

**Bradninch
Together**

Mental Health Matters:

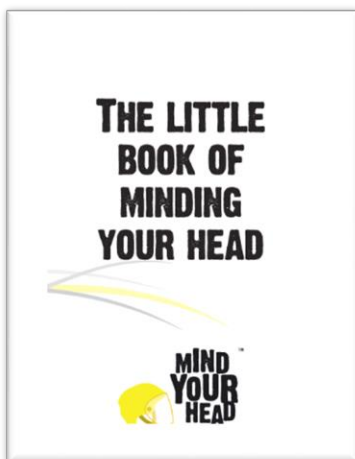
Cultivating care in the farming community

We are a rural community. If you stand in front of the Guildhall and walk for 10 minutes in any direction you'll be surrounded by farmland.



We depend on farmers for our food and many of the materials with which we make our lives. For outsiders farming may carry a sense of romance ... living close to nature and tuned into the cycle of seasons but we may also be aware it's undeniably very hard work and with many complex tensions and difficulties too.

In 2018 The Farm Safety Foundation launched a new campaign, Mind Your Head, to raise awareness, through which they found that, 'four out of five young farmers (under 40) believe that mental health is the



biggest hidden problem facing farmers today and 85% believed there was a link between farm safety and mental health' Their motto is, 'Living well is the key to farming well', and their resource guide (<https://www.yellowwellies.org/resources/>) carries very similar ambitions to our MHM initiative ... to increase understanding, invite discussion, reduce discrimination and cultivate support. Similarly over the last couple of years Mole Valley Farmers, as part of the Farm Safety



Partnership, have been actively campaigning for everyone to 'Take A Moment' to



consider their own health, safety and wellbeing and are committed to cultivating a culture in farming that promotes positive mental health, prevents people experiencing mental ill health and helps them better manage mental health problems

<https://www.moleonline.com/takeamoment>.



A major tip ... common to many guides is once you are able and willing to notice the difficulties, take action ... seek help, support or even just start a conversation to bridge the gap between things bubbling up inside to letting others know you are in difficulties and need help. Reaching out is the first step to recovery - so in addition to reminding farmers of the value of turning to their GPs or the Samaritans (tel: 116 123) they recommend the following sources of information and support:

Farming Community Network (FCN) confidential helpline Tel: 03000 111 999 (every day 7am – 11pm) help@fcn.org.uk

RABI supporting farming families Tel: 0808 2819490 www.rabi.org.uk

Farming Health Hub Tel Jon: 07568 471064
www.farminghealth.co.uk

Focussed Farmers offer a free video introduction to understanding meditation and what may be the benefits of mindfulness www.focusedfarmers.com



The basic issue is the same for us all ... as Lorna Filby of Mole Valley Farmers says, 'kindness unlocks our shared humanity'.

All good wishes from Glenn, Kate and Sophie
For BradTog MHM

Ps. Do let us know if you have suggestions for future postings