The Power of Personal Resilience

*Thomas Memery, Director*

Gerard Egan in his influential book *The Skilled Helper* (ISBN. 0534367313) suggests that people can benefit from appropriate help in two key areas:

- Dealing or coming to terms with difficult situations
- Tackling inertia, missed opportunities and unused potential

People living stressful lives, for example, often need help eradicating negative self-talk, managing hypervigilance, dealing with co-dependency and increasing self-confidence; once they recognise that they may need to make changes and might benefit from help, they can begin making better decisions. Some people need help coming to terms with loss or a serious health scare, overcoming social isolation or determining and addressing personal priorities and rebuilding important relationships.

Since 2009 we have championed the immense value of peer-support and self-help. We recognise that clients and colleagues in crisis without supportive friends and a resourceful family cannot always rely upon the state for ongoing support. It is, therefore, useful to develop coping skills and build personal resilience.

Specialist help is sometimes needed. Cognitive behavioural techniques, structured decision making, self-compassion, relaxation, mindfulness, meditation, going for a walk, exercise, reading, knitting, laughter, personal interjection, trying something new and the mutual consolations of kindness all have their place.

Some situations cannot be changed; instead we have to find the best way to accept or adjust to the circumstances in which we find ourselves. Identifying and grasping opportunities and making best use of the personal resources we have can prove transformative. Above all, people will move at their own pace in their chosen direction and assume responsibility for their own success. If you feel you need help or you have the skills to support Omega clients and colleagues to deal with difficult situations and make the best use of their skills and experience, please get in touch.
Christmas Message from Chairperson Linton Waters

Thank you for your valuable contribution towards our work throughout the last 12 months. This year, with your help, we have strengthened the Omega team and risen to new challenges. I am confident we are in a strong position to help even more elderly, isolated, and vulnerable members of our community in the future.

We wish you and your family a relaxing festive holiday break and look forward to working together in the New Year.

Linton Waters, Chairperson

Tackling Loneliness in Later Life - Christmas Appeal

For over a decade, Omega has supported people who are lonely and isolated due to caregiving roles, bereavement or age. We have launched a Christmas appeal that will run throughout December to raise funds to help us support more clients in need in 2020.

If you are able, please pledge a donation at: www.justgiving.com/campaign/omegachristmasappeal2019.

Thank you.

A Letter from Louise in the News

You may have seen that Omega’s A Letter from Louise pen pal service has recently picked up a lot of news media attention. Thanks to a mention in The Lady magazine, and features on BBC Radio Solent, the Lymington Times and the Southampton Echo, volunteers have begun flocking to sign up as pen pals. We’re looking for new clients to match with our volunteers for this monthly pen pal service. If you, or anyone you know, would benefit from regular letters, please contact Carol Moody at: aletterfromlouise@omega.uk.net.

Chatterbox Befriender Rose flies high!

Last month, Rose, a long-standing Chatterbox Befriender, celebrated her 103rd birthday by taking to the skies in a helicopter ride. Full of enthusiasm and energy for life, Rose likes to do as many fun and ‘wild’ things as she can! We can all learn a thing or two from her.

Happy birthday, Rose!
Congratulations to our Volunteer of the Month Winners!

Sponsored by

October: Ricardo Alonso

Ricardo Alonso is the first international winner of an Omega care for life Volunteer of the Month Award. Ricardo is a Spanish economist who has supported our community learning and outreach activity since 2014. Despite juggling his lively sessions with family caring responsibilities and running a successful business in Spain, Ricardo has provided the thriving Omega care for life Hablemos espanol! group with a worthwhile and extremely enjoyable interactive learning experience for almost 5 years. Since returning to Spain, he has continued his informative laughter-filled sessions via Skype each week. Ricardo is one of several inspirational figures committed to supporting our important work.

November: Scott Chiossi

Scott Chiossi worked with Omega care for life as a volunteer researcher and bid writer supporting our grant fundraising work. Volunteering remotely from Edinburgh whilst working around his intense post-graduate medical studies, Scott helped to secure much needed funds. Senior Grant Fundraiser, Alexandra Payne, said: “Scott’s enthusiasm, diligence and commitment, as well as his effortless research skills, have been invaluable to the grant fundraising team.” Although we had to say goodbye to Scott when he began his new career in Sweden, we want to express our gratitude for his contribution. We know that Scott will bring dynamism and a broad range of skills to his new role. We wish him every success in his exciting new role and would welcome him back into the Omega team anytime!

