




Tudor Grange Academy
Kingshurst

Sixth Sense

 Sixth Form

Which Week?

This Week: Monday 16th Jan (Week 2)

Next Week: Monday 18th Jan (Week 1)

How BLUE is your MONDAY?



The concept of Blue Monday originated in a 2005 press release for UK-based travel firm, Sky Travel. The third Monday of January has been awarded the gloomy title due to a

combination of post-Christmas blues, cold dark nights and a long wait until pay day.

After the excitement and bustle of the Christmas season, it is completely natural to feel a little down at this time of the year. January, the month of cold weather, dark mornings and (possibly) failing in our New Year's resolutions collide to create 'January Blues'. Typically, January Blues manifests itself as feelings of low mood, sadness, lack of motivation, tiredness and low energy.



Combating 'Blue Monday'...



Have a BREW Monday instead

Charity 'Samaritans' states that today being classified as 'the most difficult day of the year' "is a myth" and asserts that "we all have our good days and our bad days, and those aren't for the calendar to decide."

The charity urges people to **use the day to connect with family, friends, colleagues start a conversation over a brew! Have a cup of positivity-TEA!** During this time, do not underestimate the power of listening. If somebody starts to share how they are feeling, you don't always have to offer advice or attempt to solve their problems.

Focus on the positives

- Every day since the 21st December we've been gaining 3 minutes of daylight. Every four weeks we will gain an extra hour of daylight
- You're working towards a long summer break
- The next half term that we will reach will mark half way through the year—think of all you will have accomplished by then!
- We've got an extra bank holiday this year due to the king's coronation
- You will reach personal milestones this year
- This is going to be a year of achievement

Increase your endorphins with exercise

Research has shown that physical activity can help boost mental health in the following ways:

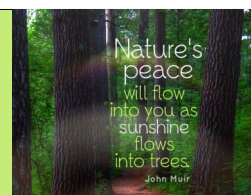
- Happier moods
- Better sleep
- Managing stress
- Reducing the risk of depression

Remember, you don't need to be a fitness fanatic to benefit from exercise. Taking a simple walk or joy around the block will still improve your mood.

"For me, exercise is more mental than physical. I crave it for my sanity. Not just the endorphins, but my energy, confidence, and relaxation are all motivated by it." - Jonathan Keltz



Our series of information from National Online Safety, continues on this week with a focus on supporting your well-being through nature both online and offline. The mental health charity 'Mind', state that spending time in nature supports mental health difficulties such as anxiety and depression. Being outside in natural sunlight can also be helpful if you experience seasonal affective disorder (SAD) or can boost your mood if you are struggling to feel motivated in the dark month of January.



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12 Top Tips TO SUPPORT MENTAL WELLBEING THROUGH NATURE Online and Offline

'Nature' is a superb choice as the theme of this year's Mental Health Awareness Week, as there's clear evidence that getting access to nature is excellent for our mental health. With Covid-19 restrictions beginning to ease, it's the perfect time of year to rediscover the natural world and give ourselves a calming, uplifting treat. You don't have to drag the family on a four-hour hike, either – just 10 minutes each day in the garden, in the local park or your nearest green space could really help. Here are 12 suggestions for ways you can benefit from nature ... both online and off.



ONLINE



OFFLINE



1 Give something back to nature

A swift internet search should bring up details of any local conservation projects you could volunteer for, or litter-picking events that you could enrol the family in. It doesn't have to be a long-term commitment: most schemes are grateful for every bit of help!

1 Ditch the phone

Now the weather's improving, go for a walk in a green space nearby. If you're already familiar with your chosen route, you could always leave your phone at home to be completely free of the usual distractions and notifications.

2 Tranquil streams

Search your preferred music player for some soothing natural sounds. A few minutes' gentle audio of rainfall, ocean waves or birdsong are all great ways of unwinding at the end of the day to get you ready for an excellent night's sleep.

2 Put down some roots

Planting flowers, shrubs, herbs or vegetables can be extremely rewarding. Not only does it help us to connect with nature – it also provides an ongoing project to draw pleasure from. If your home doesn't have a garden, no problem: a window box will do the job just as well!

3 Give geocaching a go

If you've not heard of it, geocaching is a modern twist on the traditional treasure hunt. Participants look for items hidden in outdoor locations, using a GPS-enabled device like a mobile phone or tablet. We'd recommend that an adult accompanies young adventurers!

3 A different kind of tweet

Most gardens in the UK attract a wonderful variety of birds, and just watching them for a few minutes can be immensely therapeutic. There are some excellent apps and sites to help you name any species you don't already know or even play a game: identifying bird song, like bird song bingo!

4 Share what you see

While you're out exploring nature, take a photo or video of anything you find that inspires you. Not only will it be a nice memory for you to look back on, but you could also share it safely on social media and maybe motivate others to engage with the natural world!

4 Feed your feathered friends

Hang a bird feeder where you can easily see it from a window. Then enjoy the feelgood factor of satisfied avian visitors perching where you can see them. For something more advanced, you could try building a nesting box to fix onto a fence or under a window sill.

5 Watch the stars

Looking at the night sky can be incredibly calming. There are some comprehensive stargazing websites and apps to help you locate and recognise different stars. It can take 20 minutes or so before you can see stars fully in the dark, even on clear nights, so allow your eyes time to adjust.

5 Park your worries

If you're lucky enough to live within easy travelling distance of a park, you'd benefit from using it. Whether it's to play ball games, get on your bike, walk the dog or just get some fresh air into your lungs, the potential bonuses for mental health are enormous.

6 Wildlife on the web

A Google search will bring up lots of sites that stream webcam footage of nature. From seals to barn owls, rabbits to badgers, you can get an intimate, heart-warming view of all kinds of animal communities from inside the comfort of your own home.

6 Art and soul

Younger children will enjoy drawing or painting animals or nature scenes, or writing a poem or song lyrics about nature. For extra art or crafting fun, you could collect natural materials – leaves, feathers, tree bark or seeds, for example – to use in your creations.

Meet Our Expert

Anna Bateman is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department for Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



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Sources: <https://nhf.org.uk/coronavirus-lockdown-we-need-nature-now-more-ever> | <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/article/call-to-wild> | 'Mental Health and Nature', Mind, 2018



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