

## Million Hands: Re Second Session

### Beavers and Scouts on Monday 23 January; and Cubs on Wednesday 8 February

*I would be pleased if Leaders will have to hand pens or pencils for young people to write their Pledges - also markers and flipchart paper (I have some if needed). I will bring everything else.*

*Leaders may also like to have a short, fairly physical, game available if the young people's concentration wanes part way through, or if there is time left at the end of the meeting.*

*If they are willing, then I would like all Section Leaders and helpers to participate throughout the session on equal terms with the young people. (This stuff is for everyone – not just our young people)*

*Please forward this email to all your Leaders and helpers so they can know what to expect.*

During the First Session of 'Million Hands – Mental Health' that I led during 2016 we attempted to:

- Understand the Need
  - Activities to help our young people understand what is meant by the term 'mental health', and increase their empathy towards people (including themselves) whose mental health may be negatively affected
- Take Notice, Plan and Take Action to help themselves
  - Introduce 'The Five Ways to Wellbeing' [*Mental Health Resource Pack, Page 21*]
    - **Connect**
    - **Be Active**
    - **Take Notice**
    - **Learn**
    - **Give**

**Second Session** will attempt to encompass:

- Introduction briefly recapping the first session:
  - The Need
  - The Five Ways to Wellbeing (High Five):
    1. **Connect** spend time doing things with your friends and family, talking to people.

2. **Be Active.** Doing a sport or being physical generally, preferably out of doors.
3. **Take Notice.** Notice that there are times when you may feel low (for Beavers use sad), for example during times of change when moving house or when friends move away; and during exams. It is O.K. to feel happy and it is OK to feel sad - but important that you can share your feelings with someone you trust who will understand. Notice what you do to relax and enjoy what's happening at the moment, even though you might feel stressed about something else
4. **Learn.** Learning something new, either in a traditional (education) or non-traditional sense
5. **Give.** How have you given your time to others recently? Do a good turn to help someone at home, school or in your community.

### New ground

- Explain: The key to looking after your mental wellbeing is to be **kind to yourself** and **kind to others**.

That means **Taking Notice** of what you **think**, what you **feel** and what you **do**.

- Explain: What people **think**, what they **feel** what they actually **do** are not always the same.

Personal example, for instance – I **think** too many biscuits are bad for me; I **feel** that I want to eat lots of biscuits; I **do** eat more biscuits than are good for me – so I am too fat.

Personal example, for instance – I **think** it is important to get a good night's sleep; I **feel** I want to stay up late and do more of what I am enjoying; I **do** go to bed too late, sleep-in then wake up tired and grumpy – so I don't make the best use of each day

What we **think** and what we **feel** aren't Black or White, or Yes and No, or Right or Wrong. We often find ourselves somewhere in between.

- Self-Awareness (Continuum):  
Explain: Imagine this room has a line drawn across it. One side of the room is **More** and the other side is **Less**. When I ask a question get up and position yourselves on the line

Let's experiment with **Be Active** (Doing a sport or being physical generally, preferably out of doors.)

- Do you **think** it is important to be more or less active than you already are?  
(*Position yourself on the line.*)

- Do you **feel** you would like to be more or less active?  
(Position yourself on the line.)
- Now you know how you think and how you feel, what will you actually **do** this week – will you be more or less active?  
(Position yourself on the line.)

Now let's experiment with **Take Notice** of what we **think, feel** and **do**

- Do you **think** it is important to **take notice** of your feelings more or less than you already do?  
(Position yourself on the line.)
  - Do you **feel** you would like to be more or less able to talk about your feelings to someone you trust and who will understand?  
(Position yourself on the line.)
  - Now you know how you think and how you feel, what will you actually **do** from now on – will you talk more or less about your feelings to someone you trust and who will understand?  
(Position yourself on the line.)
- Doing:

Set up five 'stations' labelled:

- **Connect**
- **Be Active**
- **Take Notice**
- **Learn**
- **Give**

Game:

Ask individuals to tell the group 'some activity they have done in the past week' (played a game with someone, talked with someone, helped someone, listened to someone, learned something new).

Everyone then runs to the 'station' they think the activity fits

[Starter examples if needed: Visited my grandmother, played football, had tea with my family, helped clear the table, did my homework, felt angry, read a bedtime story to someone, played on my Xbox etc.]

Ask some individuals why they chose that 'station'

Discuss as a group:

- Which of the five ways would you find easiest to do?
- Which of the five ways would you find most difficult to do?

*Explain: If you were to undertake Scouting activities, such as book reading or playing sport, they might also meet the requirements of badges (such as: Cubs Athletic Activity Badge, Cubs Book Reader Activity Badge, Scouts Athletics Activity Badge, etc.)*

Discuss as a group (write up on flipchart paper):

- How might what you do affect the mental health (for Beavers use Happiness / Sadness) of other people both positively and negatively?
  1. When acting alone
  2. When acting with others

*Explain: When we just follow the crowd, we don't always **think** for ourselves, **take notice** of our what we **feel** is right, and **do** things that are **kind to ourselves** and **kind to others***

*Explain: Run to the appropriate station in response to the question. Everyone is different. It really is O.K. to be you. There is no right and wrong answer. You can think for yourself and make your own decision about what's right for you – you don't have to 'follow the crowd'.*

- Which do you **think** is the most important thing you could do more of?
- Which do you **feel** is the most enjoyable?
- Which will you **do** more of this week?

- Pledge Wall:

On a 'postcard' ask each Scout to write a promise to **do** something towards one (or more) of the **five ways** and pledge a timescale for doing it. Display the pledges on the Scout's Noticeboard (Pledge Wall).

*Between the Second and Third Million Hands session, Leaders to follow up on Pledges and congratulate /reward each achievement. Write the date of achievement on the Pledge.*

*Between second and third session Leaders to periodically ask Beavers / Cubs / Scouts which elements of the **five ways** to wellbeing and being **kind to ourselves** and **kind to others** the current activity in their Section's programme supports. (This should be a consideration during Programme planning - but almost all activities are supportive.)*

**Third Session** (Plan and do action to help others.) Date and content T.B.A. with Section Leaders:

- Probably:
  - Facilitate our young people to brainstorm ideas and plan practical action that will have a genuine impact on the lives of others.
  - I envisage this action being started during the Summer Term and sustained until it has achieved the objective(s) set by the young people.

Scouting sees this action as being focussed on e.g.

- Policy Action - where our young people's action is aimed at decision makers. For instance, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts could as Sections invite their parents / carers (teachers and team leaders?) to a Workshop where the young people explain the Five Ways.
- Land / Waterways Action – using the adoption, upkeep and use of land / waterways to affect change that impacts the mental health of others (Ecotherapy)

Note: A Million Hands does not involve raising funds for charity partners (Mind / The Canal and River Trust) but could involve fundraising for the actions our young people will take to tackle whatever issue they identify.

My preference is for our young people to simply focus on being **exemplars** (in all their interactions with others – family, friends, Scouting, school, team, etc.) of how the **five ways** and being **kind to yourself** and **kind to others** helps us stay happy and resilient - and cope with the inevitable emotional bumps in the road our personal journey through life will entail.

For each Section I favour inviting their parents / carers to a Workshop where they explain the Five Ways – probably through a staged presentation / drama. This could also be used as the theme for a shared Parade Service.

*David Donaldson*  
*21 January 2017*