

Finding Balance

The Human Givens Approach to Balance,
Balancing Our Inner And Outer Selves,

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About Speak Up Somerset

We promote recovery from mental health problems through creative means. We provide mutual support to each other and campaign on mental health issues.

Funding

We were originally funded by a grant from the Mind Millennium Awards Scheme. Other funders have been the South West Foundation, Somerset Social Services, West Somerset & South Somerset District, the Users & Carers Evaluation Group. In 2005 received £5000 from the Awards For All National Lottery scheme. We also received £5000 from Comic Relief in 2005.

Speak Up Somerset have recently been granted £10,000 funding following the closure of Rockmount House in Yeovil.

All the members of the news group have used mental health services or are carers. The group welcomes articles and/or letters. The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the News group.

Super-size Somerset

Public consultation on the government's planned merger of Somerset's four Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) into one super PCT ended in early February.

The proposal forms part of a national overhaul of health care provision, outlined in a government white paper, *Commissioning a Patient-Led NHS*, published in July 2005.

Dorset & Somerset Strategic Health Authority spokeswoman Pauline Malins said the merger would save £6m in administration costs.

She said the proposals would also see health care provision in Somerset aligned with existing social services provision.

"I would like to assure mental health patients that this is not about changes to service provision. They are structural reforms that should streamline services in line with social services, which should improve social care across the county, particularly in areas of mental health."

Speak Up Somerset spokesman Simon Heyes said: "It seems incongruous that the government is promoting choice and patient-led health care on the one hand and yet centralising decision-making away from the people on the other.

"Speak Up Somerset has found these constant reorganisations disorientating. It diverts attention from our core work when we are continually having to deal with new organisations and different structures."

The white paper also proposes creating one super-size ambulance service, covering Somerset, Dorset, Devon, Cornwall and the Isle of Scilly.

For more information, look up www.dorsetsomerset.nhs.org.

Mental Health Bill latest

The government seems intent on pushing on with its reform of the Mental Health Act 1983 despite opposition from many quarters.

Critics of the Draft Mental Health Bill have accused it of being politically-motivated rather than based on principle. The African Caribbean Mental Health Commission echoed previous criticism when it spoke out against the bill recently, saying it reinforced prejudices against those with mental health problems.

The Royal College of Psychiatrists, The Law Society, the Royal College of Nursing, the British Association of Social Workers, Rethink and Mind have all voiced concern about proposed changes to the existing legislation.

There is widespread anger that the main ethos of the bill seems to be about reassuring the public that something is being done rather than providing effective care for people with mental health

problems.

A Department of Health spokeswoman said the bill, which was listed in the Queen's Speech last autumn, was due to be debated in Parliament before the end of the current session in mid-July.

The Mental Health Alliance recommends a mass lobby of parliamentary MPs when the bill finally comes up for debate and Speak Up Somerset plans to lend its full support. For more information about the mental health alliance, visit www.mentalhealth.org.uk

Therapy recommended for OCD

People with the diagnosis OCD (obsessive-compulsive disorder) should be offered cognitive behavioural therapy as the first-line of treatment according to new guidelines. The guidelines issued by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) also suggest when drugs should be used to treat OCD. For more information, look up www.nice.org.uk

New benefit reforms

GPs will be rewarded for helping people come off benefits and into work under controversial welfare reforms announced by work and pensions secretary John Hutton in a green paper.

The government also announced that incapacity benefit is to be replaced with a new employment support allowance from 2008.

The new benefit will be higher than current long-term incapacity benefit of £74 a week but people with more manageable conditions will only be able to claim the highest rate if they participate in measures aimed at returning them to work.

If they do not comply, the new benefit will be reduced in a series of cuts stopping at the level of job seeker's allowance, which is about £55 a week.

People with the most serious conditions will be paid at a higher rate than at present.

Blueprint for community care

The government has published its blueprint for shifting health services from hospitals into the community.

Our Health, Our Care, Our Say: A new direction for community services proposes giving people with long-term conditions personal health and social care plans, managed by joint health and social services teams.

