



Welcome

Yet another month has passed at the speed of light! I've been beavering away on a lot of background 'stuff' involving the research, groups, meetings with academics and healthcare workers. All time consuming, but slowly chipping away to a successful outcome! Oh yes, there have also been a couple of speaking occasions and two exciting possibilities I'm bursting to ask your opinion about, but my lips have to be sealed for the moment! I'm following my own advice and knitting regularly to manage my stress. I'm creating a wonderful throw with eight different yarns and it's certainly keeping me sane – the colours and textures are uplifting and it's a great therapeutic project. I look forward to hearing your news on the Forum.

Betsan xxx



Support

News

Those of you who visit the Stitchlinks website regularly will know that we're slowly adding more articles and information for you to read and enjoy. The News page is the place to go to keep up to date with new additions and changes. Since our last Newsletter, five articles covering a range of subjects have been added to the Your Health Matters page and one to the Personal Development page. Plus there's a new pattern from the wonderful Sockfairy and two fabulous bunting pennants that will fill you with inspiration to get creating!

Don't forget to log in regularly to the website and Forum to keep up to date!

My Story

"I found knitting to be extremely therapeutic while living with extreme back pain from a ruptured disk in the spine. The first doctor I visited did not want to perform surgery to correct this problem. Instead he tried a number of other procedures in the attempt to reduce or eliminate the pain. None of them were successful. I found that the only time I could significantly reduce the pain was either when I took a large amount of painkillers or when I could concentrate on knitting. Knitting became my drug of choice and I spent many months knitting furiously to avoid thinking about the pain. I eventually found another doctor who did operate (successfully) to eliminate the pain.

I still knit very frequently as I find that it helps to bring me peace and brings on a type of meditative state of mind. I would recommend this type of therapy to anyone who needs some down time or a calming influence in their life. I also love the feeling of making gifts for family and friends while providing great mental health benefits to myself!"

You'll find examples of stories from knitters and stitchers around the world on the [My Story](#) page. If you haven't yet told us your story, please fill in our [online questionnaire](#).

Managing Change

Stitchlinks is evolving on a daily basis with some avenues we explore not bearing fruit whilst many other doors open as a result. I've found that this is like life and I prefer to use the term evolving to changing – it's a bit gentler isn't it? Age has taught me that when some doors close there is always something else to look for on the horizon. It may not be immediately obvious but it will become so with time. Training yourself to think in this way is a good coping strategy for dealing with rejection or disappointment. Put it behind you and look for that better opportunity that's coming your way! Keep checking our tips on [living life to the full](#).

Personal Development

We've added a new article on [Emotional Intelligence](#) (EI). It's an interesting subject and one about which experts are divided. Does it exist or is it another aspect of intelligence? What do you think? Why not start a debate on the [Forum](#). We'll be adding more articles so click on [this page](#) for regular updates.

Team Projects

We've had two new, fabulous additions to our ongoing [bunting pennants](#) project. They showcase the wonderful talent we have amongst us. Why not take a look and be inspired? If you'd like to join in with this project to celebrate friendship, you'll find details on the [team projects](#) page.

Meanwhile in Nottingham, UK, Sue and her mother Shirley have teamed up for a mammoth project of their own. They've

**“Joining
Stitchlinks was
another step
– and thank
you for all
your help and
encouragement
in changing my
life. I log on
regularly and
get so much
out of the
communication
between fellow
stitchers.”**

Did you know

Sugar suppresses the immune system. The sugar contained in two and a half 12-ounce cans of sodas reduced the ability of white blood cells to kill bacteria by about fifty percent. The effect lasts for up to five hours after drinking!

got a exhibition planned for May 2010 at a Nottingham Wildlife Trust reserve, so they've got 24 months to stitch and frame enough wildlife pictures to fill the exhibition space. Sue says they have their work cut out, but she's looking forward to the challenge. She finds having a specific target to look forward to helps her cope with pain in the moment, but also with the long-term aspect of chronic pain. She keeps us regularly updated with progress on the Stitchlinks Forum so why not [login](#) and wish her luck!

Shop

Our Stitchlinks [shop](#) is undergoing a refit at the moment! Please bear with us!



