is so important to be part of a community and meet people who are empathetic"

"I strongly believe LGOWIT goes above and beyond with all they offer and I would not have coped without this service in my life."

Staying Connected in Lockdown

Thanks to a generous grant from the Scottish Government LGOWIT has developed a number of new online initiatives during the pandemic. These have enabled many of our members to stay in touch and be supported from the comfort of their own homes. These initiatives have included a new set of eLearning modules, as well as a programme of activity/therapy sessions, a Closed Facebook Group and a new Members' Zone on our website, which will be highlighted later in this newsletter.

Self Management in Challenging Times

The modules, which include 20 new bespoke animations created to reinforce and complement the content, cover the following topics:

Embracing change - Understanding the process of change and the stages of change

Uncovering Self Management – Introducing what we mean by Self Management and recognising your own health and well being

Goal Setting - Outlining five important steps to change, action planning and planning for setbacks

Staying Positive - Exploring thoughts and emotions and core beliefs

Managing Symptoms 1 & 2 – Coping with anxiety, managing pain, depression and fatigue and highlighting key distraction and relaxation techniques

Living Well - Focussing on staying physically active, pacing yourself, enabling healthy connections and eating healthily

Communicating Effectively - Offering lots of tips for effective communication, positive self-talk and active listening

Coping with Loss - Understanding death, coping strategies and other practicalities

"All very useful - I can dip in and out for anything that is bothering me."

(LGOWIT Member)

"It is great you are providing these services for those stuck at home" (Grantown GP)

Maintaining Independence - Highlighting practical considerations involved in managing your condition from home

The eLearning modules are freely available to anyone living in Highland. A resident of Highland will be able to register for the eLearning by following the link for Self Management in Challenging Times at our website - www.lgowit.org.uk. We are working to secure funding to make it possible to offer the course more widely - contact Sodi to find out more in the meantime.



The eLearning has been designed to allow access from computers, tablets and smartphones connected to the internet or using a 3G connection or higher.

A new attractively presented booklet accompanies the ten modules.

As well as providing lots of useful information it contains lots of activities to try out and questions to consider at the end of each

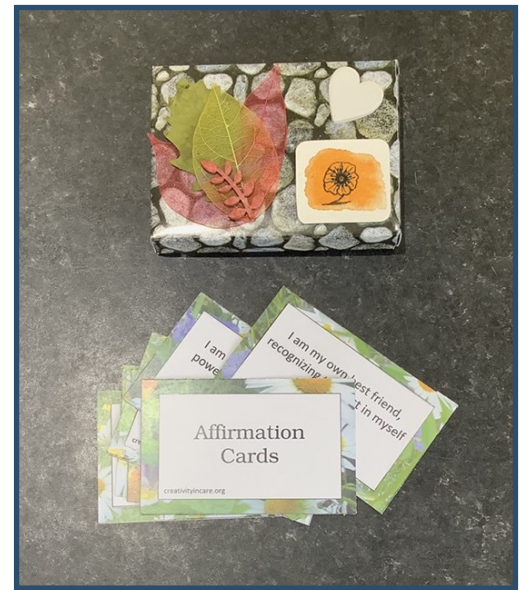
module. The booklet allows anyone who does not have digital access to work through the modules, either themselves or in the company of others. Copies have been distributed to members and health professionals and can be obtained by contacting the LGOWIT office.

"A priceless booklet - I never want to lose it!"

(LGOWIT Member)

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Promoting Inner Peace

Recently many of our members enjoyed being creative with Inner Peace kits produced by Creativity in Care and joining in some online workshops. Here (and on page 9) you can see some of the excellent fruits of their labour.



Self Management Week 2020

Reset

Over the past few weeks Creativity in Care, who gave us the fantastic Inner Peace activity packs, have been facilitating some fun and creative sessions around the theme of RESET. These sessions have focussed on reclaiming our inner wisdom and resetting our lives when things feel overwhelming. As you can see the sessions have prompted a wealth of creative interpretation resulting in some amazing craftwork and stunning poems, all produced within a very short timescale.

Just for the record the Oxford English Dictionary defines 'Reset' as to 'set again or to set differently'. The group looked at what Reset meant to them personally - responses included:

- * to be able to go out without fear or anxiety
- * to do something differently and notice what feels good about it
- * to realise we can be in control of how we feel about things
- * to reconnect with who I really am

Each session centred around a different artistic medium - cross-stitch, fabric collage and banner-making. The first session encouraged participants to reflect on where their feet had been or would like to go in the future. The second session was spent in creating past, present and future pathways of life spanning ten years at a time, while the third session involved making Reset banners for the fridge.