Primary care trusts will be assessed on their success in transferring resources from hospitals to community care. It backs individual budgets for social care, currently being piloted, but makes no commitment to roll them out, suggesting a possible introduction in 2009.

For more information, look up www.dh.gov.uk.



Winner of our 2005 Acceptance photo competition by Barbie Markey

Speak Up Somerset Publications

Positive Steps Diary 2007

A week a page diary featuring artwork and positive quotes £3 each

Something Different Calendar 2007

Colourful calendar featuring artwork and quotes £3 each

Journal of Hope

Speak Up Somerset has produced a 365 page a day journal of hope featuring daily quotes from famous people and others on how to cope with adversity £5.00 each

Acceptance Poetry and Photography Anthology. £2.00 each

For all prices add 25% for postage. Please make cheques payable to Speak Up Somerset and send to Speak Up Somerset, PO Box 3484, YEOVIL BA21 5ZH.

'Now for Something Different' 2006 on Friday 5th Oct, from 9.30am-5pm, at the Brewhouse Theatre, Taunton, has been organised to coincide with World Mental Health Day on Wednesday 10 October.

The conference will look at creative ways of keeping well. Free admission with lunch and refreshments provided.

The closing date for bookings is Tuesday 20 September. Book early because places are limited. There will also be live music in the evening at Uncle Tom's Cabin in Wincanton from 8pm.

Enter our Photo and poetry competitions on theme **Something Different** Please contact Maureen Street on 01935 850979 or download forms from www.artofrecovery.com

New

Art of Recovery is a guide to recovering from mental health breakdown published by Speak Up Somerset on behalf of South Somerset Mind. Please send a cheque for £4.99 made payable to South Somerset Mind (includes postage) to South Somerset Mind, the Markwick Centre, Yeovil, BA21 5EN or phone 01935 474875 for more details.

The Art of Recovery features stories of recovery from mental ill-health and suggests ways that we can all climb up our own ladder of recovery.



Recovery - turning ideas into reality

Tuesday 11th April 2005
Taunton racecourse 10 to 4.00

This is a day to hear from leading international, national and local people about latest practical solutions to question of recovery from mental health problems. Speakers include Diane Bardsley from CSIP, Shery Mead from USA on peer support, Frank Bristol on recovery in New Zealand, Piers Allot on recovery in the UK, and John Jenkins on the Whole Life approach to recovery. Organised by Speak Up Somerset & Somerset Partnership NHS & Social Care Trust. and NIMHE South West.

For details contact Eve Hawkins, Events Co-ordinator, CSIP SW on 01278 432002



Second prize in our 2005 photo competition by Emma Nurton

Finding Balance - Accepting Life On It's Own Terms by Therese Liddy

Finding balance to me means finding balance between my inner and outer selves. I have to balance my inner self as I discover it through personal growth with my outer personality- the person my friends and family know as me. I find today's world a very difficult place to do this. I missed out on a lot of my twenties due to being ill. I was coping with life when I could have been living to my full capability. I don't resent this but I still feel that I have a lot to catch up on and there's more to it than that.

Nearly everyone has illusions about themselves and I know now it isn't likely that I will be making my Oscar speech live from my home in Beverly Hills. I might publish a novel or a book of poetry one day but though I've missed out on a career I still have options even if I have to separate the facts from the fictions of my life as I go along. The TV cult of celebrity taps into my desire for illusory living and drug/alcohol/food addictions which advertising pressure can inspire, feed into my fantasies about self-image and unrealistic aspirations. The climate of fear created by the media makes me run for reassurance to catalogue shopping and avoidance of reality. The net result of this bombardment of my life is the failure to see the world through my own eyes. It's like junk food for my mind, if I don't exercise choice it will take over my life and turn me into a monster or a zombie. TV and advertising companies don't care for my well being or my mental health they only care about my ability to consume without question.

