

Healthy Minds, Healthy Bods

Inspiring; Encouraging; Motivating



HMHB's Monthly Health Pack:

Number 23

Focus on:

Mind-set, Nutrition, Exercise, Health

The Unique and Original, and still The Best



Prepared by: Lazza and the HMHB team:

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www.hmhb2016.org.uk



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**Our monthly health packs now contain a massive 40 pages.
To help you get through it, here is a list of contents for you. Something for everyone.
We want to encourage you, inspire you, and motivate you. :-)**

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“You may not always have a comfortable life, and you will not always be able to solve all of the world’s problems at once, but don’t ever underestimate the importance you can have, because history has shown us that courage can be contagious, and hope can take on a life of its own.” — Michelle Obama

Welcome to Issue 23 of Healthy Minds, Healthy Bods’ New Monthly Health Packs.

From April 2020 to March 2021, through the Pandemic, HMHB was providing weekly health packs, all 50 of which can be found in PDF form on our website, with content details: www.hmhb2016.org.uk.

We then went monthly for 7 issues.

This is our new venture for 2022/2023.

A revamped Monthly Health Pack for everyone.

All copies are on the website in PDF form.

HMHB is a mental health project that is looking to shake up intervention through our own unique, pioneering, fresh approach.

Mentor led by people who have experienced some very tough times, come through recovery, and now want to help others who may themselves be struggling, HMHB looks to prevent people from experiencing depression, stress, and anxiety, and show that a healthy lifestyle is the way forward, as well as guide people who may be currently having a tough time.

For these packs to happen, there are so many people to thank. That includes Islington Council who print some copies to post to those who have no internet, our local councillors, Caroline Russell, Benali Hamdache, and Ernestas Jegorovas Armstrong, as well as Sue Lukes and Osh Gantly, all of whom have been HMHB supporters since inception.

We also like to thank Islington Giving, the Cripplegate Foundation, and the National Lottery, all of whom have funded our health packs in the past, and continue to do so.

Lastly, we thank you, our readers, who have given us such incredible feedback. Yay!!!



I was having a look back at some of our photos. All these are from last year, yes, 2023. We have delivered across Islington and beyond. We get referrals to us from the NHS and other projects. Lots of outings, social events, terrific exercise sessions, new walks, and astonishing feedback for our courses. HMHB delivers to all.

HEALTH NEWS AND RESEARCH PAGE

Benefits of Resistance Exercise on Mental Health

A new study by researchers at University of Limerick in Ireland and at Iowa State University has demonstrated the impact resistance exercise training can have in the treatment of anxiety and depressive symptoms. The new study provides evidence to support the benefits of resistance exercise training can have on anxiety and depression and offers an examination of possible underlying mechanisms. The research, published in the "Trends in Molecular Medicine" journal, was carried out by Professor Matthew P Herring at University of Limerick and Professor Jacob D Meyer at Iowa State University.

The researchers said there was "exciting evidence" that resistance exercise training may be an accessible alternative therapy to improve anxiety and depression like more established therapies, while also improving other important aspects of health.

"Anxiety and depressive symptoms and disorders are prevalent and debilitating public health burdens for which successful treatment is limited. The healthful benefits of resistance exercise training, or muscle-strengthening exercise involving exerting force against a load repeatedly for the purpose of generating a training response, are well-established," said Dr Herring, Associate Professor in the Physical Activity for Health Research Centre, Health Research Institute, and Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences within the Faculty of Education and Health Sciences in UL.

"However, the potential impact of resistance exercise training in the treatment of anxiety and depressive symptoms and disorders remains relatively understudied. Moreover, the plausible psychobiological mechanisms, which help us to better understand how and why resistance exercise training may improve these mental health outcomes, are poorly understood."

The researchers argue that, while the available studies in this area are focused on relatively small sample sizes, there is sufficient evidence from previous and ongoing research at UL and the National Institute of Health funded research with Dr Meyer and colleagues at Iowa State University, to suggest that resistance exercise training does improve anxiety and depressive symptoms and disorders -- though disorders themselves are scarcely studied.

"There is a critical need for confirmatory, definitive trials that adequately address limitations, including small sample sizes, but the limited evidence available to us provides initial support for the beneficial effects of resistance exercise training on these mental health outcomes, including increased insulin-like growth factor 1, cerebrovascular adaptations, and potential neural adaptations influenced by controlled breathing inherent to resistance exercise," Dr Herring explained.

As resistance training likely works through both shared and distinct mechanisms to achieve its positive mood effects compared to aerobic exercise, it has the potential to be used in conjunction with aerobic exercise or as a standalone therapy for these debilitating conditions. This research will use the platform established by current research as a springboard to comprehensively evaluate these potential benefits of resistance exercise in clinical populations while also identifying who would be the most likely to benefit from resistance exercise.



HEALTH NEWS AND RESEARCH PAGE: Retinal Images could predict disease.

People with unusually thin retinas are at greater risk of later developing bronchitis and other conditions, suggesting retinal scans could eventually become a component of routine health screening.

Want to know more about your future risk of developing heart or lung problems? Your retinal thickness might hold important clues.

Researchers have previously established links between the thickness of the retina and whole-body health, but a new study provides more detail about its potential for predicting future risks.

Using data from 44,828 participants, an international research team found that having thinner retinas was correlated with an increased risk of ocular, neurological and cardiovascular diseases. Most notably, this is the first study to find that a thinner retina increases someone's risk of developing a lung condition like bronchitis or emphysema later in life.



The data came from the “UK Biobank”, an enormous medical database that contains anonymous details about the health and genetics of around half a million people in the UK. The retinal images included in the data were captured using a non-invasive procedure called optical coherence tomography. Ophthalmologists routinely use this technique to determine a patient's risk for various eye conditions, including macular degeneration and glaucoma. The procedure captures information about the retina, which is usually 0.5 millimetres thick, and its internal layers.

Nazlee Zebardast, at Harvard Medical School, one of the study authors, hopes the study will eventually expand how optical coherence tomography is used. Beyond simply giving details about the eyes, she would like to see it become a tool for providing future health information about the whole body.

“We have patients coming to our eye clinic all the time,” she says. “Wouldn't it be great if we could tell from someone's retinal image, ‘you look like you might have a high risk of sleep apnoea’, or ‘you might have a high risk of developing diabetes’?”

While exciting, this technology is still “a long way off” from immediate clinical application, says Anthony Khawaja at University College London. Researchers are still unsure why retinal biology might correspond to systemic health, or what kind of mechanism might be driving the associations seen in this study and others. What's more, Zebardast and her colleagues point out in the paper that a lack of genetic diversity within the UK Biobank sample limits the universal applicability of their conclusions: 94 per cent of the people who contributed their data to the database have white European ancestry.

Still, Zebardast is optimistic about the study's implications. She says researchers will first need to carry out prospective studies, tracking people for years to see whether a thinner or thicker retina actually does correspond to an elevated risk of developing conditions like heart disease or pneumonia. But if such research confirms these hypotheses, then retinal imaging could emerge as a useful and non-invasive method for routine health screening.

HMHB Activity: Photos and Events from February 2024



In 2023, HMHB delivered 101 Health Walks.

Isn't that extraordinary.

Here we are at the start of the month in Clissold Park, as part of our weekly Thursday walk.

An eclectic mix of ages, races, abilities, sexualities, genders, and so on. All are welcome.

We are adapting too. We have a three week cycle.

- 1 - Visit the 2nd Chance Café: 2 - Park Café visit
- 3 - Bring own drink/nibble with a health conversation.

We do like to diversify.

With that in mind, Healthy Minds, Healthy Bods visited its first every Ice Hockey Match.

We headed to Alexandra Palace not knowing what to expect, but wow did we have a great time.

We didn't know a lot of rules, but thankfully there were some friendly fans around who were updating us on what was going on.

The Haringey Huskies (Lazza is pictured with their mascot) won 6-0, but for us it was just a wonderfully exciting experience.



HMHB had fourteen of us. We were dotted about as it was impossible to stick together. Some of us were even stood behind one of the goals, and had a terrific view of the action (including two fights).



I will certainly be going again myself, and hopefully HMHB can also return.



As always, we thank our wonderful Justin for our quiz photographs - catching everyone smiling.

Our wonderfully unique quiz, with questions to befuddle, bamboozle, and confuse you, is online every Thursday evening.

Professor Lazza (or Dr. Quiz) sets posers to deceive and baffle, and it is more about learning facts, and having a lot of laughs.

Anyone can win.

Why not join us one week?

HMHB Activity: Photos and Events from February 2024



I travelled up to Glasgow in February to visit a great friend of HMHB, Rosemary. I have known her for over 25 years, ever since I managed an International Charity, and Rosemary ran our Scottish Office. She then went on to become CEO of Mellow Parenting in Scotland. But she remained a terrific friend of mine, and over the years has helped with advice here and there that has helped us grow. Lovely to spend some time together.

As people know, I was very fortunate and humbled to be voted Islington Volunteer of the Year 2023.

Well, part of the prize for that was a complimentary overnight stay at the Hilton, Angel, the Doubletree on Pentonville Road.

I decided to take it up in February.

I was also lucky enough to get dinner for two and breakfast for two (I stayed on my own), so I invited one of HMHB's users to join me.

We feasted very well I can tell you.

Was such a nice experience.



We had an absolute treat in February, a visit to the English National Opera at the London Coliseum.

We have been there for several productions in the past, but this was our first ever Classical Opera.

A great one to see too. Puccini's *The Barber of Seville*.

The music was, of course, superb, as were the vocals and staging.

It helps that they have the wording in captions above the stage.



Our group of 20 had a wonderful evening of entertainment. We had to sit groups in different locations to get the value seats, but this sort of evening can be really uplifting.

