

January 2020

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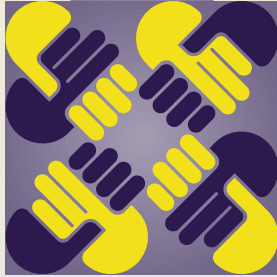
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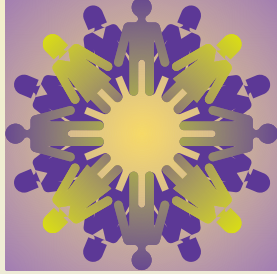
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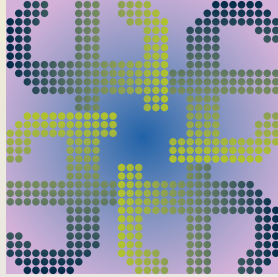
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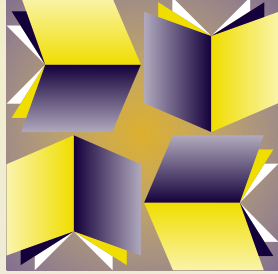
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# Happy New Year!

Welcome to the January edition...

**So, if one of your new year's resolutions is to try new things then check out the local events (page 6) that are happening in the area, from cocktail masterclasses to litter picking!**

Or if you're not feeling quite so active, check out what's coming up at the cinema and the Core Theatre this month (see page 32). There's some great new films and shows out and it's nice to get out the house and beat those Winter blues!

The Solihull Index is also full of local suppliers who can help you with anything from cars and carpets to gardens and gutters, and many other things in between! They are all based locally and would love your support.

Wishing you all a happy and healthy 2020.

Zoe

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# community events

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## Elmdon Park Litter Pickers

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- **Councillor's Surgery** - these are face-to-face meetings held by councillors for local people to raise issues in their area. First and last Saturday of the month, 10.00am-12.00pm
- **Rhyme Time** - Wednesdays 10.15am to 10.30am, term-time only. A short interactive session for 0-2s that includes finger and action rhymes and songs. Come along and meet up with other parents/carers and discover what the library can offer your child.
- **Meet and Play** - Fridays 10.15am to 11.15am, age 0-2 years (term time only). Our new Meet and

Play session offers the chance for young families to meet up, relax, chat, play, sing or make music together! The session is for families, led by families. Toys and musical instruments are provided. For more information contact 0121 704 6965.

- **Homework Club** - Tuesdays 3.45pm to 5.15pm, term time only
- **Silent Reading Cafe** - Held once a month on Thursday evenings, this is a chance to unwind and read in a cosy, informal environment without distractions. It begins with an hour of silent reading from 6pm with a chance to chat (if you want) between 7pm and 7.45pm.

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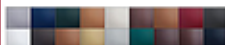
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**Buy a gift or a gift card at a local business in your area and give to a friend, family member, or co-worker.** This will introduce the company to someone new and allow for the "shop local" mantra to spread.

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**By Anne McCarthy**



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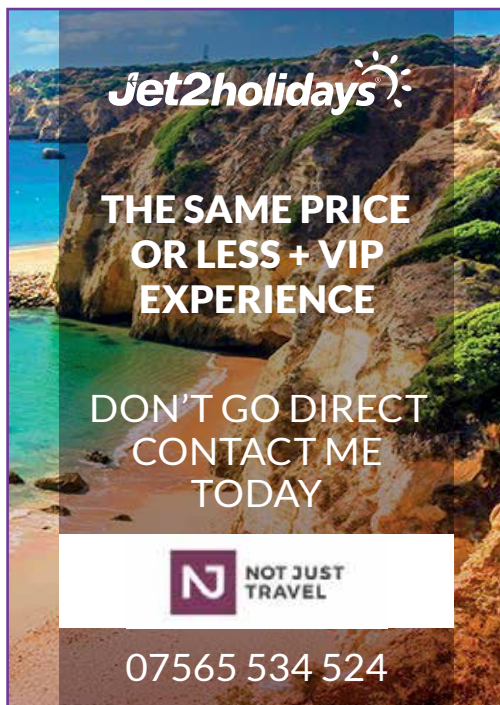
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It has a fascinating history which can be discovered all over the island. It has a world heritage site, The Pitons which are 2 very distinctive mountainous volcanic plugs.