People keep saying that there is never enough time nowadays. There is an increased sense of urgency and heightened awareness of the importance of getting things done. This is a great boost to motivation but leads to stress on our bodies and minds. Things seem so important that they cannot be ignored or pushed aside any longer. Our lifestyles have to compromise with this increased activity and we have to strike a balance with ourselves to



Therese Liddy

help us cope with it all. A lot seems to be being asked of us at present and most people have more than enough to do with their own lives and those of their loved ones. Others feel under appreciated or taken for granted. It is important to try to find self-honouring in all this chaos and learn to listen to your needs as opposed to your wants and desires. Making time to tune in to your needs can mean finding clues to your well being. Ask yourself " What do I really need right now ? " Maybe you don't actually need anything. It is amazing how easy it is to forget this. Don't be afraid to put yourself first. Never be afraid to say no. Even to yourself. I find this strategy helps me overcome negative habits like overspending, smoking, lack of exercise etc.

An old meditation teacher of mine asked us to do the following exercise. Imagine you had only one day left to live. What would you have to do ? The object is to focus on what is actually important as opposed to the million mundane distractions we waste our lives on while we cheat ourselves out of really living. Once you've worked it out of course you have to go and do it. You can continue the exercise as an infinite meditation if you ask yourself what you would have to do if you had one week left to live, one month, one year etc. It is useful to help move situations along in your life and allow space for new ones.

Recovering from illness, the lessons are difficult and rewarding. I am learning not to think of life as if I've got to get back to a point of sanity hidden somewhere in my past but instead to think of it as a journey for

ward armed only with experience and self-knowledge. If I can take care of my needs I can take this journey into the unknown at my own pace. Every day living becomes about finding balance within myself and with the world as it presents itself. That means accepting it on it's own terms. You cannot change people, a wise person once said, you can only learn to change yourself. The present world situation appears to me to offer no balance for the individual mind. Neither the government nor the media nor anyone else can provide that. We are all dis-empowered daily by them. I think it's vital for people who haven't woken up to this yet to begin thinking about it.

Finding balance in your life is a constant principle of living to the best of your ability. I feel that everyone deserves a chance at it. If we continue to allow our minds be enslaved by the world created by those who do not have our best interests at heart, we keep ourselves ill instead of recovering our will and ability to do the best for ourselves. I think that we are really lucky sometimes, those of us whose minds have broken open, because we have the ability to rebuild our beliefs and our conscious minds are more sensitively attuned to the challenges. If we can find balance within ourselves then we could even start to perceive mental illness as a gift that enables us to open these closed doors. We might want to develop our growing awareness of the world and challenge it's assumptions about us. Then we really might be able to live to the full extent of our capabilities.

Finding Balance - A Human Givens Perspective by Judith Desbonne, Human Givens Therapist

The Human Givens approach relates to the underpinning idea that all us human beings are born into the world with an existing set of physical and emotional needs which have to be fulfilled in order for to lead balanced and fulfilling lives.

Q: So how do we find balance using the human givens approach?

A: For me, I try to recognise the signs of my life not being in balance; this usually presents as physical illness, tiredness, or reduced energy or sometimes just feeling that I need a holiday or a good nights sleep.

A simple way to assess the extent to which our emotional needs are being met is to do use the checklist below, for each point you can rate to what extent that need is being met in all areas of your life; such as home, work, leisure and within your relationships.

" Do you feel secure in your environment?

" Are you able to make choices and feel in control?

" Do you give and receive enough attention?

" Do you have at least one person that you can really be yourself with?

" Do you feel valued for who you are?

" Do you feel that you are involved with your wider community?

" Do you have a

special skill or a sense that you have achieved something?

" Do you feel challenged or stretched both mentally and physically?

" Are you able to obtain privacy when you want it?

By regularly checking out that our emotional needs are being met we all stand a better chance of feeling that our lives are in balance and are more likely to feel mentally healthy.

Bibliography:

Griffin, J and Tyrell, I (2003) 'Human Givens A new approach to emotional health and clear thinking', East Sussex, HG Publishing

For further information on the Human Givens approach to emotional health see: www.humangivens.com

Six top tips to keep in balance

Apply these simple suggestions to help avoid burnout.

Simplify. It seems human nature for just about everyone to take on too many tasks and responsibilities, to try to do too much, and to own too much. Find a way to simplify your life. Change your lifestyle. Learn to say no to requests for help. Get rid of the clutter and baggage in your house -- and your life.