Wow!!

HMHB Activity: Photos and Events from February 2024



Our very own PT Zombie leading our fabulous session at Highbury Leisure Centre on Tuesdays. We like to shake it up each week with different classes so we can work our whole bodies. The most important thing is we have a lot of fun, and there is usually laughter of some kind going on. These guys always inspire and motivate me and we enjoy our relationship with Better Gyms.

We were going to visit the Natural History Museum on the 24th, but due to incredible queues we headed instead into the Victoria and Albert Museum opposite and had a fascinating look around the South Asia, Renaissance, and British History departments. We have several more museum visits lined up, and our social calendar is looking full.



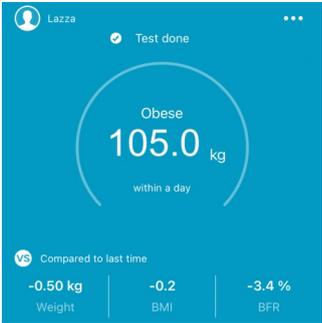
On the back of our last two years of awards, and after working with clients for seven years building a terrific network, and creating a unique intervention course that receives astonishing feedback, HMHB are currently preparing a large bid for three years of funding, including salary and core costs. It's very difficult to win. With help from Georg we are designing a video to answer all the questions they want answered. In 5-6 minutes!!!!



Lazza's weight loss Corner

31 January 2024: I was 108kg. (17 stone 1lb)
 I've really had to overhaul myself the last month. It took a while. In these packs I talk a lot about how we need to give 100%. I am working with one of our friends, Robin, who luckily also lives in my road, I decided to overhaul my diet and get exercising even more. I have been referred to a gym near Tottenham Ct Rd for a 12 week programme.
And on 29 February 2024: I was 105kg. (16 stone 7.5 lbs)

Loss of 3kg - (6.6 lbs). Delighted, as really it's the last 11 days. Onwards.



NUTRITION: Lazza's Kitchen Adventure

Lumberjill Cake

A Brand NEW Recipe from Lazza's Kitchen.
Lazza made his first ever version of Lumberjill Cake from scratch

Plums and prunes are rich in antioxidants, which are helpful for reducing inflammation and protecting your cells from damage by free radicals. They are particularly high in polyphenol antioxidants, which have positive effects on bone health and may help reduce the risk of heart disease and diabetes. In fact, some studies have shown that plums contain more than twice the amount of polyphenol antioxidants as other popular fruits, such as nectarines and peaches.

Ingredients

4-5 apples, peeled and diced: 6 plums, diced
400g plain flour: 1teasp bicarb of soda
300g caster sugar: 2 eggs
175g soft unsalted butter: ground mixed nuts
Cinnamon: Coconut: Vanilla Essence
Topping
75g unsalted butter: 100ml milk
125g brown sugar: 125g flaked almonds
Crushed almonds

Place the diced apples and plums into a bowl with the bicarb - mix - put aside
Cream the butter and sugar in a large mixing bowl.
Add the eggs and vanilla essence and beat till light and fluffy.
Fold in the flour, being careful not to over mix
I also added in some coconut and crushed nuts for texture.
Add the apples and plums and combine.
Pour the mixture into your tray or trays.
Bake for 35-45 minutes.
While it is baking make the topping.
Put all the ingredients into a pan over a low heat and stir.
Allow the butter and sugar to melt and the almonds to soak up some of the milk.
When the cake is ready, take out oven.
Pour over the topping mixture and spread it over evenly with a spatula.
Return to the oven for 15-20 minutes until the top is brown.
Take out, leave to cool, or have when it is warm with ice cream or clotted cream.



During the pandemic and lockdowns, Lazza decided to try a new hobby - cooking.
Why not try out some new recipes and foods yourself?
More on HMHB recipe pages: www.hmhb2016.org.uk
This was a great, and very tasty, bake to prepare.

MIND-SET: **Fear of Responsibility - page 1**

Fear of responsibility is an irrational fear of taking responsibility. Also called “Hypengyophobia” (Greek ‘hypengos’ means ‘responsibility’), people who have a fear of responsibility avoid responsibilities, even at a significant cost to themselves and others.

Such people are trapped in their comfort zones and avoid taking the risks that most responsibilities entail.

People can fear taking responsibility for themselves and others in different life areas. First and foremost, they might avoid taking responsibility for their own life and actions.

Of course, those who can’t take responsibility for their own life and actions won’t take responsibility for their actions that impact others.



A person who avoids taking responsibility doesn’t have enough proof that they can take responsibility. They lack the belief that they can take responsibility or believe that taking responsibility leads to negative outcomes.

Experiences are one of the most powerful shapers of beliefs. A person who fears and avoids responsibility may simply not have enough ‘reserve’ of past life experiences that tell them they’re good at taking responsibility. We do more of what we’ve already done. When we’ve already done something, it gives us the confidence to approach future challenges and responsibilities.

For example, I had never taken any management role in my career when I was offered the opportunity to become Manager of an International Charity back in 2000. I was really not sure if I could do it. The same when I was asked to become Financial Director of a retail group in 2008 overseeing new accounts software in the USA and Holland, building an internal accounts system that had to be multicurrency, and deal with stock too. I had never done that before. Happy to say I did both really well, but I was not sure at the time.

People have different levels of confidence in different life areas which can make them fear responsibility in some areas, but not in others. But it all boils down to having a good reserve of successful past life experiences. Eventually, success in one life area generates confidence that can spill over to other life areas.

Having taken responsibility in the past and failed is worse than not having taken any responsibility at all. The former generates a greater degree of fear than the latter because the person is actively trying to avoid something.

Taking responsibility and failing may teach you that taking responsibility is a bad thing. People can usually handle the negative outcomes of taking responsibility if they have to bear all the costs. What people can’t seem to handle is letting others down.

So, if you took responsibility in the past and let important people in your life down, then the fear of responsibility might haunt you for your entire life.

MIND-SET: Fear of Responsibility - page 2

Often, when you're given a chance to take responsibility, you're given an opportunity to move out of your comfort zone, which can be really uncomfortable. It's uncomfortable because you worry if you'll carry out the responsibility perfectly and avoid making mistakes.

Knowing that perfectionism is an impossible goal and making mistakes is okay, as long as they're not big blunders, can help in overcoming these fears.

A huge responsibility often brings along with it huge anxiety and worry. This goes back to being out of your comfort zone. When you step outside of your comfort zone, you're definitely going to feel a lot of anxiety, stress, and worry.

If you have a low tolerance for these emotions or can't manage them, you'll crumble under the responsibility. It's much easier to live in the shell of your comfortable emotions than to experience the roller-coaster of emotions that come with taking responsibility and growing.

Nobody wants to look bad in front of other human beings. Taking up an enormous responsibility and failing could mean coming across as incompetent and letting others down.

When you take responsibility, you're saying, "I'm going to make this happen. You can count on me". This is a high-risk/high-reward/high-loss position to be in. If you succeed, people will look up to you as their leader (high-reward). If you fail, they'll look down on you (high-loss).

There's a subtle yet important difference between not wanting to take responsibility and being afraid to take responsibility. The former involves rational cost-benefit analysis that leads you to conclude that the risk isn't worthwhile and the latter involves irrationality. If you don't want to do something, people might accuse you of fearing responsibility. It can be a manipulative tactic to get you to do things you don't want to do.

Nobody wants to be seen as irresponsible. So when we're accused of fearing responsibility, we're likely to bend to the pressure of wanting to appear responsible.

People can throw their accusations and opinions at you but, ultimately, you should be self-aware enough to know what you're doing and why you're doing it. Or what you're not doing and why you're not doing it.

Healthy Minds, Healthy Bods (HMHB), promotes a Growth Mind-set mentality. It means you see things as a challenge, don't allow issues and situations to overwhelm, and are proactive in finding solutions to life problems. It something we can all do, but it is hard, and takes effort.

HMHB is a mentor led organisation. We are not trained or qualified psychiatrists, psychologists, or health workers. However, we have experienced tough times, overcome depression or addiction, and just want to help people deal with whatever life throws at us. If you feel you need any help with your physical or mental health, please speak to your local medical practice professionals.



EXERCISE/FITNESS: STRETCHING

HMHB's PT Zombie takes us through some mat stretches - 1

In simple terms, “stretching” is when we deliberately flex or stretch a specific muscle in order to improve the muscle’s elasticity. The result is a feeling of increased muscle control, flexibility, and range of motion.

It is also used to improve function in daily activities by increasing range of motion.

When we stretch it helps work out any stiffness or tightness in our muscles and joints caused by spending an extended amount of time in a single position. In the long term, this helps maintain a wide range of mobility and flexibility. Stretching keeps the muscles flexible, strong, and healthy, and we need that flexibility to maintain a range of motion in the joints. Without it, the muscles shorten and become tight.

Then, when you call on the muscles for activity, they are weak and unable to extend all the way.

That puts you at risk of joint pain, strains, and muscle damage.

Let’s just do a few stretches. Daily stretching is really good for you, as detailed above.

It is not just about warming up before an exercise session, or warming down after completing one.

Stretches are something we all need to do every day to stay supple, flexible, and healthy.

Check out our other monthly packs for other stretches. Some stretches we show are repeats. But that’s cool.

BODY STRETCH 1

This is a lovely stretch - one of my favourites.

Lie on your back with heels up to your bum.

Lower your knees to the left while reaching arms to the opposite right side, looking towards your arms.

Opens up a gorgeous stretch down your back and side. Then switch sides.

Try and hold both stretches for around 15-20 seconds.



When you stretch or move frequently throughout the day, you decrease strain on your muscles and skeletal system. In the long run, that can decrease the likelihood you'll develop chronic low back and shoulder pain, knee discomfort, headaches, and more.

