



**Success After Stroke
News Bulletin No 42
Thursday May 27th 2021**

Hello everyone,

How are you all? Well its been quite a busy few weeks behind the scenes at SAS and it is wonderful to know that we are finally able to start meeting up after what seems an extraordinary long time! I know some of you made it to Helmingham Hall (photos next bulletin and many thanks to Jeannette for organising the 'surprise'), and some of us are going next week.

Please also welcome our new **Trustee, Haydn Hertz**, who is delighted to be joining the SAS family and who is undoubtedly going to bring his enthusiasm, considerable knowledge, ideas and 'can do' attitude to our organisation. Exciting times ahead!

Have a great week.

Shirley

Introducing our new Trustee

Haydn Hertz



"I am 53 years old, happily married (well I am and can only hope my wife Monica agrees, you would need to ask her), a dad to four children and one chocolate Labrador.

We moved to the area 13 years ago and have never looked back.

Sport plays a big part of our lives and it was a Charity Golf Day that introduced me to SAS. Our friend and neighbour (shout out to Diana Skrine) was owed a favour so I asked her to nominate a Charity for the event that year, she chose SAS and that leads us to where we are today.

I was delighted to be asked to join as a Trustee and I recall from the first moment I went to the Stevenson Centre feeling the special relationship between staff, volunteers, and its members so it was an easy question to answer when I was asked to get involved.

I look forward to meeting everyone in the very near future".

Regards

Haydn

Mental Health and Wellbeing



There seems to be an ever-increasing mention of “Mental Health” and “Mental Wellbeing” in newspapers and the media in general these days and I suspect that just reading the words makes some people raise their eyebrows and sigh with frustration. After all, the world that most of us grew up in had very little reference to mental health and virtually none to mental wellbeing, although of course I am sure that most of us knew of at least one person who had had a “breakdown” as was the terminology at the time.

Of course too, most of us grew up in an age where talking to the world at large about one’s problems was definitely not the done thing. There was a time when even speaking about having cancer was frowned upon or spoken about in whispers. After all, many people grew up in wartime during which close members of the family had been killed as a direct result of war leaving family and friends bereft. So it is understandable if, on an individual basis, we have little patience for the current trend to share every last detail of one’s life amongst friends and especially on social media.

However the fact remains, there appears to be an increasing number of people, often the famous, who are willing to share aspects of their lives which previously would have been kept a secret. In doing so, they are showing the vulnerable side to themselves with the intention of helping other people to know that they aren’t the only people to have gone through similar trauma.

But whether you think this sharing of intimate secrets is a good thing or not, there is a great deal of evidence that traumatic events when kept hidden in oneself can do a great deal of harm to a person’s self-esteem and so prevent people from leading fulfilling and happy lives. It is not to say that anyone has a perfect, idyllic life and it is through difficulties of all kinds that people can learn to grow and have the sense of achievement and self-worth that come with overcoming challenging times.

So what does mental well-being mean to you? And does it mean that because you have the physical challenges that come with having had a stroke or other serious illness, you are more prone to mental ill health and so you cannot have peace of mind? It is my belief that having a healthy outlook on life, regardless of the physical challenges, is both possible and achievable. I believe too that although it can be helpful in a therapeutic environment to share one’s traumas, but it isn’t necessary to share that information with the world at large.

There are several strands (at least) to mental wellbeing and these are my personal favourites:

Being connected with others and having good close relationships. I think this is very much about the quality of our connections, rather than the number. Good relationships can offer so much but need an awareness of the other person's needs and wants, as well as our own.

Having a sense of purpose. What does that mean to you and how do you create it? Often it involves doing something for others and this can range from getting shopping, doing the garden or simply making a regular phone call to make contact with another person. In essence I believe it means doing something for someone else to help make their lives easier or to help them feel less lonely. As anyone who volunteers either in an official or unofficial capacity will tell you, helping others always has a benefit to both the giver and the receiver.

Eating a healthy diet – with more information than ever about what constitutes a healthy diet, with a little pre-planning and with a wide range of foods in the supermarkets, this can be a relatively easy goal to achieve.

Getting some form of physical exercise - however limited your physical abilities/capabilities are it can be possible, albeit with some assistance for some.

Finding some quiet time to rest or meditate every day. Having some 'me time' is so important and can help restore ones equilibrium. Even 10 or 15 minutes a day sitting quietly can be beneficial.

Asking for help from a friend or professional when everything gets too much. The old saying that a problem shared is a problem halved is as true now as it ever was.

Mental health is clearly a vast topic that I have only touched on here and, as always, in my role of SAS Well-being Therapist, I am here to listen and, where appropriate, advise so if you are feeling overwhelmed with life and at a loss as to where to turn next, then please do get in touch.

But, to quote Dr Max Pemberton (the Daily Mail's Mind Doctor) and thinking about the events which have occurred all through our lives:

"The failure, struggles and difficulties we experience are what makes us learn to stand on our own two feet and be stable secure adults. It is part of the learning how to deal with frustration, anxiety and uncertainty." So maybe the traumas we have experienced as children and young people have helped make us the balanced adults that we are today. What do you think?