Sleep well - A good night's sleep isn't a luxury; it's a necessity for clear-thinking and coping with the stresses of life. Aim to get a good night's rest by watching what you eat before you go to bed, going easy on the caffeine later in the day, turning off the television and computer, and taking a few minutes to slow down and transition from "busy day" to "restful night".

Loosen up - Tight muscles and narrow, critical thinking exacerbate stress and propel you toward burnout. One solution? Find ways to stretch both body and mind. Just taking a walk can do the power of good. Not only does it help burn off nervous energy, but you can get some exercise and enjoy the scenery, which can help you think more clearly than you might if you're always tethered to your desk or buzzing about mindlessly. It may even lessen chronic perfectionism and self-criticism.

Have fun - Laughter is great medicine, so provide yourself with a basket of toys at the office, watch your favourite funny movies, play with your kids or animals, choose to be around people who make you laugh, or just laugh at yourself when you get overly serious or cranky. It's nearly impossible to wallow in your stress when you're enjoying a good belly laugh.

Get away - Don't eat lunch at your desk, don't call in or do work while on holiday and don't spend your allotted free time working yourself into a frazzle with chores. Remember the old saying, "All work and no play makes Jack a very dull boy." See a movie, read a book, listen to music, take a walk in nature, or take a nap. Just recharge your battery.

Nurture your spirit and your dreams. What lights you up? Is it nature, culture, great conversations with friends, your relationship to a higher power? Consider spending regular time every week with these things. This is the time that refills the well, so to speak. By paying attention to what inspires you, you begin to build a reserve of energy to draw from when you are stressed.



'ACCEPTANCE'

The News Page

Minister to reveal cuts

Health minister Rosie Winterton bowed to pressure from campaigners and ordered the full disclosure of planned cuts to mental health services.

The minister's assurance followed a letter from mental health charity Rethink, which raised serious concerns about widespread cuts.

In a written reply, Ms Winterton told Rethink that she would ask the finance directors of the twenty-eight strategic health authorities for the 'latest information on services'.

"We are asking them to supply us with specific information about their current financial situation. We hope the returns will provide us with a detailed response, which will help us analyse the situation in more detail," she wrote.

At least fifteen mental health trusts have been told to cut costs by primary care trusts.

A *Health Service Journal* survey carried out in January suggested that fifty-eight per cent of mental health trust chief executives have had to close wards.

Four out of five chief executives who responded to the survey said they had stopped recruiting staff and twenty-one per cent had made redundancies.

Moira Fraser, Mind's policy officer, said mental health services were easy targets in the current financial climate. "They have fewer targets and are not directly involved in emergency care. A day does not go by without us receiving news that another service has been cut."

South Somerset Mind have produced a DVD about personality disorders. For more details please contact South Somerset Mind on 01935 410138 or go to www.southsomersetmind.co.uk

The Outreach Counselling Service has been renamed the **Matrix Project**. Clients have an initial meeting with the co-ordinator and then will be referred to a counsellor. There is a small cost for this service and this will be discussed at the first session. Counselling usually lasts for a block of eight sessions. For more information, contact Angela

South Somerset Mind wants volunteers to help at the Markwick Centre, Dampier Street, Yeovil. The centre runs a drop-in service Monday to Friday for those experiencing mental ill health. People can call in for assistance and support on their journey of recovery. Anyone is welcome.

It also offers a range of training sessions on mental health issues. For more information, contact Nicky Davis on 01935 410138 daytimes.

South Somerset Mind runs a series of activities in association with Yeovil College, including horticulture, digital photography, jewellery making, creative writing and story-telling. Other groups meet at the centre, such as U-in-Mind, a social group which meets the second Monday evening of every month.

South Somerset Mind is looking to recruit new volunteers and befrienders. Volunteers are expected to assist in the day to day running of the drop-in centre on a regular basis. Volunteer benefits include training, work experience, meeting people, and gaining self-confidence. Travel expenses are paid.

Befriending requires fully trained volunteers to take part in a one-year professional friendship with a client referred to us by Somerset Partnership NHS and Social Care Trust. The role includes visiting the client once a week and being a friend to them. The next training sessions starts this month and lasts eight weeks.