BODY STRETCH 2

As you can see it is quite a simple move, but effective.

Zombie starts off by lying flat on the mat.

Then he brings his knees up to his chest, and reaches round to the top of the knees and pulls in, lifting his shoulders off the mat and holding the position.

You can achieve the most benefits by stretching regularly, at least two to three times a week. Even five or ten minutes can make a difference.



If you have any personal health concerns re stretching, always check with a medical professional before starting.

EXERCISE/FITNESS:

HMHB's PT Zombie takes us through some mat stretches - 2

STRAIGHT LEG STRETCH

You have even got me taking this photo in the background. As you can see, Zombie started out on his back. Keeping his legs straight, he lifts them up towards him, reaching round to grab as close to his ankle/heel as possible.

Stretching the hamstrings can help keep these muscles loose and flexible, improving posture, increasing flexibility, and preventing lower back pain.



DOG AND CAT POSE STRETCH

Zombie was on all fours. He then lowered his stomach to the floor while lowering his back, keeping his head up looking forward, holding that for 10-15 seconds. He then reversed the procedure by arching his back up and lowering his head, squeezing his core.

This yoga stretch helps to keep your spine flexible. They condition and strengthen the back muscles and tone and firm the tummy muscles. They improve general circulation and will help to ease lower back strain.



SEATED LEG STRETCH (FLOOR FLAMINGO)

The flamingo stretch is really good for your legs, but some people find it hard to stand. So why not do it on the mat?

Seating position, bring one up bent behind you, keeping knees together. Hold for 15 seconds then change.

These stretches help to lengthen and stretch the quad muscles and open up the hip flexors.



**As long as you're not overdoing it,
the more regularly you stretch, the better it is for your body.
It's better to stretch for a short time every day or almost every day
instead of stretching for a longer time a few times per week.
Being flexible and having full joint mobility can have several beneficial implications on
quality of life, including: reducing day-to-day pain and increasing vascular health.**

MIND-SET:

How can I be more Responsible? -1

Life doesn't have to be something that happens to us but something we shape and control. With the influx of events that are entirely out of our control, there are many circumstances with which we do have a say in. When experiencing hardships, one may be inclined to feel discouraged and helpless. However, it's important to remember that you can take control of your life by taking responsibility. Although we can not control everything in life that happens to us and the ones we care for, we can maintain how we respond.

For example, look at the Pandemic. It was crushing for a lot of people and repercussions on our physical and mental health are ongoing. We had no control on the actual virus. But we did have a responsibility to look after our health, and to not allow the situation to overwhelm us.

Many of the things we will look at here we have covered before. But that just demonstrates that they cover a multitude of issues. How can you take control and be responsible?

Are you responsible to yourself?

Do you actually look after yourself? Is your flat clean, your clothes washed and put away, your washing up done, your food cupboards full of healthy stuff (and the odd treat)? Are you exercising enough, getting out and socialising, keeping busy?



The first step is to shift your mindset and stop thinking of prioritising yourself as selfish. You have to help yourself before helping others. When we spend all of our time caring for others, we end up feeling tired and stressed, and that can actually make us less able to focus and socialise with others. We can't engage with our children or partners or friends or colleagues. We don't excel at work. We don't achieve our goals.

So, take a look at what is happening in your life right now. What can you do to improve that situation? Remember, many things are out of your control, but what will you do in response? That is your responsibility.

Limiting Beliefs

A limiting belief is a state of mind or belief about yourself that restricts you in some way. Everyone experiences limiting beliefs, but learning how to identify them can help you proactively prevent these beliefs from limiting you. For example, if your limiting belief is that you're bad at speaking in front of others, you'll likely decline any opportunity to share your knowledge with others in a group setting. Or, if you have to speak in front of people you may think you'll be more likely to fail. This is because you have preconceived notions about your ability to speak that limit your potential.

Limiting beliefs can also keep you in a negative state of mind, hindering you from encountering new opportunities and life experiences while wreaking havoc on your mental health. That's why it's so important to not only work on your self-awareness and self-esteem, but also recognise "unconscious biases". Holding on to biases about others hinders your ability to collaborate effectively, ultimately impacting your quality of work.

It's up to you to take responsibility, recognise that something is stopping you from doing something, but then step forward and face that fear down. It's really difficult. I have faced many issues setting up HMHB, not thinking I was good enough to succeed. But then I still put myself in the positions where success can happen.

MIND-SET:

How can I be more Responsible? -2

Create your own blueprint.

Growing up, I am sure our parents expected certain things of us. In some cultures, it is seen to be a good thing to be a doctor or a teacher, but not to be an actor or a designer.

How do you manage expectations? Sometimes, living up to someone else's expectations can be harmful. It can make you feel overwhelmed, frustrated, and disappointed. Occasionally, you start with good intentions, trying to make everyone happy, but you can actually forget who you are. To be true to yourself, you must live your own dream, whatever that is.

As cliché as it sounds, you need to live your life and not someone else's. This means that you should pursue your own dreams, goals, and plans. It can be hard to manage expectations when you're living somebody else's life because you're not in control. You won't please everyone, and that's okay.

Make sure everyone around you knows the direction you are going in. Try not to let others drag you down into negativity.

Keep growing

We're all busy. We're taking the kids to activities, working late at the office, spending time with friends and family and caring for aging parents. With so little time on our hands, we start to confuse being busy with growth. But putting others first doesn't mean you're growing. Learning how to prioritise yourself is essential to true growth – and if you are not growing, you are dying.

Commit to constant and never-ending improvement in every area of your life, but especially in your own personal growth. Keep a journal or a list of your self-care activities, new skills and latest knowledge. Feed your mind with inspiring books, articles or quotes about prioritising yourself. And always remember that it's not selfish to put your needs first. In fact, it's one of the most selfless things you can do.



Life is a challenge, and we need to see it as such. And challenges should excite us. Does life excite you at the moment? Why not? Is it not your responsibility to sort it out? Are you waiting for someone else to come along with a magic wand and wave all your troubles away? That isn't going to happen.

Stop blaming others

Yes, life means that sometimes other people will hurt you, either on purpose or accidentally. It is going to happen. It's inevitable. Are you going to let that affect you so much that you do not live your own life?

Although convenient, it's a massive form of self sabotage when we play the blame game. It's usually relatively easy to point the finger and cast judgment towards others instead of looking at our actions. When we are hyper-focused on other people's mistakes, we often miss learning many important life lessons. People play the blame game for many reasons. You may be defensive when the light is shined on your wrongdoings. This can lead to you avoiding accountability which typically worsens the problem.

NUTRITION: Lazza's Kitchen Adventure

Winter Green Soup

A Brand NEW Recipe from Lazza's Kitchen.
Lazza made his ever version of Winter Green Soup from scratch

Ingredients

Chopped Onion
Two Chopped and Diced Potatoes
Bag Cauliflower Rice
Bag Edamame Beans
Bag Mange Tout
Bag Spinach
Two Green Peppers (diced)
Bag Broccoli
Vegetable Stock
Garlic, Parsley, Basil, Salt, Pepper

Edamame beans are whole, immature soybeans, sometimes referred to as vegetable-type soybeans. They are green and differ in colour from regular soybeans, which are typically light brown, tan, or beige. Edamame is rich in protein, antioxidants, and fibre that may lower circulating cholesterol levels. The beans are low on the glycaemic index, so are suitable for people with type 2 diabetes. Traditionally eaten in Asia, edamame has gained popularity in Western countries, where it's typically eaten as a snack.

Heat the oil in a large non-stick frying pan or wide-based casserole.

I cooked the onion for around 3 minutes.

Then I added the chopped and diced potatoes and stirred for another 3 minutes

I made up one litre of vegetable stock and added to the pan.

I then poured in the cauliflower rice and gave a good stir.

Then I added all the other green veg.

This cooked for around 20-25 minutes.

I added the seasoning and herbs. Stirred and cooked for another 3-5 minutes.

Took off the heat and blended.



During the pandemic and lockdowns, Lazza decided to try a new hobby - cooking. Why not try out some new recipes and foods yourself? More on HMHB recipe pages: www.hmhb2016.org.uk This was a great, and very tasty, meal to prepare.

HMHB's funny quiz page: It's mostly guessing, but play with friends: Answers Page 37

Since summer 2021, HMHB has been hosting an online quiz on Thursday evenings. We started it as a way of bringing people together, having a laugh, and not taking things seriously. It is important that anyone can win, so we make it funny, but no knowledge is required.

All Answers are at the base of Page 37 - don't look till you have done the whole page!!

ROUND ONE: Multiple Choice

Only TWO of the choices are correct: which two are they?

Breeds of Rabbit	Spent Time in Prison	Appeared in Star Trek programmes
New Zealand White Spot	Paul McCartney	Kelsey Grammar
White Vienna	Paris Hilton	Drew Barrymore
Florida White	Mel Gibson	Liam Neeson
Flemish White Dwarf	Charlie Sheen	Terri Hatcher

ROUND TWO: Give Me a Number

Every answer to the question is a number. Can you get close?

- In 2023, how many schools were in Northern Ireland?
- In feet, approximately how deep is the wreck of the Titanic?
- How many "detective" novels did Agatha Christie write?
- How many stations on the London Underground?
- How many people have walked on the moon?

ROUND THREE: When Did That Happen

You have to guess the year all the events below occurred:

- The Commonwealth of Australia is formed.
- The Brothers Grimm first published the story of Snow White.
- Mendelssohn's Wedding March first used at a wedding.
- The Lava Lamp is launched.
- The first patented Dishwasher.



ROUND FOUR: What specifically links these films?