The following pages highlight some of the excellent output from the Group, both in word and picture.



Reset Your Life

Be clear on your intentions – why do you want to reset?

Turn negative thoughts into positive ones

Declutter your most used areas

Choose one goal to focus on

Start a new routine that your future self does.

Ways We Walk

Promenading around the garden

Meandering towards the woods

The red, gold and yellow clothes are tumbling from the trees.

I stomp through the leaves disturbing the colours of autumn.

Uphill and down dale
Splashing through the burn
Ambling through the fields
The golden wheat is waiting for harvest.

Stumbling and bumping to and fro
to find a path through the Marram-covered dunes.

Finally sinking into the sand with every step
Leaving my path behind.

Self Management Week 2020



The walk down through the woods from the car park to the edge of the loch is laden with anticipation. I try to control it, to wait for my swimming buddies, but my heart is racing with excitement, and my feet trip over themselves in a rush to feel the cool, dark, velvet water against my skin.

Reset

I can rise up and recreate myself

Nothing is permanent

I am not stuck - I have choices

I can think new thoughts

I can learn something new

I can create new habits

All that matters is that I make a decision.



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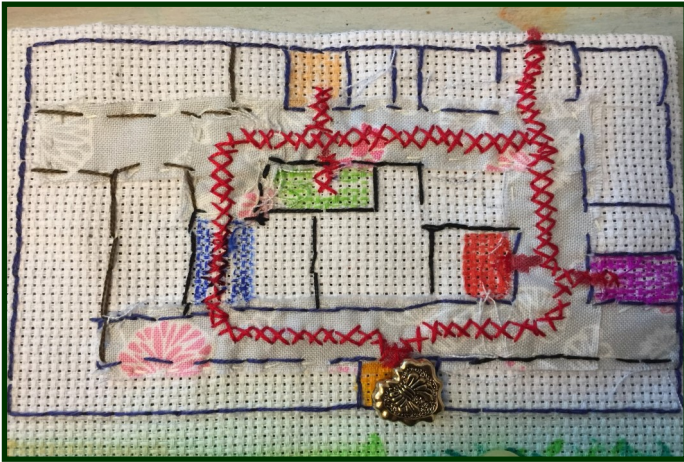
I absolutely love the Creativity in Care sessions and they have been amazing for me. It's made me much more confident about experimenting and I'm having so much fun "playing" with everything - watercolours, flower thumping, drying flowers, colouring etc.

... it's really encouraged me to think even more about the amazing natural world around us and to explore ways to connect - using all the senses and also representing the natural world in creative ways.



Nature Shelf - reset to a much stronger connection with the natural world

Along the seashore
sinking into the sand with every step
Leaving my path behind



Ten Long Years

I am me.

It has taken me a long time to get here: most of my life, in fact, from a cold, lonely, confusing childhood, all the way into adulthood.

Ten years ago, I crawled away from an abusive marriage, battered, bruised, and empty, and I began my journey back to my true self. It was a dark and rocky road, and often I fell, reopening my raw wounds. Yet, each time, I struggled back up again. It took a long, long time to haul myself up out of the dark, and I didn't always believe that I could, but I persevered, regardless. Like a boulder rolling down a hillside, my transformation gained momentum, until eventually, I emerged, to a colourful world, full of fun and happiness, full of love: to myself.

I am ready now to dive headlong, with gratitude and joy, into the rest of my life.