For more information, contact Marsha Miles at South Somerset Mind on 01935 424516 daytimes, or email marsha@southsomersetmind.co.uk.

New code upsets psychiatrists

Psychiatrists are concerned that standards of care will be reduced if new codes of practice are adopted.

A report published by the Royal College of Psychiatrists and the National Institute for Mental Health England recommends that psychiatrists should concentrate on more complex cases and leave routine treatment to teams of other care professionals.

Some psychiatrists have criticised the recommendations because they believe their role in preventing a patient's condition from deteriorating would be undermined.

Six more top tips to achieve balance

Breathe deeply - Have you ever noticed your breathing when you're feeling stressed or moving at high speed? It's probably shallow and tight. Borrow a tip from professional athletes, and take a few slow, deep breaths to relax and collect yourself.

Develop a really good support system. Let's face it we all need support and sometimes it's hard to ask for help. Often times the difference between getting through the day well or not depends on how well we feel supported by others.

Eat well - It is easy to become a chronic meal-skipper, or too frequently eat junk food on the run. Heavy foods, too many or too few calories, and inadequate nutrition can make you feel like you're short on fuel. It is recommended we try to eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and veg every day.

Drink water - Most people don't drink enough water, and end up feeling dehydrated, tired, cranky and achy. Next time you feel dry or in need of a liquid "pick me up," go for the water bottle instead of coffee or soda. In fact, experts say that once you feel thirsty, you're already dehydrated, so drink up. An added bonus? Water helps flush toxins away.

Slow down - "Type A" stands for anxious, not admirable. Don't worry; you don't have to plod along or come to a stand-still. By making sure your mind is actually where your body is, you'll feel (and appear) less scattered, think more clearly, and be more effective. Good time-management and delegation strategies can help avoid confused priorities and schedule-melt-downs.

Go easy on the alcohol - Easier said than done but drinking too much can cause serious problems including hepatitis (inflammation of the liver), cirrhosis (scarring of the liver). Up to 3 in 10 long-term heavy drinkers develop cirrhosis. Other problems of drinking include stomach disorders, impotence, some cancers (mouth, gullet, liver, colon and breast) and addiction.

Alcohol is also high in calories, so cutting down could help you control your weight. Women can drink up to 2 to 3 units of alcohol a day and men up to 3 to 4 units a day, without significant risk to their health. A unit is half a pint of standard strength (3 to 5% ABV) beer, lager or cider, or a pub measure of spirit. A glass of wine is about 2 units and alcopops are about 1.5 units.

For good health, it's a good idea to spread your drinking throughout the week and avoid binge drinking.

South Somerset Mind training sessions

The sessions are aimed at giving greater understanding and insight from a holistic perspective. The sessions are relevant for those working with people having mental health problems and also for people who experience mental ill health or are caring for someone.

All sessions held in the Training Room at South Somerset Mind, The Markwick Centre, Dampier St, Yeovil. Please bring a packed lunch

Dates

All Sessions 10 – 3.30 pm

- Anxiety - 28th June
- Depression – 8th March
- Eating Disorders – 4th April
- Learning to Relax – 23rd March
- Mental Health Recovery – 10th May
- Personality Disorder (2-day) – 13th & 14th June
- Schizophrenia – 1st March or 13th April
- Self Harm & Suicide – 14th March
- Self Harm – 17th May
- Suicide - 18th May

If you wish to book both Self Harm on the 17th May and Suicide on the 18th May at the same time you may pay a combined fee of £75.00

Costs

Statutory Sector - £50

Charities, Students & Individuals - £35

Service users/Carers & South Somerset Mind

Volunteers - £5 deposit returnable on attendance

Please Telephone Nicky Davis for more information on 01935 410138

Please visit www.southsomersetmind.co.uk for more details.