Gladiator: Jaws: Alien 3: Sunset Boulevard: Iron Man: Men in Black 3

ROUND FIVE: Which is it: Which of the answers is correct?

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. The only British Pope: | Alexander: Stephen: Nicholas |
| 2. Won Italian Football League 2023 | AC Milan: Napoli: Juventus |
| 3. Furthest from London: | Berlin: Warsaw: Milan |
| 4. Town in Yorkshire | Castleford, Fleetwood, Nuneaton |

ROUND SIX: Which Person is it?

1. Played Q in 17 Bond films between 1963 and 1999.
2. The Mr Man who could "tie an iron bar into knots".
3. Icelandic singer who sang "It's Oh So Quiet".
4. Scored 34 goals for Argentina in 91 games..
5. American President at the start of World War 1 in 1914.



NUTRITION:

How Nutrition can help with Bipolar Disorder

There is a difference between our “diets” and our “nutrition”. Our diet is what we consume on a daily basis (solids and liquids). Our nutrition is the nutrient content that is essential to keeping our bodies healthy, and us alive.

HMHB are not qualified nutritionists or dieticians. We just pass on information for a healthy lifestyle. If you have any concerns around your diet, do speak to a recognised medical professional who will be delighted to assist.

Bipolar disorder is a mental health condition that causes extreme mood swings. The main symptoms of bipolar disorder are episodes of extreme highs and lows, which can last for several weeks.

It's no secret that eating unhealthy foods can lead to a host of ailments. But a lesser-known effect of a poor diet, according to research, is that it can contribute to bipolar mood episodes. And while there is no specific diet recommended for bipolar disorder, certain food choices may help manage manic episodes.



Moreover, individuals with bipolar disorder have a high prevalence for multiple chronic conditions, such as being overweight or obese. So choosing healthy options is particularly important if you have this condition. Maintaining a healthy diet has the potential to not only benefit the symptoms of bipolar disorder but reduce the burden of these co-occurring illnesses.

You need to avoid stimulants, as they can trigger mania and should be avoided. Caffeine is an underappreciated bipolar trigger and can also impair sleep which can be particularly problematic because sleep deprivation is a notorious trigger for bipolar mood swings and mania.

While the evidence isn't conclusive, it has been noted that caffeine's stimulant effect may be responsible for triggering mania symptoms in some people, and it may also change the way certain medications used to treat bipolar disorder are metabolised in the body. It is also suggested other triggers could include alcohol, salt, saturated fat, and sugar. In other words, everything we know is not good for you.

You do not have to have bipolar. These changes can affect suffering from anxiety, depression and stress.

Planning a healthier diet doesn't have to be a chore.

- Munch on fresh vegetables with a savoury dip, such as hummus, instead of potato chips or fries.
- Skip the sweet pastry and instead top a slice of whole-grain bread or a few crackers with jam or peanut butter.
- Choose a decaf latte or herbal tea instead of a fourth or fifth cup of coffee.
- Avoid the burgers and fries at fast food places and order a fresh salad instead.
- Swap a fried entrée for steamed or broiled fish

NUTRITION:

How Nutrition can help with Stress - 1

Stress: We all have it, and how we handle it can make all the difference. Stress management can be a powerful tool for wellness, since too much stress is bad for you. There are many strategies, and one of them includes what you eat.

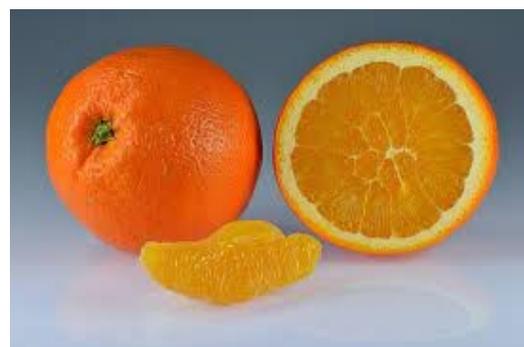
Foods can help tame stress in several ways. Comfort foods, like a bowl of warm porridge, boost levels of serotonin, a calming brain chemical. Other foods can cut levels of cortisol and adrenaline, stress hormones that take a toll on the body over time. A healthy diet can help counter the impact of stress by shoring up the immune system and lowering blood pressure.



Our health packs have covered carbohydrates a great deal. But did you know that all carbohydrates prompt the brain to make more serotonin. For a steady supply of this feel-good chemical, it's best to eat complex carbs, which take longer to digest. Good choices include whole-grain breads, pastas, and breakfast cereals, including old-fashioned porridge. Complex carbs can also help you feel balanced by stabilising blood sugar levels.

That does not mean never having simple carbohydrates. Dietitians usually recommend steering clear of simple carbs, which include sweets and soda. But in a pinch, these foods can hit the spot. They're digested quickly, leading to a spike in serotonin. Still, it doesn't last long, and simple carbs can also spike blood sugar. There are better options. So don't make these a stress-relieving habit; you should limit them.

A review found that vitamin C supplementation could improve symptoms of stress-related disorders, such as anxiety and depression. Eating fruits like oranges, grapefruits, and strawberries is a good place to start. Oranges make the list for their wealth of vitamin C. Studies suggest this vitamin can curb levels of stress hormones while strengthening the immune system. In one study of people with high blood pressure, blood pressure and levels of cortisol (a stress hormone) returned to normal more quickly when people took vitamin C before a stressful task.



In mice, diets low in magnesium were found to increase anxiety-related behaviours. Foods naturally rich in magnesium may, therefore, help a person to feel calmer. In fact, too little magnesium may trigger headaches and fatigue, compounding the effects of stress. One cup of spinach helps you stock back up on magnesium. Don't like spinach? Other green, leafy vegetables are good magnesium sources. Or try some cooked soybeans or a fillet of salmon, also high in magnesium.

To keep stress in check, make friends with naturally fatty fish. Omega-3 fatty acids, found in fish such as salmon and tuna, can prevent surges in stress hormones and may help protect against heart disease, depression, and premenstrual syndrome (PMS). For a healthy supply of feel-good omega-3s, experts say to aim to eat at least 3.5 ounces of fatty fish at least twice a week.



NUTRITION:

How Nutrition can help with Stress - 2

If you drink black tea you will de-stress faster because your levels of cortisol, a stress hormone, will go down more quickly, say researchers from the University College London. This study applies only to black tea.

The researchers observed 75 volunteers. They were all male, non-smoking, regular tea drinkers. For a period of six weeks one group was given 4 cups of black tea per day while the other was given a placebo that tasted, looked and smelt the same. Both groups had to refrain from drinking other teas, coffees and herbal and/or caffeinated beverages during this period.



All the volunteers were exposed to stressful tasks while the researchers monitored their cortisol levels, blood pressure, blood platelet levels, and how they subjectively rated their levels of stress.

The scientists found both groups experienced similar increases in heart rate and blood pressure during the stress-inducing situations. Levels of cortisol 50 minutes after each stressful task dropped 47% among the black tea drinkers and just 27% among the placebo drinkers. The black tea drinkers also had lower levels of blood platelet activation. The black tea drinkers also expressed themselves in a more relaxed way 50 minutes after a stressful task, when compared to the placebo drinkers.

Walnuts, almonds, and pistachios are perfect for reducing stress and anxiety. Walnuts contain high omega-3 fatty acids, which are essential for a healthy nervous system and can help reduce stress and anxiety. Almonds are rich in magnesium, which helps to relax muscles and reduce stress.

One study found that increased consumption of nuts, including almonds, was associated with decreased symptoms of depression.

Another study in 3,172 adults showed that males who consumed the highest amount of nuts were 66% less likely to experience anxiety than those who consumed the lowest amount.



Because of their fat content, nuts are high in calories, so it's best to limit your portion size to a small handful (30g). This amount of nuts generally contains 180 to 225kcal (depending on the type of nuts).

Having Potassium in your diet reduces Anxiety and Stress: Ingesting potassium assists with regulating a variety of hormones in your body, including those produced as a result of stress such as cortisol and adrenaline. This helps to reduce the feelings of anxiousness and tension that you may be experiencing.

One of the best ways to reduce high blood pressure is to get enough potassium, and half an avocado has more potassium than a medium-sized banana. A little bit of guacamole, made from avocado, might be a good choice when stress has you craving a high-fat treat. Avocados are high in fat and calories, though, so watch your portion size.

**Think about what you are eating. It can have a direct affect on your mood.
Making simple healthy changes to your diet can bring significant rewards.**

Nutrition: HMHB looks at Minerals

Today: Iron

**On this page, we will take a brief look at Minerals.
Why we use them, what they do for us, etc.**

In the context of nutrition, a mineral is a chemical element required as an essential nutrient by organisms to perform functions necessary for life. Nutrient minerals, being elements, cannot be synthesised biochemically by living organisms. Plants get minerals from soil. Most of the minerals in a human diet come from eating plants and animals or from drinking water."

The four major structural elements in the human body by weight ("Oxygen", "Carbon", "Hydrogen", "Nitrogen") are usually not included in lists of major nutrient minerals (Nitrogen is considered a "mineral" for plants, as it often is included in fertilisers). These four elements compose about 96% of the weight of the human body, and major minerals ("Macrominerals") and minor minerals (also called "Trace Elements") compose the remainder.

Iron is a Micromineral. Microminerals are essential and indispensable trace minerals in the human body. However, only in a very small amount to participate in the body's operation.

About seventy per cent of the iron in your body can be found in a protein in red blood cells called "Haemoglobin". Iron is essential in making haemoglobin. These red blood cells help carry oxygen throughout your body. Six percent of iron can also be found in other essential proteins and another twenty-five per cent is stored in your body in a blood protein called "Ferritin".