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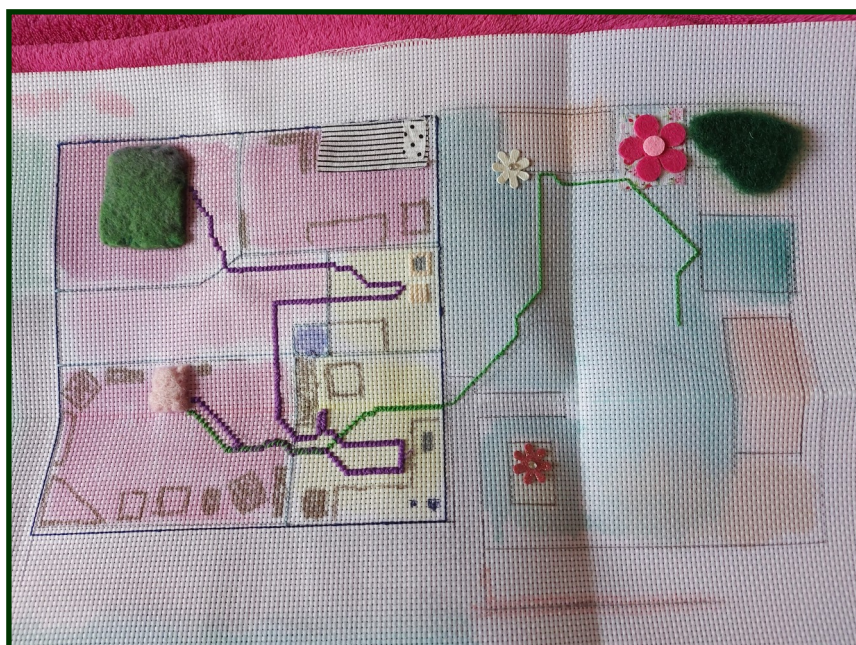
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Into the woods we go
With the dogs.
They make every walk
Twice as long for themselves
In looking for things in the
bushes
While WE look for berries
And heather and new little
trees
Growing beside the path
Don't forget the willow herb
Rather common but brave
enough
To grow anywhere
Woods or canal banks –
Or my garden

Daily Reminder

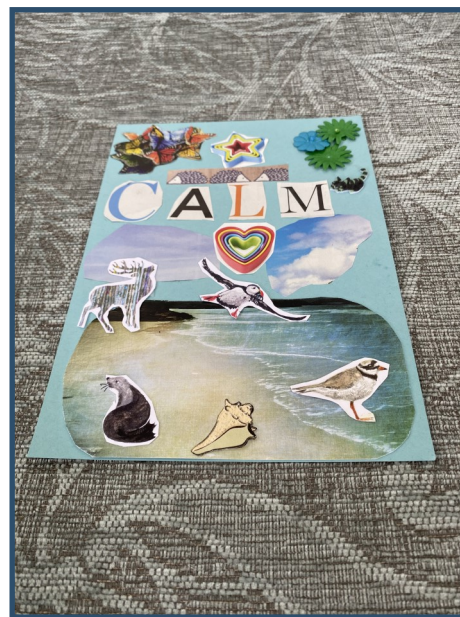
Approach each day with gratitude,
Understanding openness; Knowing that
it offers potential and possibilities.
Knowing that every moment is an
opportunity to reflect, reset and move
forward with intention.



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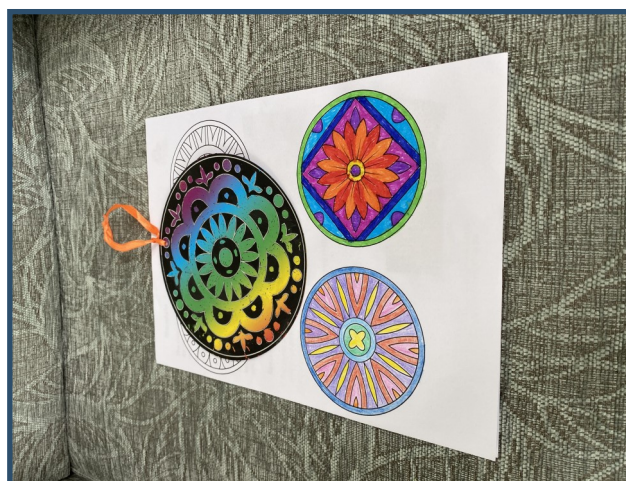
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Way

Walking along Home Braes, I feel huge Gratitude for my Parents and Family. A glorious Childhood shone on my growing Up in my Family Circle. Ochils View saw me born into blissful days. And Strathy Lane gifted me cherished memories of another young Paradise. Joy forever follows my journey down Beach Avenues. My deep love of nature is there also, and nature drives me to Appreciate the incredible wondrous beauty of all Life. My Pathways to Knowledge are paved with the flagstones of Genius - Attenborough, Banting, Rhind and others innumerable. Along Leonard Lane I now meander in contentment into Older Age. What a magnificent world! What a tremendous life!



Self Management Week 2020

Caring and Sharing

Our Living Better Groups have not met since March due to the pandemic. This has left a large void in the lives of the members, who really look forward to the monthly meetings. We now have 23 Groups stretching right across Highland from Thurso in the north to Aviemore in the south and from Kyle in the west to Nairn in the east.

The groups provide an opportunity for members to share experiences within a supportive environment and learn from others in a similar situation to themselves. Every Group is different in that it is shaped by the interests and needs of the members. Some enjoy hearing from guest speakers, others like to try out a range of different therapies. Many engage enthusiastically with art and craft activities and music - as well as Boccia! Special occasions, such as summer outings and

Christmas parties are always eagerly anticipated.