Speak Up Somerset events

All welcome

8th April Planning meeting for *And Now For Something Different* October conference, Holly Court, Preston Road, Yeovil 11 to 1

25th March Desktop publishing, The Markwick Centre, South Somerset Mind, Dampier Street, Yeovil, 10 to 3.00

29th March AGM at Tor Leisure Centre, Glastonbury 11 to 2.00

11th April Recovery conference, Taunton racecourse 10 to 4.00

26th July Speak Up Somerset summer meeting, Minehead, venue and time to be arranged

5th October *And Now For Something Different* conference at the Brewhouse Theatre, Taunton 10 to 5.00

13th December Christmas meal, Broadway Village Hall, Ilminster

For more details please phone Maureen Street on 01935 850979 or visit www.artofrecovery.com

"RECOVERY FROM STIGMA NEXT ISSUE OF SPEAK UP SOMERSET NEWS

We welcome articles, poems, stories, photos and artwork on the theme of recovery from stigma. Many people who experience mental distress speak of how stigmatised they feel sometimes - that they are made to feel unworthy in some way by the fact of their difficult thoughts and emotions, or else by their labels. Other people can react to us strongly and may: criticise, blame, scapegoat, be blindly prejudiced, trivialise, not listen, misjudge, stereotype us, use physical violence, mock, avoid us, mistrust us, think we are stupid, question our judgement, make our decisions, patronise, nag, make generalisations about us, use emotive words to describe us, be polite but keep us at arms length or make phoney bids to include us - not to mention the biased and unjust media coverage we so often see all around. However, the July edition is about RECOVERY and we should like to hear your stories describing how you have regained your self-esteem, overcame other people's prejudice and asserted your creativity and giftedness proving to yourself your equality with others.

Your contributions will be warmly welcomed and please send them by June 30th to Maralyn Longman by e-mail maralyn@longman1046.freemove.co.uk or by post to:

Garail Cottage, Bladon Hill, Kingsbury Episcopi, Martock, Somerset, TA12 6BJ

MindLine Somerset

Do you need someone to talk to? Mindline is there Wed, Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 8pm-12midnight on 01823 276892.

Mindline is a service for anyone who is experiencing or has experienced emotional or mental distress. Mindline also offers help to family members, carers and friends. We are here to provide a friendly ear, to empower you to make your own choices. We can signpost you to other services or agencies that may be of help.

If you would like to know more, please call our Helpline co-ordinator on 01823 286001.

Somerset and Wessex Eating Disorders Association

Working with Comic Relief

For people 18 to 25 with eating disorders

Please CONTACT Nicky TO FIND OUT MORE on 01458 837900

Or nicky.linfield@btconnect.com

Or look up on the website

<http://home.btconnect.com/18-25>



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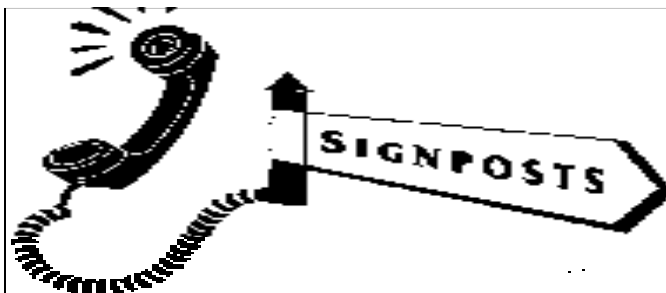
West Somerset Inclusion Project

The West Somerset inclusion project aims to promote social inclusion for people marginalised as a result of mental ill health.

West Somerset Inclusion Project, The Connexions Building, The Vennland Centre, Ponsford Road, Minehead, Somerset TA24 5DX

Tel: 01643 708765 email:

mindinwestsomerset@vinnia.net



Somerset's Health & Community Care Information Service
FREEPHONE 0800 317220

Yeovil Outreach Project

If you are feeling down and don't know where to turn.
Call 01935 414170 and speak to Angela
Mental Health Outreach Worker for the Yeovil area

Somerset's Mental Health Participation Workers:

Project manager: Krista Felek 01278 423033

Somerset Coast: Anita Devlin is the new user participation worker for Somerset Coast, tel:01643 704539.

South Somerset: Julia D'Allen 01935 840137

Mendip: Kate Wilkins 01749 343481

Taunton: Alexandra Simson 01643 702853

PALS—Somerset Partnership & Social Care NHS Trust

Andy Jones has taken over the role of PALS officer, and will also work on patient information. His phone number is 01278 720222, and he can be contacted at Broadway House, Barclay Street, Bridgwater TA6 5YA.