It's a beautiful island and has a tropical climate with temperatures ranging from 25c to 35c all year round. The dry season is from December to May and the rainy season is from June to November.

So you want to get away now, St Lucia is perfect! You don't need a visa, there's only 4 hours difference at the moment.

In St Lucia you drive on the left so hiring a car is easy and as it's only 27

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water. Whale and dolphin watching, there are 33 different species of whale and 20 species either live or visit St Lucia.

I could go on forever about this amazing place but to name just a couple more things, amazing World class cricket, tennis and golf. There are also lots of cultural activities too and a fabulous destination to get married in!

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# New Year's Resolutions

## — What's Yours?

By Tracey Anderson

**A** New Year's resolution is a promise for the new year. Regardless of what resolution you commit to, the goal generally is to improve life in the coming year.

### Resolutions can come in many forms.

Some people make a promise to change a bad habit, such as quitting smoking or eating less junk food. Other people make a promise to develop a positive habit, such as starting an exercise program, volunteering in their community, or recycling more.

**The tradition of New Year's resolutions dates all the way back to 153 B.C.** January is named after Janus, a mythical god of early Rome.

**Janus had two faces** — one looking forward, one looking backward. This allowed him to look back on the past and forward toward the future. On December 31, the Romans imagined Janus looking backward into the old year and forward into the new year. This became a symbolic time for Romans to make resolutions for the new year and forgive enemies for troubles in the past.

The Romans also believed Janus could forgive them for their wrongdoings in the previous year. They would give gifts and make promises, believing Janus would see this and bless them in the year ahead.

**And thus, the New Year's resolution was born! What is your promise for 2020?**



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# WIN 2 TICKETS

**to see Nicholas Crane**  
**The Making of the British Landscape**

**on 4th March, 7.30pm**  
**The Core Theatre, Solihull (formerly Solihull Arts Complex)**

For your chance to win these tickets, visit the Core Theatre website page for this event - [www.thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk](http://www.thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk) - to find the answer to this question:

**Who does Nicholas Crane hold two world records with?**

Email your answer to: [thecoretheatre@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:thecoretheatre@solihull.gov.uk)  
– and please put 'Nicholas Crane' as the subject line.

**Closing date for entries is 1st February. The winner will be drawn at random and notified by email after this date.**

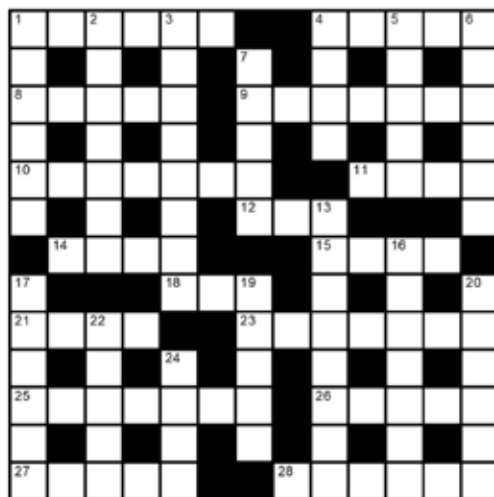
**Please note there is no cash value nor exchange for this prize so please don't enter if you cannot attend the date shown above.**

## **About the show:**

Nicholas Crane is an author, geographer and cartographic expert. He has been the lead presenter on more than 80 BBC films including the hugely popular BBC2 series Coast. Also for BBC2 he has presented Map Man, Great British Journeys & Town, Britannia.

Nick presents The Making of the British Landscape - or Our Island Story: which tells the illustrated 12,000-year story of Britain's physical evolution from the Ice Age to the Shard, from hunter-gatherers to farmers and city-dwellers. Including amusing tales and observations from 10 years of presenting over 80 BBC programmes.