At the moment the Groups are meeting online for those able to

join in and in small cluster as and when feasible in line with Scottish Government guidelines.

“Being with LGOWIT has encouraged me to do things I would not otherwise have done”



Crafting at Dingwall



Christmas Snowwomen at Balloch



Cruising on the Canal

June has been going to the Nairn Group since it started five years ago.

I really enjoy going to my local LGOWIT meeting in Nairn. They are a friendly group all with various long-term conditions. Nobody discusses their conditions because there is always something to see or do. We have had introductions to alternative treatments and presentations ranging from recycling to Family History. We have done various arts and crafts and the highlights included going to Inverness for a canal cruise. Another brilliant afternoon was spent cycling. We have had music workshops and not to be missed Roy's quizzes. Then coffee and a chat and to finish the afternoon a game of Boccia. There is no time to feel sorry for yourself and any pain seems to fade into the background. All in all a good way to spend an afternoon in nice company. I would thoroughly recommend it.

TOP SM TIP

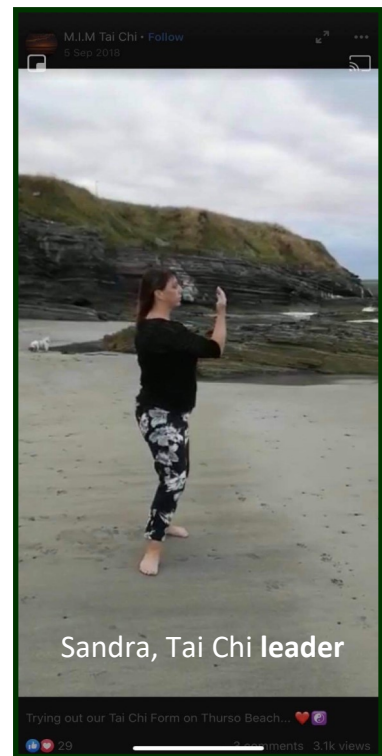
Find something to focus on. Whatever it is, it just shifts the focus from the pain. If only momentarily, it does work - well for me anyway. Also, mentally, I have reduced my pain's importance. I try not to call it pain - discomfort, annoyance, soreness - even give it a name and tell it, 'I don't want you today, I've got other more important things to deal with right now, get to the end of the queue.' It may sound daft but it can help...believe me.

LGOWIT Member

Thumbs Up for Activity/Therapy Sessions

The online programme of activity/therapy sessions organised by LGOWIT over the past few months has proved very popular with many participants saying it is the one thing that has kept them going. Therapies offered have included Tai Chi and Qi Gong, Sound Therapy, Mindfulness and Pilates. Some have taken place on Teams, others in a Closed Facebook Group (for health and safety reasons). The Pilates videos have been recorded and can be accessed anytime from the Members' Area of our website.

Claire in Wick has taken part in the programme from the start. " I have a disability called CMT and have suffered on and off with my mental health since I was a teenager and this last year or so it has been the biggest struggle. When lockdown happened, I was distraught and felt so alone and struggled myself with just me and my son. LGOWIT has been a godsend keeping me busy with online classes such as Just Relax, Tai Chi and sound therapy and even my 12 year old son has enjoyed joining in the classes with me. They have kept me going, not only the actual content and relaxation of the classes but also getting to chat to other people, see friendly faces and interact. Kirsteen, my local leader, has been amazing at reminding me and filling up my schedule which has really kept me going. I cannot express enough how much these classes have helped us through this period and I am excited to continue them whilst we await some more normality with the Groups"



Closed Facebook Group

At the start of Lockdown in March LGOWIT set up its first Closed Facebook Group. This was to provide a convenient way for our members to keep in touch with each other when physical interaction was not possible. Since then the Group has continued to

grow and at the last count it boasted 114 members. Everyone has enjoyed sharing stories of what they have been getting

"The posts cheer me up and remind me to look after myself."

up to - some very hard to believe! - as well as photos of beautiful gardens and exquisite craft work.

Existing Living Better Group Members can join the Group by request - just contact lgowitadmin@highlandtsi.org.uk and Mary will put you in touch with your local Community Networker.

Members' Area

Our LGOWIT website - www.lgowit.org.uk - has recently undergone a bit of a facelift and is well worth a browse.

One of the most recent additions to the site is the creation of a Members' Area, where LGOWIT members can access specific information and opportunities not available on the main site. If you are not already a member you can join by



contacting Mary, whose contact details can be found on the front page.