Iron is also vital for a fully functioning immune system. If your iron levels are too high or too low, they can cause serious health problems.

Ferritin is a protein in the body that stores iron and releases it when needed. A ferritin test can determine how much iron your body has stored. On average, adult males have about 1,000 mg of stored iron (enough for about three years), and adult women have about 300 mg (enough for about six months).

When iron intake is chronically low, these stores can become depleted, resulting in lower-than-normal ferritin levels and decreased haemoglobin.

Iron is not made in the body and must be absorbed from what you eat, so try eating foods that are rich in iron if your iron levels are low. There are two types of iron in foods: heme iron and non-heme iron. Heme iron is found in red meat, poultry and pork and is most easily absorbed by your body. Non-heme iron is not as easily absorbed by your body but is still a good source of iron and essential if you don't eat meat. Foods that are high in this type of iron include greens, breakfast cereals fortified by iron, breads and pasta, tofu, beans, dried fruits and eggs.

Like all Minerals, these are Elements that are "essential for life".

Your body can't create them (they are inorganic). You have to get them through your diet.

Why not research Minerals this month, and what foods you need to consume?

It's your body, and your choice.

Make sure your choices are the best ones you can make.



LAZZA'S PAGE
Recommendations, News, Life!!!

I thought I would launch a new page in 2023. I just wanted to talk a little more about who I am and the people behind HMHB, and maybe talk about what gets me through life.

I have been asked a few times about my favourite tipples, and I am probably a little unusual. I am not really a beer man, but more a fruity cider. With spirits, maybe rum, but I do like a glass of amaretto and coke, or a nice tot of Baileys, and at Christmas I get a bottle of Advocaat. But I am only a social drinker. It has never really appealed to me to do a lot. I'd prefer to meet up over a cup of tea or coffee rather than alcohol. I tend to get tipsy on just one glass of wine now!!



I have been fortunate to have enjoyed a few theatre shows recently, but that is again down to me finding great deals, especially with local theatre. I know this pack goes to other countries, but you will have stuff near you too. Lately I have seen performances at the newly opened venue for the Kings Head Theatre in Islington. For just £10 a ticket that is great value. There are deals around if you look about.

You cannot trust anything these days. None of these photos of me are real - the closest is probably the middle one (duh!!), although part of me is delighted with the far right. :-)
 I have to thank our PT Zombie for adapting a photo he took of me into these wonderful images. Really demonstrating that you cant trust anything online.



Last Year - 2023 - Healthy Minds, Healthy Bods was very busy indeed. Just listen to the figures:
 HMHB delivered 10 courses -working with over 120 people in attendance.
 HMHB produced and delivered 10 forty-page Health Packs.
 HMHB delivered 101 weekly health walks
 HMHB delivered 84 weekly exercise sessions
 HMHB delivered 30 weekly Zumba sessions outdoors
 HMHB delivered or joined in with 58 social outings/events (many of which were FREE)
 HMHB delivered 40 online zoom quizzes – unique delivery and fun.
 HMHB made many home visits to our older more isolated users.
Islington Voluntary Community Sector turned us down for funding for a “poor quality” application form.
Please help us: www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/hmhb2016



HMHB's Name Game Page:

Can you name these bands that sang in the 1980s?
Some are easier than others. I've tried to be a little obscure.
Answers at bottom of quiz page answers (page 39)



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12



13



14



15

NUTRITION: Lazza's Kitchen Adventure

Chicken and Sweetcorn Soup

A Brand NEW Recipe from Lazza's Kitchen.
Lazza made his first ever Chicken and Sweetcorn Soup from scratch

Corn is particularly high in lutein and zeaxanthin, two carotenoids that may prevent cataracts and age-related macular degeneration (AMD). This is likely because lutein and zeaxanthin make up a large part of the macular region of your eyes.

One of the main nutritional benefits of sweetcorn is its high fibre content. Dietary fibre is important for our health: it aids digestion, it can decrease the risk of heart disease, strokes, type 2 diabetes and bowel cancer.

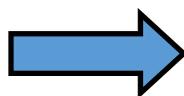
Ingredients

2 x chopped onions.
Garlic.
2 chopped and diced potatoes
3 small tins of sweetcorn
2 x chicken breasts
Chicken Stock
Parsley
Sage
Mixed Herbs
Salt and Pepper

In the oven cook the chicken breasts - around 25 minutes.
Make sure they are cooked through.
In a pan of hot water, boil the potatoes for around 15 minutes.

In a large pot, pour a little oil.
Add the onions and cook for around 5 minutes.
Then add the drained potatoes and mix.
Pour in around 500ml to 750ml of stock - depends on your pan.

Chop up the cold chicken into small pieces, and add the sweetcorn and chicken to the pot.
Season with herbs and salt and pepper.
Leave to cook for 15 minutes.
Meanwhile chop up the chicken breasts into small pieces and put to one side.
Blend the soup. Then add the chopped chicken breasts for texture and taste.
Delicious.



During the pandemic and lockdowns, Lazza decided to try a new hobby - cooking.
Why not try out some new recipes and foods yourself?
More on HMHB recipe pages: www.hmhb2016.org.uk
This was a great and very tasty dish to prepare.

EXERCISE/FITNESS

How does exercise boost us mentally?

Healthy Minds, Healthy Bods was conceived to actively support and encourage an active lifestyle, with exercise.

It is vitally important, at this time of sedentary lifestyles, that people practice movement and flexibility exercises, where they push themselves outside their comfort zone.

It can significantly improve your health; both short-term and long-term.

Healthy Minds, Healthy Bods run health walks in Islington, and have been since November 2016 in partnership with Highbury Grange Medical Practice, and we were also running three FREE fitness sessions in partnership with Better Gyms in Islington and Camden prior to the 2020 lockdown.

We now have our regular Highbury Gym sessions with Dean on Tuesdays, thanks to the team at Better, We organise a fantastic outdoor Zumba session on Sundays with our fabulous Karina.

We are outdoors Fridays with Healthy Generations Sarah, and Saturdays with Lazza.

However, we guide our users to do some of their own sessions, either on their own or in a group.

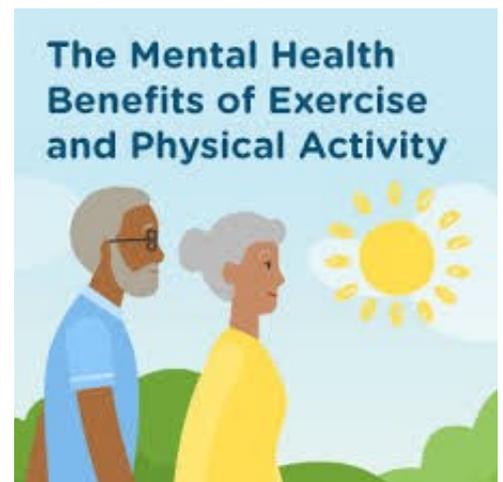
Be active, be safe, and go for it.

Often, people who exercise regularly do it simply because it makes them feel good. Exercise can boost your mood, concentration and alertness. It can even help give you a positive outlook on life.

The link between exercise and mental health is complicated. Inactivity can be both a cause and a consequence of mental illness, for example.

But there are lots of ways that exercise can benefit your mental health, such as:

- The levels of chemicals in the brain, such as serotonin, stress hormones and endorphins, change when you exercise.
- Regular exercise can help you sleep better. And good sleep can definitely help you manage your mood
- Exercise can improve your sense of control, coping ability and self-esteem. People who exercise regularly often report how good achieving a goal makes them feel.
- Exercise can distract you from negative thoughts and provide opportunities to try new experiences.
- It offers an opportunity to socialise and get social support if you exercise with others.
- Exercise increases your energy levels.
- Physical activity can be an outlet for your frustrations.
- Exercise can reduce skeletal muscle tension, which helps you feel more relaxed.



The physical benefits of exercise are also important for people with mental illness. It improves your cardiovascular health and overall physical health. This is important because people with mental health issues are at a higher risk of suffering from chronic physical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, and asthma.

**"He who has health has hope
and he who has hope has everything."
An Old Arabian Proverb**

EXERCISE/FITNESS:

Exercise to improve your Mental Health

If regular exercise is not already a part of your routine, and it is never too late to start, you might be wondering how much you need to do to give your mental health a boost.

The really good news is exercise doesn't have to be strenuous or take a long time. Studies show low or moderate intensity exercise is enough to make a difference in terms of your mood and thinking patterns.

Health guidelines around the world recommend adults should be active most days, aiming for a total of 2.5-5 hours of moderate physical activity per week, such as a brisk walk or swimming. Alternatively, they recommend getting 1.25-2.5 hours of vigorous physical activity per week - such as jogging, fast cycling, or a team sport. Or, you can combine both moderate and vigorous activities.



However, any exercise is better than none. Going for a leisurely walk, or activities like stretching and yoga, can also have huge benefits on your mind and body. Even doing housework like sweeping, mopping, or vacuuming can give you a mild workout. And maybe try and join a group. One of the reasons our own HMHB sessions go so well is that we are all encouraging and inspiring each other.

It can be intimidating to start exercising if you haven't done it in a while, but a plan can help you start and stick with it. Your new exercise plan has a better chance of success if you:

- see your doctor (GP), or even an accredited exercise physiologist, before you start, and regularly as you continue your exercise plan.
- choose an activity you like, or have enjoyed in the past, that suits your fitness levels and abilities
- start small – build up your activity gradually. Ideally, vary your activities so you don't get bored
- write your plan in your diary or on your calendar, so it's part of your schedule
- regularly revisit your exercise plans, and try something different if it's not working out for you.

