



I would love to hear from you and will reply to letters which, if we print them, will remain anonymous. For information on Walking Therapy and 'The Stay Sane Campaign', email me at harleysttherapy@gmail.com or ring me on 07760 669246. www.harleystpsychotherapy.com

The pandemic has affected us all, and as therapists we are having to think about doing things differently to adapt to the situation and continue to help people.

There is a rising demand for couples' counselling for example as a direct result of lockdown. Domestic abuse is on the rise and people (statistics before the pandemic were one in four) are suffering with anxiety, depression, stress and a wide range of mental health issues more than ever.

Some of us have lost loved ones and have not had the chance to say goodbye and grieve as we would under normal circumstances.

This has had a devastating effect on many, with very few opportunities to process feelings and talk things over. Therapy is needed now more than ever.

We cannot see our clients face to face at the moment. Some people are not comfortable with online or telephone counselling; others simply don't have the facilities to do it, and a few of our clients have lost their income and have had to pause their therapy.

People are scared, none of us know what will happen or how we will be affected in the future.

Therefore we wanted to make counselling accessible for people during this time and beyond. This is why we are launching 'The Stay Sane Campaign' which is an extended service to accommodate the current situation we are in.

We are really missing out on vital face to face, physical, social interaction. We are social creatures and this what we need for stable mental health.

I will be launching a weekly vlog with tips on communications, relationships, anxiety and how to cope with stress and the pressure of lockdown to try to help give people tools to work with, but also support and a feeling that whatever they are going through, is normal.

The perfect solution is our Walking Therapy. Therefore we have launched 'The 'Stay Sane



Picture: Doc. Steele // iStock / Getty Images Plus

Walking to stay healthy and sane

Amanda Jayne, Let's Talk's west Norfolk-based psychotherapist and counsellor, has developed a new 'Walking Therapy' to help us deal with some issues.

Campaign Walking Therapy', which is a healthy way to cope and process the overwhelming feelings we are dealing with right now.

There is research on the benefits of being close to nature, both physical and mental. Walking has been proven to reduce anxiety, depression, and activates different parts of our brain and helps us be calm. Mindful walking can provide head-space, which is what we are all needing right now and beyond.

We have run therapeutic workshops where walking has been proven to be beneficial in gaining clarity; feeling calmer; seeing things from a different perspective; feeling uplifted, and becoming a big part of our therapeutic journey.

With walking therapy, we can have the physical presence while enjoying the benefits of being outside, undertaking gentle exercise, with a professional who can help to ensure we do stay sane.

We will meet our client at an agreed starting point. The client

and therapist can observe social distancing, with simultaneous contact via telephone with earphones so that confidentiality can be maintained. The environment of the beach or park will provide an extra dimension to our therapy and help to provoke thoughts and feelings which can be lost in the therapy room.

Part of the walk will be in silence so that the client has a chance to process their feelings. We will walk, stand still, rest; have a choice on eye contact and pace while the client is in the presence of a supporting companion.

Prior to the walking therapy we will discuss what happens if situations arise, such as if we meet someone we know; how long the walk will be; the pace and level of fitness of the client; agreed routes.

We are all going to have to get used to a 'new normal' and this is one way that you can take care of yourself through these difficult times and beyond.