

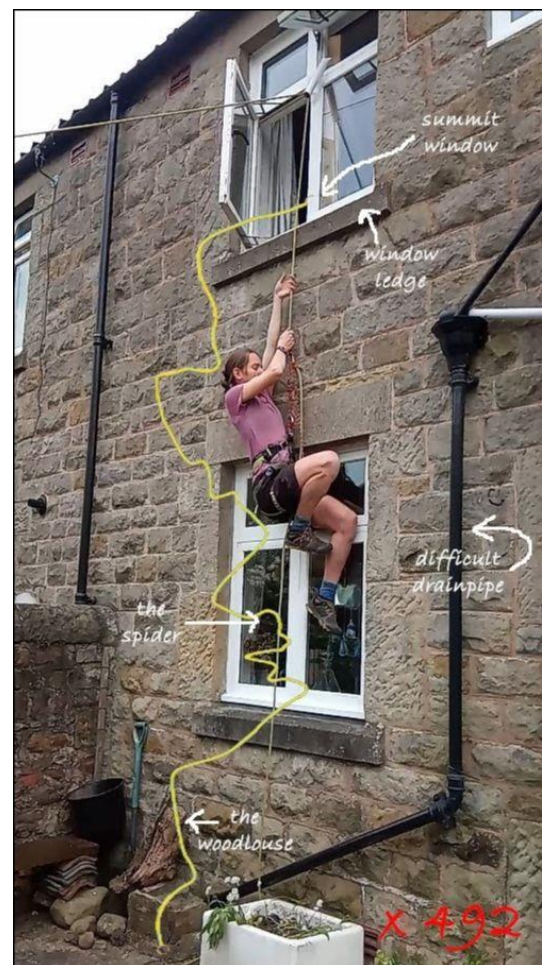
May 2020 Newsletter

Dear Supporter

First of all, I hope that you are well and keeping safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. One thing that has been striking is its impact on people's mental as well as physical health and wellbeing. The impact is very serious and there are many people out there who are experiencing very challenging circumstances.

In the light of this, it is fortuitous that one of the PhD scholarships that we are awarding this year will study the impact of psychological trauma. We decided on this long before the coronavirus pandemic started, but this area is clearly even more relevant now. The PhD scholarship competition closed last Friday and we have had a large number of applications, which is very good news. Due in large part to your amazing efforts over the past few years, we are able to make three scholarship awards this year with our current funds, but clearly we have concerns about our ability to continue supporting and training young researchers in the years to come, given that many of the planned challenge events have been cancelled as a result of the pandemic.

However, some of our supporters continue to do some amazing fundraising for us in really difficult circumstances. Victoria Morris, a keen mountaineer, decided to climb the equivalent of the North Face of the Eiger...but on the North Face of her home! She's currently in the midst of making 492 ascents of the outside of her house, using ropes, to climb the equivalent of the height of the North Face of the Eiger: 5,900 feet! As an additional challenge, for every £1,000 raised, she is going to sleep on a home-made porta-ledge, which effectively means she straps herself to the wall of the house!



This Mental Health Awareness Week, we too have decided to set ourselves a challenge: to try to raise funds to support an additional scholarship this year, related to COVID-19. This builds on people's donations over the past few weeks and our growing concern about the psychological impact of the pandemic. There is, of course, no need to undertake feats akin to that of Victoria! But we would love it if you would pledge to do one challenge for MHRUK in the next few months, however small,

and regardless of how large or small your final fundraising amount might be. We'll be posting creative ideas on our website, and we'd love you to share your challenge with us; we look forward to your photographs and tales on inventive challenges! We will add every one of your challenges to a special page on our website, and will share them on our social media platforms. Whatever amount you are able to raise will be added to our fundraising page for the COVID-19 PhD scholarship. We hope you're as excited about this new initiative as we are!

I also wanted to keep you up to date with what is happening with our existing research. Our PhD scholars are working from home at the moment. Some of them will need extra time for face-to-face data collection, and we have offered support with extensions should that be necessary. Of course, this means that there are financial implications for us, but our priority is to support our scholars and their supervisors.

We had a very good Scholars' Day at Cardiff University back in March. All our Scholars (both the PhD students and the MD(Res) students) presented their work, and it was an opportunity for them to meet each other as well as some of the supervisors and supporters. I think we all felt inspired to see the effects that our efforts are having on developing the next generation of mental health researchers, and we are determined that we will not let the pandemic derail our efforts.



May I ask you to consider doing one small thing for us? Would you nominate us for a £1,000 award from Ecclesiastical Insurance? It will take just a couple of minutes – just click on the link below, enter our charity number (1125538), click on the dropdown box, and bingo! It is open until May 24.
<https://movementforgood.com/#nominateACharity>.

Alternatively (or as well!), if any of you have a giffgaff sim card, we would love it if you would nominate us as a charity. Every 6 months, giffgaff chooses a charity and provides 'Payback' to it, which can be quite a large sum. Just log onto your giffgaff account and go to the 'Community' tab where you will see a post on charity nominations at the top.

Please be assured that it is very much business as usual for us, albeit by Zoom, rather than face-to-face.

As ever, thank you for your continued support.

Keep well.

Clair
Chair of Trustees