For even greater benefits, try exercising outdoors. Some recent studies have found people report a higher level of vitality, enthusiasm, pleasure and self-esteem, and a lower level of tension, depression and fatigue, after they have walked outside. People who exercise outside also say they are more likely to exercise again than those who stay indoors. And, people who exercise outside do it more often, and for longer, than those who work out indoors.



As you can see from the pictures, getting out and walking in a group can be really fulfilling. Here, in three pics, HMHB have joined with Islington Walks for some park walks in the borough. The bottom longer picture is one of HMHB walks.

EXERCISE/FITNESS:

Three Crunch Variations - with PT Zombie



Basic Crunch

Lie flat on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Cross your arms over your chest with your palms placed just below your shoulders.

Engage your abs, lift your head and shoulders off the floor, and hold the position for 1–2 counts. Then, slowly lower yourself back down.

Do 2–3 sets of crunches that each have 10–15 reps.

Unlike sit-ups, crunches work only the abdominal muscles. This intense muscle isolation makes them a popular exercise for people trying to get six-pack abs. This also makes them ideal for strengthening your core, which includes your lower back muscles and obliques.



Ankle Tap Crunches

Start off lying on the floor, face up, with your legs bent and feet flat on the floor. Reach your arms down by your sides, held just off the floor.

Then slowly, tense your upper abdominals to lift your head, then neck, then shoulders and upper back off the floor. Keep your lower back on the floor and do not let it arch away from the floor.

This is your start position.

Twist your torso to the side and reach down with your right hand to touch your right ankle. Immediately reach down with your left hand to touch your left ankle.

Repeat.



Bicycle Kick Crunch

Hold hands by your head, not behind neck. Pull your shoulder blades back and slowly raise your knees to about a 90-degree angle, lifting your feet from the floor. Exhale and slowly, at first, go through a bicycle pedal motion, bringing one knee up towards your armpit while straightening the other leg, keeping both elevated higher than your hips. Rotate your torso so you can touch your elbow to the opposite knee as it comes up. Twist to the other side, while drawing that knee towards your armpit and the other leg extended until your elbow touches the alternate knee. Aim for 12 to 20 repetitions and three sets



**“Fitness is not about being better than someone else.
It’s about being better than you used to be.”**

EXERCISE/FITNESS:

Three More Crunch Variations - with PT Zombie



Pedal Crunches

Similar to bicycle crunch without the elbows. Hold hands by your head, not behind neck. Pull your shoulder blades back and slowly raise your knees to about a 90-degree angle, lifting your feet from the floor. Exhale and slowly, at first, go through a bicycle pedal motion, bringing one knee up towards your armpit while straightening the other leg, keeping both elevated higher than your hips.

Because you are raising your legs, you engage the transverse abdominis, which is the deep ab muscle that is difficult to target. You will be toning your thighs, as both your hamstrings and quads will be involved with bicycling.



Reach Up Crunch

Lie down with your back pushed into the floor, legs out straight, and arms out to the sides.

Raise your right leg up and at the same time reach to the ankle with the left hand. Hold the position for one or two seconds before lowering down and changing sides.

Among the core muscles that can be worked through crunches are the rectus abdominis, internal and external obliques, transversus abdominis, hip flexors (iliopsoas and rectus femoris), being the first fundamental muscle in the flexion of the spine.

Yes, they are all big words, but why not do some research yourself and see where all those muscles are in your body?



Hand Slide Crunch

This crunch is a good one to do.

As you can see, you lie down with the back flat on the floor and raise your legs as high as possible.

Rest your hands on your knees, or things, and then slowly slide your hands up the legs towards your toes.

This automatically brings you into a crunch movement. Then lower yourself back down.

The core muscles have two main functions. Firstly, to spare the spine from excessive load, and secondly to transfer force from the lower body to the upper body and vice versa. Having a strong, stable core helps us to prevent injuries and allows us to perform at our best.

Lazza's Page of Fascinating Facts

Some knowledge to amaze your friends.

As part of our Thursday quiz, I try to find some fascinating facts that people can say "oh, I did not know that" - and maybe even take away to share with others.

Here are some fascinating facts for you to share.



I like KitKats, and it is nice to have a few flavours. Well, Japan take that to the extreme. The country has launched more than 200 flavours in 15 years. Nestlé attributes the success of the flavour varieties to the tradition of omiyage, in which regional specialties are brought back for family and co-workers from trips away. Flavours include Wasabi, Soy Sauce, Cough Drop, and Miso Soup. I'll give them a miss!

That beautiful stretch of water opposite is Loch Ness. Yes, the place that a large monster is alleged to live. But Loch Ness is much more than that. It is estimated to contain 263 billion cubic feet of water, that's more than in all the lakes in England and Wales combined. It also never freezes. The dark waters of Loch Ness remain at a rather year-round temperature of five degrees. It doesn't heat up, it doesn't freeze over; it's just chilly—all the time.



If you're an animal person, you'll love Switzerland. In recent years, they've passed quite a few pet-friendly laws which I hope will be implemented in more places throughout the world. For example, dog owners must take a course that teaches them how to take care of their dogs, care for their needs and deal with several behavioural situations. But perhaps the most heart-warming Swiss law is about guinea pigs: you're not allowed to have just one! They need social interaction to be happy, so owning a single guinea pig is considered harmful to its well-being and forbidden by law.

The Ampersand symbol - which stands for "and" - used to be in the English Alphabet. Yes, it was character number 27. It was originally written as "et" - ironically this is the French spelling (we spoke French in this country for around 300 years after the Norman conquest in 1066). The "e" and the "t" then got amalgamated into the shape we know today (although variations of the ampersand can be found back in Roman times). It was dropped from the alphabet sometime in the 19th Century.



HEALTH / ROUTINE

Our Bodies Are Amazing - 1

There are lots and lots of things that happen with our bodies that we maybe don't actually know why are happening. Let's take a look at a few examples and see if we can explain.

Why do I burp after eating and drinking?

It's the fizz. Cola, Lemonade, Beer, and all other bubbly drinks, are made with a gas called carbon dioxide. This adds extra air into your stomach, which finds its way back up the same way it entered: through your mouth. You may also want to avoid hot drinks. Sipping them causes you to swallow air and could also bring on a bout of belching.



If you down a lot of food at once or feast too fast, you'll swallow extra air along the way. Most of this won't go to your stomach. It will stay in your oesophagus, which links your throat to your stomach, until you burp it back up. Slow down when you eat, and chew your food well. Keep your portions smaller, too, so you burp less. Getting to a healthy weight may also make a difference.

Extra pounds put more pressure on your stomach.

There are also possible health issues.

Sometimes, burping can be a sign of stomach ulcers. These open sores in the lining of your stomach are quite common. An infection can cause them. So can taking too many NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) like ibuprofen. If you have an ulcer, you may burp more and feel full or bloated after eating fatty foods. Your stomach may also hurt after you eat. With treatment, ulcers often clear up within 2 months.

Acid reflux. I get this due to my Hiatus Hernia. Sometimes, stomach acid backs up into your throat. This is more likely to happen if you're pregnant, obese, or your stomach doesn't digest food as fast as it should. Once you feel this "lump" in your throat, you'll swallow more to try to get rid of it. This can make you burp. An over-the-counter antacid can help mild symptoms, or your doctor may prescribe a stronger drug. For severe cases, surgery might be an option. I am waiting for my Hernia operation.

Why do I get Pins and Needles?

Most people have temporary pins and needles from time to time. It happens when pressure is applied to a part of the body. This cuts off the blood supply to the nerves in that area. This stops the nerves from sending important signals to the brain.

Putting weight on a body part (for example, by kneeling) or wearing tight shoes or socks can potentially cause pins and needles. Temporary pins and needles can be eased by taking the pressure off the affected area. This then relieves the numbness or tingling sensation.

Sometimes, pins and needles can occur over a long period of time. It can be a sign of a wide range of health conditions, including diabetes, a condition in which there is too much glucose in the blood. Another reason could be a compressed ulnar nerve – the ulnar nerve starts in your neck and runs down the inside of your upper arm to your elbow, then down to the little finger side of your hand; it can be compressed at any point, but the elbow is most commonly affected. Other health reasons could be carpal tunnel syndrome, or sciatica. Persistent pins and needles can also occur after an injury. It can also be caused by certain treatments, such as chemotherapy. If yours persists, do seek out some medical help.

HEALTH / ROUTINE

Our Bodies Are Amazing - 2

Why are my feet so sweaty?

People sweat due to heat, stress, and a range of other causes. One area of the body that commonly becomes sweaty is the feet. Feet have more sweat glands per square inch than any other area of your body, so it's no surprise that everyone experiences sweaty feet from time to time. It's normal for feet to sweat more when it's hot or you're participating in a strenuous activity that elevates your body temperature.

There are many reasons why a person may suffer from sweaty feet. Emotional stress and physical activity are among the most common reasons. Genetics and heredity can also cause it.

Many people who think they suffer from sweaty feet or “Hyperhidrosis” are actually only being subjected to climate related normal sweating. However, hyperhidrosis can sometimes be a major health issue and may give rise to other complications. Hence, it should not be ignored, but be diagnosed and treated.

Symptoms that may cause concern, and make you see a medical professional, include:

- A bad smell emanating from the feet
- Itchiness of the feet
- Toenail fungus
- Athlete’s Foot
- Development of other skin problems on the feet
- Socks and shoes are often damp with perspiration

Why do I get hard skin on my feet?

Are there any patches of hard skin on your feet? If so, you could well be experiencing “Hyperkeratosis”. It’s a common problem and means that your skin’s outer layer has become thicker than normal in some areas.

The excessive thickening is due to an overgrowth of keratin. This tough, fibrous protein is hugely important, as it helps to protect your skin and prevent pathogens from entering your body. However, excessive amounts of keratin can be problematic for your feet.