## crossword



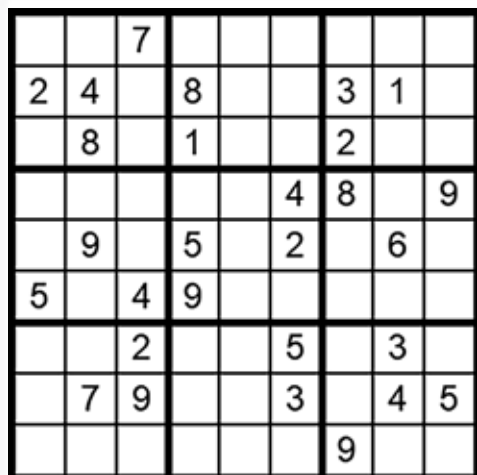
## clues

### Across

- 1 Informal gathering (6)
- 4 Intolerant person (5)
- 8 Bloodsucking worm (5)
- 9 Exceptional, particular (7)
- 10 Funeral procession (7)
- 11 Lazy (4)
- 12 Short sleep (3)
- 14 Fakir, mystic (4)
- 15 Admire, commend (4)
- 18 Winner's trophy (3)
- 21 \_\_\_\_ and hearty (4)
- 23 Salad vegetable (7)
- 25 Branched horns (7)
- 26 Sibling's daughter (5)
- 27 Large wading bird (5)
- 28 Smouldering pieces of coal (6)

### Down

- 1 Join two ends (6)
- 2 Casual farewell (7)
- 3 Physically strong, fit (8)
- 4 Infuse, ferment (4)
- 5 Association, society (5)
- 6 Steering lever on a boat (6)
- 7 Pale with shock or fear (5)
- 13 Precious metal (8)
- 16 Four stringed instrument (7)
- 17 Sword case (6)
- 19 Delux, lavish (5)
- 20 Splits, cuts apart (6)
- 22 Subsequently (5)
- 24 Long period of time (4)



## how to play sudoku

### It's simple!

Fill in the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box, contains the numbers 1 through to 9 with no repetition. You don't need to be a genius. These puzzles use logic alone. Watch out! Sudoku is highly addictive.

answers on page 36



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# Your 2020 Vision for 2020

**H**indsight is a wonderful thing. We often reflect on the past year and mourn chances we didn't take or connections we didn't make. Instead of looking longingly backwards, perhaps 2020 is a good year to develop your vision for the future so that it's...well...20/20!

## **Review your goals** — short and long-term

Are your everyday activities helping you to accomplish your short-term goals? Are you working on meaningful projects? Make sure at least some of your daily activities help you to accomplish your short-term goals, and that those short-term goals can build to let you accomplish larger goals and objectives.

## **But don't be a slave to your goals.**

**It's okay to change directions and shift deadlines.** January is a great time to reevaluate. Are your long-term goals from six months ago still relevant to you today?

It can be helpful to write down your goals using pen and paper, and then hang them in a place where you can see them. This acts as a visual prompt to remind you and inspire you during the day-to-day grind.

## **Nurture relationships**

Sometimes friendships and family relationships get placed on the backburner when we're busy. Are there friends and relatives in your contacts list who you haven't spoken with lately? Use this season to catch-up, reconnect, and nurture the relationships that matter.

## **Request a planning meeting**

It could be with your boss, or your partner!



When you think about the next year — do you see yourself staying at the same job? If so, do you want to be considered for promotion or a transfer? Would you like to plan a big trip with your partner, or start a family?

## **With your boss you might mention projects you'd like to lead, qualifications you'd like to study for.**

With your partner you might want to talk about joining a gym together, planning a safari, or taking up ballroom dancing. These discussions are useful in both your work and your private life. They can help you understand points of dissatisfaction in your work or relationship and give you the clarity you need to explore a change.

## **Invest in yourself**

There's a difference between being comfortable and being complacent. Try stepping out of your comfort zone and take an online course, sign up with the Open University or night classes at college. Try out a yoga class or a massage, or simply go away with a friend or a partner to a spa for a few days.