With love

Pam x



Carers' meeting 11/5/21

It had been longer than a month since our last get together online but on 11th May 2021, we had another Zoom Carers' group meeting, with about 6 people in attendance (remotely at least). It was great to have an informal chat and see Carers who we otherwise only see when they help their other halves on the SAS physio Zoom sessions. Those who couldn't access any Zoom sessions were enquired after and it was lovely to hear of those we haven't managed to see for well over a year.

We chatted generally at first about what everyone had been doing and after this long winter, about the rain and cold. We heard about one member's love of old cars and the work required to restore them; gardening despite the weather; how people were coping with (or not) and managing their own situations, and honestly about the impact of lockdown on our mental health. We identified our own coping mechanisms and discussed the need for mindfulness in these stressful times. All agreed that it was more of a struggle this year than last as it's been so long since most of us did much or had things to look forward to. Walking has been my salvation in the absence of being able to get in the garden much over the very long, cold winter. Others use exercise, jigsaws and art to help them cope but all agreed that it is a challenge at times. The SAS zoom exercise classes have had a positive impact on our sense of well-being as well as being physically good for us.

It was great to hear that most people have had at least one vaccination (some have had two) and that people are beginning to cautiously meet up with family members again. The news is not fantastic on the Covid-19 front but it's great to at least see people in person again, even if in a limited way with restrictions on numbers.

We ended on a positive note of hoping to be able to see each other again soon, with the possibility of sailing at Woolverstone in July and perhaps again in person in September. It was agreed that we will continue to meet remotely during term time until then.

Fran Williams and Pam Lawrence



The High Street is a dangerous place! – Tales From Corner Of The Yard, part 3

Bob Williams



During the long, hot summer of 1976, it was no fun driving the V8 Rover every day so when during the month of June, I was informed by our Duty Officer that I would be given a month's break to do some beat walking, I was over the moon!

One early turn (6 am to 2 pm) I was posted to Camden High St, NW1, which is a four lane, one-way street, with several sets of traffic lights and the assortment of shops and pubs one would expect to find. As usual on a mid-week morning, it was very busy with pedestrians, housewives and kids and others just window shopping. I was dressed for another hot day - short-sleeved shirt and lightweight trousers summer uniform – which made things bearable. I was walking along the High St on the west footway, which is the Regents Park side. I had reached the corner of Delancey St, which is one of the light controlled streets that cross the High St, so there are times that it is traffic free, giving people the time to cross from Woolworths (!) on one corner, towards the Brighton pub on the other corner.

I was about to cross towards 'Woolies' when I saw a lady, coming towards me some distance away but pushing a twin type 'double buggy', loaded with shopping and two toddler aged kids. She was also holding another toddler in her right hand. This toddler was holding a very big ice cream cornet, which was almost as big as its face! The toddler seemed very steady on his feet. I increased my pace to try to reach the first deep doorway of Woolies in order to let this lady pass as the pavement here was above average in width. After a short time, I moved out of the doorway as the northbound pavement seemed devoid of pedestrians apart from this lady with the toddlers.

I thought better of letting her pass and decided to walk towards her and use my presence in uniform, to give me room to pass her. I had misjudged the width of the pavement ahead, but it seemed that she had moved towards the shop fronts slightly more than she had before. I then had a premonition of what would happen as I stepped across in front of them, to the edge of the footway. As I was thinking that she wouldn't let a toddler be uncontrolled on the outside next to four lanes of traffic, I decided to move back towards the shop fronts, to give her more room.

As I did this, she stopped and changed the toddler, who'd been on her left side next to the traffic, to her right hand, complete with ice cream cornet, which was by now, dripping everywhere. I couldn't believe my eyes! I was blocked by a passer-by, so I moved back to the shop inside, gave up this game and moved to the next doorstep of Woolies away from the toddler with the enormous ice cream, complete with flake.

At this point, a customer wanted to leave Woolies and so I had to move forward and over to my right, just as the toddler swung on his mother's hand and came around and straight into me! The ice cream landed half way up the zip fly of my trousers, leaving a large amount of the ice cream strategically

placed, with the flake pointing away from me.

The lady customer took hold of my hand and said, “come with me officer and I will clean it up”.