Keratin overgrowth frequently affects the bottom of the foot. This is known as plantar hyperkeratosis (‘plantar’ refers to the sole). The skin on your soles needs to be thicker than elsewhere in order for it to act as a robust, protective barrier every time your feet strike the ground. But if excessively thick skin appears, you can easily run into problems, as the sensitivity of your feet will be impaired. It’ll be more difficult for them to detect changes in temperature and terrain. It could take you longer than usual to become aware of a foot injury or infection. If the hard skin is uncomfortable to walk on, you’ll struggle to be active and may develop a limp.



HEALTH / ROUTINE

Our Bodies Are Amazing - 3

Why does my tummy rumble?

A rumbling stomach is often a natural occurrence. But frequent, unusually loud sounds or the lack of abdominal sounds may indicate an underlying health condition. Stomach and bowel sounds, also known as “Borborygmi” (who knew there was a word for it?), refer to noises made within the small and large intestines, usually during digestion. Because the intestines are hollow chambers, sounds that emanate from them during digestion are often similar to the sounds of water moving through pipes.



Abdominal noises like stomach “growling” are usually a sign of digestion. This refers to the movement of food, liquids, digestive juices, and air through your intestines. Enzyme-rich fluids in your gastrointestinal (GI) tract help break down the foods and beverages you consume each day. The intestinal walls contract and relax in a wave-like rhythm to mix and squeeze the food through the intestines so it can be digested. This process is known as “Peristalsis” and could cause abdominal noises like stomach growling. It can occur several hours after eating and even at night when you’re trying to sleep.

Stomach growling is often an internal signal that the body is hungry or wants food. When you’re hungry, hormone-like substances in the brain activate the desire to eat. These then send signals to the intestines and stomach. As a result, the muscles in your digestive system contract and cause these sounds.

Speak with a healthcare professional if you experience changes around the volume and occurrence of your bowel noises, or if abnormal abdominal sounds occur with other symptoms.

Why is my bottom itchy?

HMHB doesn’t shy away from the personal questions. :-)

An itchy bottom is a symptom, not a condition. It makes you want to scratch the skin around the opening where poo leaves your body - how else was I to describe it? If you've had an itchy bottom for more than a few days, you should see your GP to try to find the cause.

Many cases of an itchy bottom have an underlying cause, for example:

- Infection and infestation – such as “Staphylococcal bacterial infections” and “Scabies”
- A skin condition – such as “Atopic Eczema” or “Psoriasis”
- “Haemorrhoids” (piles) - swellings that contain enlarged and swollen blood vessels in and around the anus
- “Anal Fissure” - a tear or open sore (ulcer) that develops in the lining of the anal canal
- A chronic condition - such as “Diabetes”

It’s nothing to be embarrassed about. I recall, when I was around 19, I had a very itchy bottom and was horrified to find these little white worm things. However, I discovered these were “threadworms”, quite common, and quickly went with medication. Bit of a shock though, especially when I saw them.

An itchy bottom is usually easy to treat. Make sure you wash thoroughly down below, do not scratch, and use soft toilet paper. There are some ointments that a doctor can prescribe. But, If your itchy bottom is caused by an underlying condition, such as a bacterial infection or piles, the underlying condition will also need to be treated. So do seek medical help if it persists - your doctor has seen everything!!!

HEALTH / ROUTINE

Our Bodies Are Amazing - 4

Why do my ears pop?

When your ears pop, it may be due to flying, scuba diving, hiking a mountain, or just riding in an elevator. When air pressure decreases around you as you go higher or increases as you go lower, the pressure in your ear isn't equal. This causes pressure on one side of your eardrum, and it can be painful. But the pain is temporary and you can ease it by popping your ears.

I have first hand experience of this when I was lucky enough to dive off the Barrier Reef of Australia in 2002. The only time I have scuba dived. The pressure grows very quickly. I was probably just 10-15 feet under the surface, but had to pop my ears to stop the pain from the pressure.



The part of your ear that pops is in your “Eustachian tube”. This tube is made to protect your middle ear and ventilate it. The Eustachian tube works to keep air pressure equal on both sides of your eardrum. When pressure builds up in your middle ear, your Eustachian tubes will open. The pressure in your ear equalizes when the tubes open. This is what makes your ears pop, to relieve pressure and potential pain.

Why do my joints crack?

In orthopaedic and sports medicine, “Crepitus” describes “a popping, clicking or crackling sound in a joint.”.

Knees, knuckles, ankles and even your lungs can make alarming crackles as we move through the day. It comes from Nitrogen bubbles in the synovial fluid (a viscous fluid found in the cavities of joints) that get trapped then released during particular movements. Most of the time, it's nothing to worry about. Crepitus is harmless when not caused by an injury, medical condition or disease. But, there are times when the noise is signalling a bigger problem.

The painless noise in your joints or ligaments is both common and quite normal. The synovial fluid lubricates and protects the joints. Over time, gases can build up in these areas which are released when the joint is being used. Thus, the pops and cracks. A chiropractor can manually induce these pops. So, getting your back “cracked” is more like getting your joint fluid popped. The noises will probably increase with age, but are generally not a cause for concern in the absence of pain.

On the other hand, the noise you hear could also be the result of arthritic damage to the cartilage and bone. Various types of arthritis cause swelling which changes the way the joints move. Osteoarthritis (OA) is known as the wear-and-tear type that typically affects people as they age. The resulting breakdown of the cartilage causes swelling and pain. At first, it may be simple Crepitus, but if the joint cushioning is destroyed, the sound will be the painful grinding of bone against bone.

I recently had to have two knee operations on my “Meniscus”. The meniscus is a thin layer of cartilage that sits between the weight-bearing joints of the femur and the tibia. If that cushion is torn (which is what happened to me), the shredded or detached edges can get caught during movement. This causes swelling, pain, and popping or clicking noises. In fact I was limping for over two years, unable to run, and this is part of the reason I put on weight.

NUTRITION: Lazza's Kitchen Adventure

Salmon, Prawn, Broccoli Bake

A Brand NEW Recipe from Lazza's Kitchen.
This was Lazza's first ever Salmon, Prawn, Broccoli Bake from scratch

Broccoli didn't reach British soil until the middle of the eighteenth century, when it was introduced by the Flemish sculptor, Peter Scheemakers, who is perhaps best-known for creating the famous monument to William Shakespeare which stands in Westminster Abbey. The word broccoli comes from an Italian word broccolo which means "the flowering top of a cabbage". China, India, and the USA are the biggest producers.

Ingredients

4 x Salmon Fillets (can have two halved)
Prawns - you choose amount
250g Macaroni: broccoli (heads)
25g Butter: 25g Plain Flour
600ml Milk
100g Mascarpone
8 Vine Tomatoes (can use salad) - diced
Basil, Parsley, Salt, Pepper, Cheddar Cheese
Tomato Puree, Garlic Puree

This is slightly costly with salmon and prawns, but utterly delicious.

First cook the macaroni in a large saucepan, as per the instructions, for 6-8 mins.

Add the broccoli florets to this pot - add more water if needed.

In a separate pot put the milk, butter and flour.

Boil up, whisking until it starts to thicken. Add tomato and garlic puree to taste.

Also add the mascarpone and stir in.

Dice up the tomatoes and add them to the mixture, as well as the prawns.

Be generous with the basil, and parsley, and sprinkle some salt and black pepper.

Now add in the drained pasta and broccoli florets—stir all that in.

In an oven proof dish, lay the salmon fillets - which you can halve, over the base.

Pour the mixture over the salmon.

Grate some cheese and pour generously over the top (you could put some in the mix earlier if you wanted)

Bake at 190C for around 25 minutes.

Honestly, this was so delicious. Serve with little sprinkle of lemon juice and some sour cream.



During the pandemic and lockdowns, Lazza decided to try a new hobby - cooking.
Why not try out some new recipes and foods yourself?
More on HMHB recipe pages: www.hmhb2016.org.uk
This was a great and very tasty dish to prepare.

HMHB and our Amazing Partnerships Promoting Projects and Organisations - Pt 1



Age UK are both national, international, and local. They do tremendous work, especially with older people, running many classes around health and well-being, as well as helping people with care and support, financial and legal matters, education and retirement. Age UK Islington would be very happy to speak with you. Look at www.ageuk.org.uk/islington/ Or Call: **020 7281 6018**: HMHB are doing some course events with Age UK, and look forward to more collaboration.

Better Lives is an integrated drug and alcohol service delivered by Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust in partnership with WDP and Humankind.

They offer a free and confidential support service for individuals and their families affected by drug and alcohol problem.

HMHB ran a successful course with them this Spring, this following a successful course we did with them before. We are hoping this will be the start of a working relationship with them.



HMHB is very proud of its collaboration with Better Gyms in Islington and Camden. We have run various classes at Pancras Leisure Centre and the Sobell Centre in the past, and currently have our Tuesday indoor morning session at Highbury Leisure Centre, who have been very supportive of our work. They are one of our Highbury Fields walk partners, and we hope to have more classes with them in the near future.

The Haringey Wellbeing Network (HWN) is a mental health and wellbeing community support service for the London Borough of Haringey. The network is made up of three specialist mental health organisations and is the single point of entry for all community mental health support needs in Haringey.

HMHB has run several courses with them in the past, and we love helping their users. Call them on **0208 340 2474 (option 1)**.

Email: Haringeywellbeingnetwork@mih.org.uk



HMHB have formed a partnership with Healthy Generations. HG promote inclusion, reduce isolation and improve health and well-being. They work mainly with older people and mental health service users. Islington classes are open to everyone. They have a huge number of FREE exercise classes of different types, so do check out their website and join in (see last pack!!!). www.healthygenerations.org.uk You can also contact Sam (Ops Manager) through their website. HMHB look forward to working with HG going forward.