## **Reflect on lessons learned**

January is not all about new beginnings. It's nice to think about all you accomplished during 2019. What did you learn? What did you achieve? A lot probably happened in the past 12 months, but life moves so fast that too often we don't take time to reflect on all we've learned. Take note of your discoveries and think about ways you can apply those lessons with intention as you move into the new year.

**By Anne McCarthy**

# Bacon and Mushroom Risotto

**A tasty and simple New Year supper**

**Preparation: 10 mins**

**Cooking time: 30 mins**

**Serves 4**

## Ingredients

1 tbsp olive oil  
1 onion  
8 rashers streaky bacon, chopped  
250g chestnut mushrooms, sliced  
300g risotto rice  
1 litre hot chicken stock  
Grated parmesan to serve

## Method

Heat the oil in a deep frying pan and fry the onion and bacon gently for 5 mins to soften. Add the mushrooms and cook gently for a further 5 minutes until they start to release their juices. Stir in the rice and cook until the rice begins to look translucent.

Add the stock, a ladleful at a time, stirring well and waiting for most of the stock to be absorbed before adding the next ladleful – it will take about 20 mins for all the stock to be absorbed.

Once the rice is cooked, season and serve with the grated Parmesan.



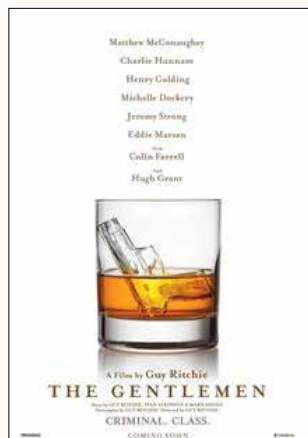
**Preparation time: 10 mins**

**Cooking time: 30 mins**

**Makes: 4**

## a taster of what's coming up...

### CINEMA



#### **The Gentlemen** from 3rd January

'The Gentlemen' follows American expat Mickey Pearson who built a highly profitable marijuana empire in London. When word gets out that he's looking to cash out of the business forever it triggers plots, schemes, bribery and blackmail in an attempt to steal his domain out from under him.

#### **A Beautiful Day in the Neighbourhood** from 31st January

A timely story of kindness triumphing over cynicism, based on the true story of a real-life friendship between Fred Rogers and journalist Tom Junod. After a jaded magazine writer is assigned a profile of Fred Rogers, he overcomes his scepticism, learning about empathy, kindness, and decency from America's most beloved neighbour.



### **Dolittle**

from 7th February

After losing his wife, the eccentric Dr. Dolittle, famed doctor and veterinarian of Queen Victoria's England, hides away with his menagerie of exotic animals. But when the young queen falls ill, a reluctant Dolittle is forced to set sail on an epic adventure to a mythical island in search of a cure.



To book please visit [www.cineworld.co.uk](http://www.cineworld.co.uk)

### THEATRE

The Core Theatre, Solihull



#### **The Syd Lawrence Orchestra**

29th January

In 1967 Syd Lawrence formed what was to become the UK's most successful and longest running Big Band, and this wonderful Orchestra hasn't slowed down! For the last 20 years the Orchestra has continued to fill theatres around the country. Tours of Brazil and Holland, Belgium and Monaco have kept the band at the top of the big band world.

#### **Sing-a-long-a The Greatest Showman**

1st February

Experience The Greatest Showman movie in the greatest

way possible – with lyrics on the screen so you can join in as loud as you want. Our live host will teach you a unique set of dance moves that will truly make you come alive. Fancy dress is strongly encouraged and full audience participation essential!



#### **California Dreamin'**

16th February

The Mamas and Papas, one of the super groups from the Flower Power era in the 60s, brought us smash hits like Monday Monday, Dedicated To The One I Love, and California Dreaming. This show will instantly transport you back to one of the most iconic periods of the Sixties and will also feature the music of Scott McKenzie, The Flowerpot Men, Barry McGuire, The Lemon Pipers and many more.



