



Julie Milavec <jmilavec@dglibrary.org>

Checking in and potential resources that may help

6 messages

Jen Ryjewski <jryjewski@dglibrary.org>
To: All Staff <staff@dglibrary.org>

Fri, Mar 27, 2020 at 7:28 AM

Dear Colleagues,

I hope you are all well (inhaling [smelling the flowers] and exhaling [blowing out the candles]) and taking life moment by moment, like I am, as it is all we can do during this most difficult and unprecedented time.

The main reason for this email is that I want to personally acknowledge that some of us, or someone we care about, may be really struggling right now: struggling with overwhelming depression/sadness, loneliness, anxiety, fear of uncertainty, feelings of helplessness, addiction, thoughts of suicide, etc. These are hard days which can trigger deep emotions whereby self-harming patterns of behavior and thoughts can emerge, and emerge quickly and unexpectedly.

With that said, I want to openly and directly touch upon the subject of mental illness, as it may pertain to some of us or someone we really care about. Admittedly, I possess no credentials in the fields of counseling, social work, or psychology, but I think it's really important to part the clouds of negativity surrounding the unpleasant, societal stigma linked to the illnesses of the mind (as opposed to the body) and let the sunshine in—because in my opinion, the only difference between illnesses of the mind and illnesses of the body is in the greater invisibility of the former. To me, illness is illness despite its nature or residence.

So, with that preface out of the way, I would like to share with you a list of free mental health resources that I asked Lizzie and her staff to help me compile. Please use them and/or share them with someone who may need help. If you need more in-depth help, please reach out to a healthcare professional for guidance about next steps. This is serious business and nothing to ignore, or about which to be embarrassed or ashamed.

On behalf of myself, Julie and the rest of the management team, I want to let you know that we are here for you and we care deeply about you and your well being. Please reach out to any of us if you need more than what it supplied here; we will direct you as best we can.

Please also continue to talk to one another (and us), and send all-staff emails of the beautiful, the funny, the kids, the pets, etc. because they help us to stay connected and grounded during this period of isolation. As Julie said in a previous email, "We are one community and we will get through this together."

Thank you. Be safe. Be well. And be kind and gentle to yourself and one another.

Jen

P.S. There is a copy of this document saved on P/Shared Staff Information/Human Resources

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Jen Ryjewski
Assistant Director
630-960-1200 x4299



1050 Curtiss Street, Downers Grove, IL 60515

 **Mental Health Resources.docx**
17K

Karen Neal <kneal@dglibrary.org>
To: Jen Ryjewski <jryjewski@dglibrary.org>
Cc: All Staff <staff@dglibrary.org>

Fri, Mar 27, 2020 at 8:19 AM

Jen,

Thank you so much for your compassionate and eloquent email. It will benefit staff and family and friends of staff.

The Downers Grove Public Library is expecting to re-open on Wednesday, April 8. I will continue to answer emails in a timely manner.

Karen Neal
Adult and Teen Services Librarian
Home Services Coordinator
Downers Grove Public Library
kneal@dglibrary.org

[Quoted text hidden]

Julie Milavec <jmilavec@dglibrary.org>
To: Karen Neal <kneal@dglibrary.org>
Cc: Jen Ryjewski <jryjewski@dglibrary.org>, All Staff <staff@dglibrary.org>

Fri, Mar 27, 2020 at 8:46 AM

Thanks ATS for helping compile these resources and Jen for putting together this reminder to be kind to ourselves.

Be well.

Julie M. Milavec
Director
My pronouns: she/her/hers



1050 Curtiss Street
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1-630-960-1200 x4300

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Christine Lees <clees@dglibrary.org>
To: Jen Ryjewski <jryjewski@dglibrary.org>, Julie Milavec <jmilavec@dglibrary.org>

Fri, Mar 27, 2020 at 11:01 AM

Jen,

Thank you for this amazing email, your words brought comfort to me and I am sure others felt the same. I really appreciate your quick, thoughtful, and informative response, you are awesome!

Be well,
Christine

On Fri, Mar 27, 2020 at 7:28 AM Jen Ryjewski <jryjewski@dglibrary.org> wrote:

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Christine Lees
Manager, Circulation Services
Downers Grove Public Library
(630) 960-1200 ext. 4264

Kathryn Moran <kmoran@dglibrary.org>
To: Jen Ryjewski <jryjewski@dglibrary.org>
Cc: All Staff <staff@dglibrary.org>

Fri, Mar 27, 2020 at 11:46 AM

Jen,

This is just one example of why I absolutely love working at DGPL.
The openness and the constant support and compassion for all.

Thank you for your email and the resources.

I for one use the senses on walks.

5-4-3-2-1. 5 things you can see, 4 things you can hear, 3 things you can touch, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste (like the cold air or the tea you brought with or outside to drink). It grounds you and make you aware and comforted by the world around you. Nature helps, even just sitting in an open window and listening to life outside connects you. Listen to the birds, dogs barking, etc... Life is going on.

Thank you,

Kathy

[Quoted text hidden]

Sandra Feuillan <sfeuillan@dglibrary.org>
To: Jen Ryjewski <jryjewski@dglibrary.org>
Cc: All Staff <staff@dglibrary.org>

Fri, Mar 27, 2020 at 12:03 PM

Thank you Jen for the list of resources. I like how you ended your email with "Be safe. Be well. **And be kind and gentle to yourself** and one another". We so often forget about taking care of ourselves instead of everyone else.

Sandy

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