New Directions

Broadway Park, Barclay Street, Bridgwater, Tues - Sunday inclusive offering a range of activities including Saturday and Sunday lunch Phone 01278 446935 for more details.

The Manic Depression Fellowship Somerset

A countywide organisation run for and by people who experience manic depression.

For further info contact Phil Cracknell on 01823 323363

Carers Voice is a group of mental health carers who advise on and facilitate carer involvement in Somerset's mental health services. Membership is open to any carer of someone with mental health needs, and Carers Voice helps ensure that carers are involved in decisions about how to plan, provide and evaluate the services. Contact Angie Gammon, c/o County Hall, on Mondays on 01823 356711

SUCH project offers complementary therapy treatment for anyone experiencing mental distress or carers, volunteers and people working within the mental health system. The project is based at the Mind Centre, Taunton phone no. 01823 331052 & website: www.suchproject.org.uk.

Somerset Autistic Support Group - Advice and Friendship line. If you are coping with problems on the Autistic Spectrum please do not feel alone, we are here to help. Contact our new Somerset Communication Line on 01823 324997, or

Somerset Partnership Patient and Public Forum (PPI)

Contact Emma Westbrook Forum Support Co-ordinator on 01225 701120.

Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health (CPPIH) www.cppi.org or telephone 01392 332100

Manic Depression self-help group for Yeovil area. The group meets every three weeks in Yeovil on a Tuesday. For further information about the group and details about joining the next meeting, please telephone 01460 73932 (evenings).

Somerset Counselling Centre (Taunton) provides weekly psychodynamic counselling. Contact Somerset Counselling Centre at 38 Belvedere Road, Taunton, Somerset TA1 1HD, or telephone 01823 337049.

South Somerset Mind run a drop-in based in Dampier Street, Yeovil from 10 to 3.30 Monday to Thursday and Friday from 10 to 12.30pm. They also run a befriending & volunteer scheme. Call Peter Hill on 01935 474875.

Mind in Taunton and West Somerset run a day project Peace of Mind on Mon, Wed & Fri 9.30 - 3.30 for details phone 01823 327094. The Hope Group, a self-help group for people experiencing anxiety and/or depression meets Tuesdays at the Albemarle Centre, Albemarle Rd, Taunton, phone 01823 334906. MINDLINE 0183 276892- offering telephone support, Wed, Fri, Sat & Sun 8.00pm to midnight. The co-ordinator can be contacted on 01823 334906 www.mindtws.org.uk Email: mail@mindtws.org.uk

Advocacy in Somerset Call Tim on 01823 324762

Mendip Advocacy Call 01749 683300

Taunton & West Somerset NSF group for carers

The group meets at 2 The Crescent, Taunton every second Tuesday of each month. 12-2pm. 01823 354879

U-In-Mind

An informal gathering of users, carers and others to discuss ideas and to share some food. We meet on the second Monday of the month at 6.15pm at The Mind Centre, Dampier Street in Yeovil. For details phone Maureen Street on 01935 850979.

Crispin Community Centre Street Self-Help Centre

"We aim to help people help themselves" Drop-in Monday, Wednesday, Friday 12-3.00pm Thursday 6.30-9.30pm. Computer workshops & facilities for groups Phone 01458 447248 for more details

Release Support Group supports adult female survivors of child abuse. The group meets Wednesday at Sydenham Family Centre, Bridgwater from 2 to 4pm. Contact Kerry, the co-ordinator, on 01278 434023

The Wincanton Community Venture at the Balsam Centre, Wincanton have a drop-in open on Wednesdays 1pm to 3pm Call Brian on 01963-31842, or e-mail balsambrian@hotmail.com.

Speak Up Somerset

Speak Up Somerset is a county-wide coalition of groups and individuals interested in mental health issues. The group includes service users, workers, carers and others. Our next meeting is our AGM on Wed 29th March at the Tor Leisure Centre, Glastonbury, 11 am start, lunch included. All welcome. Please contact Maureen Street on 01935 850979 or