Friendship

Forum

Our aim for the [Stitchlinks Forum](#) is for it to be a safe, upbeat haven where our members can feel comfortable talking openly to each others. I want it to work differently from other forums because I'd like you to dip in and out of it when you need a bit of extra support, to tell us what you're up to, to ask for, or to offer help, to keep up-to-date with groups and to chat at our regular coffee mornings. I've noticed that some forums can become addictive and this addiction can become a 'daily burden to visit'. I want you to **USE** the Stitchlinks Forum for a purpose, for your benefit – this may very well involve visiting daily for a chat and I look forward to getting to know you better. Our aim at Stitchlinks is to give you the tools to live a more fulfilled life and the Forum is at the heart of those tools.

“The Forum gives me a sense of freedom.”

June's online coffee mornings will take place on Saturday 7th June at 10am, UK time and Wednesday 18th June at 8pm UK time on our [Members' Plus Forum](#). Look forward to chatting to you there!

Groups

Those who are regular visitors to our Forum will know that Annie and Kathy have started up a Stitchlinks group in Wokingham, Berkshire, UK. They meet every Wednesday from 1-3pm at The New Rose pub where they have an area to themselves at the back. Anyone who lives in the vicinity who would like to join in is very welcome to go along. If you don't have a project on the go they have plenty of ideas, spare wool, needles, crochet hooks, books and magazines to inspire you. Stitchers are also very welcome to take their projects and chat in a caring friendly group, so please pop in to say hello.

There are other groups in the pipeline, but if you're interested in starting your own Stitchlinks linked group, please let me know. Each group will have their own page on the Stitchlinks website and we have a special Groups section on the Registered Members' [Forum](#) where you can chat to each other and keep up to date between meetings. It's a great way of getting to know people in your area.

Visit the [Wokingham Stitchlinks](#) group page to find out more details.



In Education

When I first started to explore the therapeutic benefits of knitting and stitching I met up with a neighbour for coffee and she told me her story. When she was a young girl in school (back in the 60s) she had a wonderful English Literature teacher, who used knitting to help his pupils remember the stories he read. Each child in the class, including the boys, was encouraged to bring in a knitting project to his English classes. They would knit while he read them their English Literature set texts; poetry, plays and stories. My neighbour told me that not only did the knitting help the class to remember the stories, but she recalls those lessons being some of the happiest times of her childhood!

Your Health Matters

You'll find five new articles on [Your Health Matters](#) this month. [Talking to your Doctor](#) discusses ways in which you can work together to maximise the benefits to your health. Most of us have experienced leaving a consultation wishing we'd remembered to ask certain questions or even remembered the answers or treatment alternatives offered! Make this a thing of the past with the tips in [this](#) article!

[The Guide to Recognising a Stroke](#) is an important read for everyone and could help to save a life. The sooner a stroke sufferer receives medical help the better their chances of a favourable outcome!

If you're trying to quit smoking, or know someone who is, then the timeline of benefits in our article on [Quitting Smoking](#) will be a great encouragement. As a non smoker I found it a fascinating read.

[Plastics Warning](#) is a short article on the dangerous effects of heat on plastics, so with hopefully a hot summer on the cards here in the UK, it's an article worthwhile reading. Also, if you're in the habit of re-using water bottles, or heating plastic containers in your microwave, take some time out to read these latest research findings.

I know from the Forum that many of you have had, are having, or are waiting for a course of CBT. With waiting times in excess of one year in some areas, I thought you might find an article on Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP) interesting. It's written by Master Practitioner, Philip Titheridge. Enjoy the read and let me know what you think!

Research

A month or so ago an opportunity for potential funding came unexpectedly our way.

This coincided with an opportunity at Cardiff University, but unfortunately the timescale of one week was too short to mobilise the amount of money needed. Although disappointing, we knew from the start it was a long shot, so we're back to the original plan of applying for funding through more conventional routes! Keep up-to-date with the latest news on our [research here](#).

Patterns

With lots of summer music festivals coming up here in the UK we thought Charlotte's crocheted Festival Hat was a must have, so we've added it to our [patterns](#) page for you to enjoy too!

Press

Yours truly features in [Simply Knitting](#) this month (June issue) so don't forget to buy your copy! You'll find an article I've written on good posture while you knit. Hope you enjoy it!

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