



Top Tips & Happiness Habits

Flourishing Borders is a project that encourages good mental health and wellbeing among older people. That's about feeling well and about feeling better at the times when you do feel down or are finding it harder to cope.

We met people from all over Borders. We got together at Happiness Habits Cafés, where people found out about what helps people be well and shared their tips on what works for them.

Keep connected to other people

Keeping in touch with people is good for our mental wellbeing. This includes family, friends, neighbours, members of your Church and people you know socially. It also includes the people you see and say hello to in places like shops and services you use.

- Visit other people as well as inviting them to visit you.
- Enjoy the social contacts in day-to-day life.
- Keeping in touch with people by phone or through the internet is good too.
- Look out for activities in your community where you can meet new people as well as keeping in touch with people you know.

“Grandchildren, my family and other visitors to the care home”

“It is important to still see lots of people, but have some time on your own”

“Keep in touch with family – I look forward to family visiting me. If they don't visit, I phone or text them when I need to chat”

“Mix with younger families”

“Using the mobile library which comes ever 3 weeks”

“Companionship through doing things in the church”



Have a sense of purpose

It helps when you feel that you have something to do and are needed.

- Remind yourself of what you do for yourself and other people. Make a list. Add things over the next few days as you remember them.
- Stay involved in what is going on in your town or village.
- Day-to-day life, hobbies and interests all give a sense of purpose too.
- Remember that when you keep in touch with people you are also helping them.

Try to have a positive outlook and learn how to look after yourself

Being positive and having a positive outlook is not always an easy, but it does make a difference. Our mental wellbeing and physical wellbeing and connected, so helping one will help the other too.

- Look after yourself, such as eating properly and sleeping well.
- Be with people who make you feel good about yourself.
- Make your own list of the things that help when you have a difficult time. Friends and family can help with this.
- When you do feel down, remember that you will feel better again.

“I get involved in community things - I get enjoyment for the sake of others and because it helps the community”

“Making marmalade to sell”

“Teaching people to knit - I felt appreciated”

“I work as a volunteer in the soup kitchen”

“I volunteer at East Fortune Museum and Men’s Shed”

“Help with young families - I get the gossip”

“Keeping the house nice”

“Get a good night’s sleep”

“Give someone a compliment every day”

“Get out the house at least once a day”

“I phone my brother, he’s always been able to get me laughing”

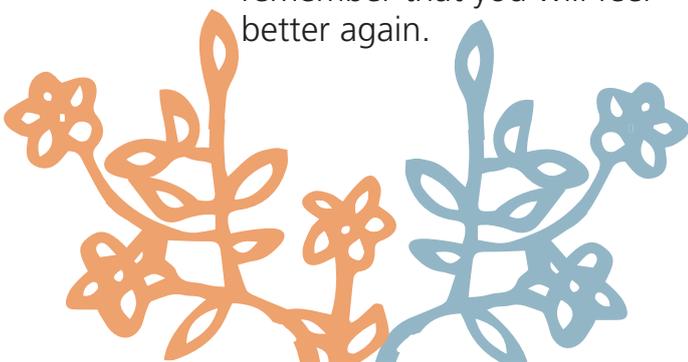
“Live life to the full”

“I have found it is good to touch base with folks with similar problems as it reminds me I’m not the only one”

“I have learnt to recognise when I suffer low mood and how I can deal with it. Times like the anniversary of the death of a loved one. I walk, I do something and plan to be with friends”

“Try not to worry, take everything in your stride”

“I put on a scarf and feel nice!”



Keep active

Keeping physically and mentally active is good for our mental wellbeing

- Try to do something every day that gets you moving about. If you can't get outside, walk round the house for a bit.
- Activities like jigsaws and puzzle books are good for us too.
- If you don't have many activities or interests, think of ones that you used to enjoy.
- Ask friends what they enjoy. You will get ideas from each other and may find things you can do together.
- Look for ways to try something new.
- Remember that it is fine to take things a bit slower than you used to and still enjoy them.

People in Borders talked about the activities they enjoy doing. Their lists grew once they got started and as other people reminded them of activities they had mentioned before. Here are some of their lists:

“Walking, swimming, crochet, knitting, skittles, carpet bowls, flower arranging, playing cards, bingo, day trips, holidays, music, live music, going to cinema, movie days, learn guitar, watching TV, shopping”

“Walking, dancing, crosswords, reading, art and craft, singing group”

“Walking, bird watching, crochet, knitting, sailing, drumming, chanting, reading, cycling, gardening, appliqué, making things, playing bridge, crosswords – challenge the mind, board games, holidays, music, listening to trees, origami is very soothing, watching TV and dressmaking”

“Going for a walk, watch the birds in the garden, Exercise, grow veg so I can make soup at any point”

“I walk as much as I can, even if the weather is dull. I like to be outside. Reading newspapers and books and I like learning new things. I get out and about and use my bus pass to visit Edinburgh for the day. Housework and ironing too”

“Read novels and crime books, read technical books, Scottish Borders travelling library is great, walking around the lovely grounds at the care home where I live, grow plants, visits such as to Ratho Canal Centre, watch Weir's Way on TV, ballroom dancing would be lovely! Music – to get up and dance to. I like to imagine something and then paint it, like the hills”





About Flourishing Borders

This project was based around Happiness Habits Cafés and starting new activities that people wanted to try. Each session was a partnership between Outside the Box and local groups for members and other older people in that area.

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We want to thank all the people who helped make Flourishing Borders happen, especially all the people who shared their tips on how to keep well.

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