December: Anna-Marie Loader

Anna-Marie is one of our original A Letter from Louise volunteer pen pals and her passion for the project helped to propel it forward in the early stages. Despite being a busy mum, Anna-Marie continues to support Omega and its clients with enthusiasm and warmth. She often goes above and beyond, not only writing letters but sending postcards and small, thoughtful gifts. She has willingly taken on more clients when asked. Anna-Marie is certainly a valued member of the A Letter from Louise team and is a glowing example of how a little bit of someone’s time can go along way to making a big difference in someone else’s life.

Thank you to Ricardo, Scott and Anna-Marie!

A big THANK YOU to the following organisations for their recent donations and grants:

The Hilton-Jones Charitable Trust, The Kirby Laing Foundation, and Newby Trust.

THANK YOU also to everyone who has donated prizes for the Christmas draw and volunteer hampers.

Congratulations to Omega Lottery winners Joan Hodgson (October 2019) and David Hewetson (November 2019)
Omega care for life is a forward-thinking end of life charity supporting carers, the bereaved, lonely and/or isolated individuals, and those over 75 years old. For more information about our services, visit www.omega.uk.net.

Registered Charity No 1120322 | Registered Company No 6196052

How You Can Help Us

There are many ways that you can help us to support vulnerable clients in crisis.

Got any unused phones in good condition (with chargers) lying around? We can use them to supply a Chatterbox Befriender with a mobile phone to call their clients, or surplus phones will be sold to raise funds for our work. We would also be grateful for your unwanted stamps (new or used), foreign currency (all denominations), used printer cartridges, and paperback books. Please bring or send your donations to Omega care for life, London House, Town Walls, Shrewsbury, SY1 1TX (please ensure sufficient postage is paid when sending).

If you have some spare time and would like to make a difference in someone’s life, why not volunteer with us or organise a fundraising event? From Befrienders to community fundraising, we can find a role for you. Send us an email at info@omega.uk.net or call 01743 245 088.

NEW! Weekly Coffee Mornings in Shrewsbury.

Join us every Tuesday, 10:30-12pm, at the Unitarian Church, High Street, SY1 1LR. All welcome. Drinks £1.

Saturday 21st December: Come and see The Phoenix Singers Shrewsbury sing carols in aid of Omega. Market Hall, Shrewsbury, 10-11am.

Sunday 23rd February: National Garden Scheme garden opening, The Old Vicarage, Bishops Castle. Omega will be there. Check our website soon for full details.

Bereavement Friendship Group coming February. Contact Claire to register: community@omega.uk.net / 01743 245 088.

Stephanie Waters, Chatterbox Co-ordinator (Team Leader)

In October, our befrienders got together for a fun and informative quiz by Becky Warwick from Shropshire Fire and Rescue. Testing their knowledge on Fire Safety in the home, they all felt they had learnt something new that is valuable to not only themselves, but to their clients as well. They all thoroughly enjoyed it and we thank Becky for taking the time to come and visit us.

After lunch, the befrienders took part in a brainstorming activity on how we can recruit more befrienders for our ever-increasing waiting list. A big thank you goes to Alexandra Payne for facilitating this part of the session. The befrienders spoke about what they think works and doesn’t work.

All were in favour of our current training methods and the ongoing support they receive from the office. They agreed that befriending for Chatterbox is flexible and easily works around their busy lives. Word of mouth is our biggest recruiter and we hope this session spreads the good work of our befrienders and interests new people to come and join the team. If you would like more information about becoming a volunteer befriender, please email chatterbox@omega.uk.net or call 01743 245 088.

Befriender Gathering and Keeping Safe with Shropshire Fire and Rescue


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Bereavement Friendship Group coming February. Contact Claire to register: community@omega.uk.net / 01743 245 088.

Would you like an email copy of the Newsletter? Sign up at www.omega.uk.net and click "Our Latest Newsletter" on the Home page. Alternatively, let us know at info@omega.uk.net and we can add you to the mailing list.