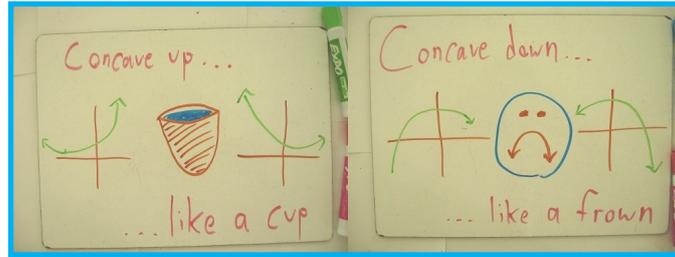
Before she had spoken, I had not recognised who the lady was. It eventually dawned on me that it was the landlady of the Brighton pub. She walked me into the pub and took me into the kitchen where she worked on my flies, to remove all the ice cream and flake. Whilst doing so, she slipped her hand into my trousers for a good grip on them. Her husband, the landlord, then walked into the kitchen behind me and initially raised his eyebrows at what he was seeing, recognising me as a policeman in uniform. He said, “what has happened and why am I always the last to know?” As he was an Irish, ex New York copper as well as a landlord who had seen everything, he then recognised me, calling me Taff as I was then known, and realised what was actually taking place. We all then had a good laugh about the situation as he was one of the good ones with a great sense of humour and great to know on night duty.

As the pub was closed, I was spared further embarrassment from my predicament. Shona, as I think her name was, managed to do a good job on my trousers and I looked a lot more respectable. I then had a good reason to pop into the Brighton next night duty, to say “thank you” to Shona for helping me out and calming down the mother of the ‘Dangerous ice cream wielding toddler’

Corner Of The Yard



MNEUMONIC



A **mnemonic** is a memory device or learning technique that aids information retention or retrieval. They can be in the form of a song, rhyme, acronym, image, phrase or sentence.

Mnemonics are particularly useful when the order of things is important and aid original information becoming associated with something more accessible or meaningful, which in turn provides a better retention of the information. Their use is based on the observation that the human mind more easily remembers spatial, personal, surprising, physical, humorous or otherwise 'relatable' information, rather than abstract or impersonal forms of information.

The word "mnemonic" is derived from the Ancient Greek word '**mnemonikos**' meaning "**of memory or relating to memory**" and is related to '**Mnemosyne**' (remembrance), the name of the goddess of memory in Greek mythology.

Ancient Greeks and Romans distinguished between the two types of memory: the '**natural**' memory and the '**artificial**' memory. The former is inborn and the one that everyone uses instinctively. The latter in contrast has to be trained and developed through the learning and practice of a variety of mnemonic techniques.

COMMON MNEUMONICS:

- **My Very Easy Method Just Speeds Up Naming Planets** - self explanatory.
- **Every Good Boy Deserves Favour** - for the notes of the Treble Clef in music. (and **FACE** for the spaces in between)
- **Able Bodied Seamen Catch Hairy Pirates** - (sur)names of Henry VIII wives.
- **God Equals Light Not Darkness** - the first five books of The Old Testament.
- **Never Eat Shredded Wheat** - compass directions (or **Never Eat Soggy Waffles**).

FURTHER EXAMPLES:

"Cooking rice? Water's twice" - a simple recipe for rice.

"If his face is red, raise his head. If his face is pale, raise his tail" - treating someone in shock.

"The harder the stem, the hotter the water" - placing cut flowers in a vase.

"High to low, look out below. Low to High, clear blue sky" - used by pilots for altitude.

"**Never A Plan Like Yours To Study Oral History So Wisely**" - The Royal Houses of England & Great Britain (which are Norman, Angevin, Plantagenet, Lancaster, York, Tudor, Stuart, Orange, Hanover, Sax-Coburg, Windsor).

NOTICEBOARD



We wish **Christine Stibbe** a very Happy Birthday on the **28th!**



We would like to pass on our Get Well wishes to Diane Sears who is currently unwell. We are all sending our love and thoughts to Diane, Ray & family.

ZOOM REMINDERS

JEANNETTES EXERCISE CLASSES:

Tuesday 9.30 - 10 am Question time followed by the formal exercise class at **10 - 10.30/45 am** .

(NB: use the Tuesday invite to enter Zoom at any time 9.30 - 10.45 am).

Friday 9.30 - 10.15am.

HIT ZOOM EXERCISE CLASS

A **Higher Intensity class** with Jeannette for SAS members and volunteers starts:

Tues - 11.00 - 11.30/45am

Jeannette strongly suggests you join one class or the other, but not both.

A note from Jeannette - "as Summer and accompanying warmer weather is approaching, this class will be reviewed as we go, as undertaking more strenuous exercise during heat is not always a good plan. I will keep you updated accordingly".

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE

Fridays from 10.30am for approximately an hour.

CARERS MEETING

Carers meeting will be held once a month. Date for next meeting to be confirmed. For further information contact either:

Pam : pam@pamlawrence.co.uk

Fran: franwilliams23@gmail.co.uk

ZOOM INVITES FOR THESE GROUPS WILL BE ISSUED AS USUAL.

For any enquiries or further information, please don't hesitate to get in contact.

Contact details are:

E Mail : info@successafterstroke.org.uk

Website : www.successafterstroke.org.uk

Facebook : Success After Stroke Registered Charity no 1115016

Sarahjane Lewis (Manager) either through the e mail address or phone : **07434931962.**

Shirley Rarity (Administrator) e mail :

[admin@successafterstroke.org.uk.](mailto:admin@successafterstroke.org.uk)