

# THE MAYOR'S MONTH



friends at Ivy House - an Eastbourne Day Centre which provides cognitive therapy for those suffering with Dementia and their carers .

Because, this month, The Volunteer is concentrating on 'mental health' issues, I went to my friend, Jane Lowe, from Ivy House and asked if she might give my column the benefit of her expertise. Jane very kindly agreed and she writes.....

"Dementia is a disease of the brain which effects our (and the people around us) mental health and wellbeing. It is not an elderly illness despite the public's perception. The way we frame Dementia needs to change.

There is never any warning when Dementia arrives. In fact, it has probably been there long before anyone notices it. We are rarely looking for, or seeing the signs. I am sure most of us can say we have

memory issues but loss of memory is not always Dementia.

There are no manuals or training guides to prepare us for the journey. Dementia brings behavioural changes in the way they react and respond. Speech, language and sometimes aggression caused by frustration can be a daily feature, making life difficult to cope with.

Those who care for people with Dementia often doubt their ability to cope and guilt can often feature. However, they continue to carry on the journey despite all odds. This doesn't have to be a losing battle. People with Dementia are still people and they can still appreciate so many things. They are more than capable of happiness and humour. They understand our language and what we are saying, although they may not be able to communicate it. Acceptance is everything.

The importance of sharing and seeking support is essential to the carers' mental health. They will be able to cope for longer. We, as a society, must accept that Dementia is

here to stay and we must find ways to live well with it - let's start by treating people with Dementia as people. People who deserve every bit of care, affection and attention, as every other member of society.

If the nature of Dementia care is given with love and with no barriers, it can successfully forge a worthwhile life for loved ones. The wellbeing of the person with Dementia is defended and in many cases improved.

If we allow ourselves to fear Dementia, to place it in a box and close the lid, the illness wins and the efforts of all the unnumbered care givers will stand for nothing.".....J.L.

If you need some support or have any questions regarding Dementia, you can contact Jane at Ivy House. The email is:- care@ivyhouse-dementiacare.com. Tel.number is :- 01323 431801.

I do hope this article may be of help to some of you, now or in the future. My very best wishes

**Pat Hearn**  
Mayor of Eastbourne

**A** WISE MAN NAMED TOM KITWOOD once said ' See the PERSON with Dementia..... not the person with DEMENTIA'. A very profound statement and one that has stayed with me during the many times I have spent with all my

## BREATHE SOFTLY...

**C**onsciously breathing softly and slowly can be one of the quickest and easiest ways to bring you out of a place of stress and discomfort into a place of wellbeing and ease.

Did you know that adults take 17,000 – 30,000 breaths each day when resting and up to 50,000 when active? Mental stress can also cause us to breathe more rapidly, triggering stress hormones and sometimes leading to hyperventilation and panic attacks. So next time you feel yourself getting stressed and your breathing is short, try this simple technique to bring you back into a place of calm and focus:

- Sitting or standing quietly, focus on your feet. Plant them onto the ground. If it feels appropriate, place your hands on your belly.
- Relax your body, relax your shoulders especially.
- Begin to notice your breath going in and out. Notice your belly moving with each breath.
- Breathe in for the count of 2, out for the count of 4. Breathe into your belly. Try three or four rounds of this. See how you feel. Then try breathing in for the count of 4, out for the count of 7. Do this three or four times. See how you feel. If you like you can extend this to in for the count of 7 and out for 11...Choose the count that works best for you and repeat it for as long as it

takes for you to feel more relaxed. This should only take a few rounds.

- When your breathing has settled, notice what's happening that may have caused you to feel stressed in the first place.

You can use this technique for yourself wherever you like, in a meeting at work, at home watching TV, in a café or in a crowd. You can also use it to calm others and the environment around you. When you next find yourself with an upset friend, family member or colleague, notice what happens when, without them knowing, you consciously breathe softly. You can try this with upset young ones and animals too. You needn't tell anyone else what you're doing, although in some cases this might be helpful and appropriate. You can also use your breathing as a silent service to others, for instance in an angry impatient queue. If nothing else, you will feel better and not be contributing to the negativity around you.

Practice breathing softly, for yourself, others and our world.

**Brenda Bruzon**

**Shine Holistic Life Coaching**

*Brenda is a holistic life coach, artist, writer and Spiritual Companion with the Spiritual Companions Trust. She offers wellbeing workshops for the public and in-house for groups. To find out more see Brenda's website: [www.brendabruzon.wordpress.com](http://www.brendabruzon.wordpress.com)*



Shine  
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# OPERATION SHINE!

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**For more information and a question, contact Brenda on [shineholisticcoaching@gmail.com](mailto:shineholisticcoaching@gmail.com) or on 01323-639172 / 07906-314436**