HMHB and our Amazing Partnerships Promoting Projects and Organisations - Pt 2



Help on Your Doorstep

Help on Your Doorstep aims to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Islington, especially those who are vulnerable and isolated. Working with residents they seek to find solutions to the issues which make life difficult, strengthen communities to do more for themselves and enable people to improve their life chances.

Do contact them if you have an issue, and they can signpost you to the relevant people. connect@helponyourdoorstep.com

HMHB are so proud to be part of a world-wide network that focuses on the benefits of walking for your health.

We are partners with the US based Walk With A Doc, that now has chapters all around the world.

Started back in 2005, it reaches into all continents, and we are humbled to be in their London based events.

We keep in contact, send them our health packs, and are on their social media and beyond. www.walkwithadoc.org



SHP's vision is of a society where everyone has a place to call home and the chance to live a fulfilling life. They help single Londoners by preventing homelessness, providing support and accommodation, promoting well-being, enhancing opportunity, and being a voice for change.

HMHB have done several courses to terrific feedback with SHP, and look forward to working more in the future.

www.shp.org.uk 0204 509 8300

HMHB have had a working relationship with VAI for over eight years, and they have been extremely helpful as we developed and then started working with users.

VAI support hundreds of small projects and organisations throughout Islington, and it was through them that Lawrence won an award at the Volunteer of the Year Awards in 2022.

If you need help - please contact Yvette, Marta, Maria:

www.vai.org.uk Main phone no: 020 7832 5801

**Voluntary
Action
Islington**

Answers to Fun Quiz from Page 18 - don't look till you have done all the quiz

- Round One: 1 Vienna/Florida 2 McCartney/Hilton 3 Kelsey/Terri
 Round Two: 1, 1079: 2, 12500 3, 66: 4, 112: 5, 12
 Round Three: 1, 1901: 2, 1812: 3, 1847: 4, 1963. 5, 1850.
 Round Four: All Movies that started shooting without a completed script.
 Round Five: 1 Nicholas: 2 Napoli: 3 Warsaw: 4 Castleford
 Round Six: 1 Desmond Llewelyn: 2 Strong: 3 Björk: 4 Maradona: 5: W Wilson



Review of Challenges and Targets

Mind-set:

We talk about “responsibility” a lot in our health packs, and as part of our regular HMHB course that we deliver.

We have to stand up sometimes and know it is up to us to do the right things, and that includes looking after our health and our daily routines.

There is a bit of excitement of setting yourself challenges and pushing yourself to achieve. But many of us sit back and hope that things will happen.

It is up to us to find the motivation and encouragement.

Find your way. Move forwards. You can choose!!!



Nutrition.

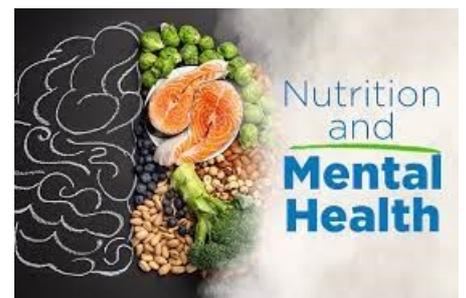
Eating the “right” foods that your body needs to function properly does not just boost your physical health. It can also support your mental health. It

can lower stress and depression, and increase your energy levels and focus.

We talk a lot about that in these packs, and I am my own worst enemy.

Back on my weight loss project, and the problem there is comfort eating when I get stressed. I know that. I know what I must do.

So, it isn't always easy. But the benefits can be significant. Not just about reaching, and maintaining, a healthy weight. But living a good life.



Exercise.



I had to use that clipart. The guy looks so happy to be doing crunches. And that is what we looked at this week.

We tried out some variations on the basic crunch exercise.

Your core muscles are kind of like the link connecting your upper and lower body. Whether you are working out or doing household chores, you need a strong core to comfortably do your daily work.

Not having a strong core will make you susceptible to lower back pain, poor posture, and of course, an unsightly bulge of your belly (me at the moment).

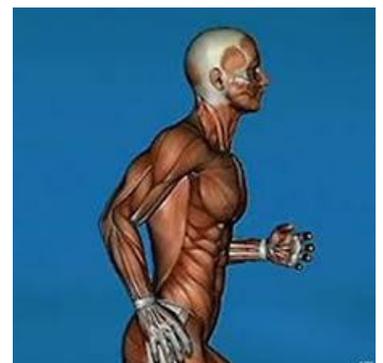
Health.

Our bodies are miraculous. We have repeated that many times over the last few years of these health packs.

Think about it. A pile of 206 bones covered in muscles, ligaments, organs (that perform various crucial tasks), a liquid that exists only in life, a lump of fat in our skulls that controls everything. It is truly astonishing.

But we do various daily things that many of us do not really understand what is happening to make them occur.

In this pack we look at some of our body functions and try and find an explanation for them. I have learnt a huge amount just doing research, and will be answering even more in the next Health Pack. I hope you found them interesting.



**Start thinking about setting weekly goals yourself on these topics.
A small difference every week will grow into significant change over time.**

Quiz Answers from Page 6 + Bands from Page 24

See if you can beat your family and friends

Music: The singers for those Number UK Singles in the 1980s.

1. Survivor
2. Adam Ant
3. Paul Young
4. UB40
5. Jim Diamond
6. Fergal Sharkey
7. Dead Or Alive
8. Foreigner
9. Doctor And The Medics
10. A-ha
11. Pet Shop Boys
12. Mel and Kim
13. MARRS

Places: The US State are these cities.

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. Los Angeles | California |
| 2. Dallas | Texas |
| 3. Seattle | Washington |
| 4. Denver | Colorado |
| 5. Phoenix | Arizona |
| 6. Chicago | Illinois |
| 7. Boston | Massachusetts |
| 8. Portland | Oregon |
| 9. Memphis | Tennessee |
| 10. Atlanta | Georgia |
| 11. Omaha | Nebraska |
| 12. Tulsa | Oklahoma |
| 13. Orlando | Florida |
| 14. Cincinnati | Ohio |
| 15. Buffalo | New York |

Music: Which Actor/Actress won the Best Actor/Actress Oscar for these films, and what year was the film released?

- | | |
|-----------|-------------------|
| 1. 2022: | Brendan Fraser |
| 2. 2002: | Nicole Kidman |
| 3. 1988: | Rain Man |
| 4. 1972: | Liza Minnelli |
| 5. 1962: | Gregory Peck |
| 6. 2000: | Julia Roberts |
| 7. 1989: | Daniel Day-Lewis |
| 8. 2017: | Frances McDormand |
| 9. 2014: | Eddie Redmayne |
| 10. 1964: | Julie Andrews |
| 11. 1956: | Yul Brynner |
| 12. 1977: | Diane Keaton |
| 13. 2019: | Joaquin Phoenix |
| 14. 2016: | Emma Stone |
| 15. 2007: | Daniel Day-Lewis |
| 16. 1990: | Kathy Bates |
| 17. 2000: | Russell Crowe |

The World:

The Top 20 Beer Producing Countries

China, USA, Brazil, Mexico

Germany, Russia, Japan, Spain

Vietnam, Poland, UK, South Africa

Colombia, India, Belgium, France

Netherlands, Thailand, Canada, Czech Republic

QUIZ ANSWERS

Musical Bands: Did you name them? - from Page 24 (how well did you do?)

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 1: Kajagoogoo | 2: Frankie Goes To Hollywood |
| 3: Erasure | 4: Huey Lewis And The News |
| 5: Yazoo | 6: A-ha |
| 7: The Cure | 8: Spandau Ballet |
| 9: U2 | 10: Dire Straits |
| 11: Tears For Fears | 12: Europe |
| 13: Madness | 14: Simple Minds |
| 15: Pink Floyd | |

UK History:

Last 9 Prime Ministers and Partners

Rishi Sunak / Akshata Murty

Liz Truss / Hugh O'Leary

Boris & Carrie Johnson

Theresa & Philip May

David & Samantha Cameron

Gordon & Sarah Brown

Tony & Cherie Blair

John & Norma Major

Margaret & Denis Thatcher

THE LAST PAGE

We hope you have enjoyed this pack. HMHB is trying to keep people active, motivated and guiding people to a healthier regime.

You can contact HMHB:

HMHB would prefer you email us: hmhb2016@outlook.com

Please follow and like us on Facebook if you are on it:

www.facebook.co.uk/healthymindshealthybods

Check out our GoFundMe: www.gofundme/hmhb2016 (*being updated*)

Check out our JustGiving: www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/hmhb2016

Please follow us on Twitter if you use it: [@hmhb2016](https://twitter.com/hmhb2016)

Please follow PT Dean on Twitter if you use it: [@zombie_pt](https://twitter.com/zombie_pt)

Please follow us on Instagram: [healthymindshealthybods2016](https://www.instagram.com/healthymindshealthybods2016)

Please follow and like our blogs:

www.hmhbmainblog.blogspot.com ; this about HMHB as a whole

www.healthymindshealthybods.blogspot.com our health blog

Our website is: www.hmhb2016.org.uk you can contact us through the site.

We are updating it with new pages at the moment, and plenty of pictures on our gallery page

All copies of our Mental Health Packs can be downloaded from our website.

HMHB: Official Nominee Team Islington Volunteer of the Year Awards 2021

Lawrence & HMHB: WINNER Mayor Civic Award in 2022

Lawrence: WINNER at Volunteer of the Year Awards 2022

Lawrence and HMHB: Official Nominee Mayor Civic Award 2023

Lawrence: WINNER Islington Volunteer of the Year 2023



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Link to our Website