To book please visit [www.thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk](http://www.thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk)



# Kids Page



Find the sports listed inside the letter grid. One sport is missing from the grid. Which one?

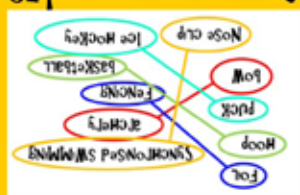
- |          |            |
|----------|------------|
| Archery  | Rounders   |
| Boxing   | Rowing     |
| Cricket  | Running    |
| Cycling  | Sailing    |
| Football | Skiing     |
| Hockey   | Squash     |
| Judo     | Tennis     |
| Karate   | Volleyball |
| Netball  | Wrestling  |



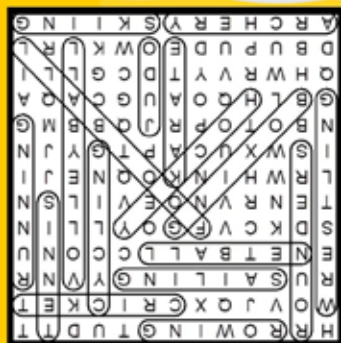
Can you match the equipment to the sport?  
The first one is done for you



- Foil  
Hoop  
Puck  
Bow  
Synchronised Swimming  
Fencing  
Basketball  
Ice Hockey



Match the equipment to the Sport



Sporty Word Grid  
Missing sport - Squash

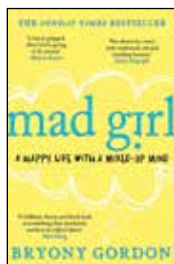


# a good read

reviews By Willow Coby

## Mad Girl

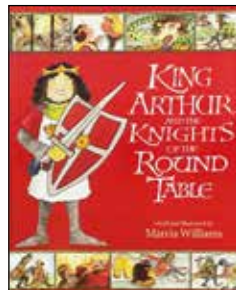
by Bryony Gordon



Mental health is in the news a lot these days with high profile campaigns by the younger royals to raise awareness, and discussions over funding for people who need help. When we talk about mental health it helps to reduce the stigma surrounding the issues, and people have been shown to be more likely to seek help. And this is where the book by Daily Telegraph columnist Bryony Gordon comes in. This is a funny, inspiring, and frank look at mental illness as Bryony recounts her own personal experiences. Starting in her childhood when she developed OCD and bulimia she looks back on her experiences and doesn't shy away from reality of her life back then. A pervasive fear that she had killed someone but had forgotten about it led to her to try to find some aspect of her life that she could control – which led to the bulimia. Each chapter then leads the reader through different phases of her life as it begins to spiral out of control with drug abuse, before an inspiring trip to the Arctic Circle as part of her job helps her to turn her life around. It was a slow process, but she finally decides to take control and starts on the journey that lead her to the present day. This is a must-read for everyone, regardless of how good, or otherwise your life currently is. We all struggle at times and Bryony's story provides plenty of food for thought.

## King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table

by Marcia Williams



Much has been written around the mythology of various cultures – from the Greeks and Romans to the Norse gods. All too often our own mythology is forgotten though, so this wonderfully illustrated comic

strip style book is a treat. It retells the British myths of King Arthur for a new generation. Marcia Williams has gathered together a number of different stories and, with a wonderful sense of humour, presents them for young readers. There is something for everyone: the sword in the stone, the origins of the round table, and the search for the holy grail, to name a few. Familiar characters are on every page including Arthur, Merlin, Guinevere, and Lancelot. She also introduces characters who are not so familiar such as Sir Pellinore, and Sir Accolon, who nearly kills Arthur in a case of mistaken identity! This is a fantastic introduction to the stories of King Arthur and is bound to inspire young readers to want to learn more about these stories that have gripped readers for centuries.

# useful numbers

Shirley Lions Club 0345 833 9547

## Health

NHS non-emergency 111

Grove Surgery 0121 705 1105

Northbrook Group Practice 0121 746 5000

Hobs Moat Medical Centre 0121 742 5211

Solihull Hospital 0121 424 2000

Spire Parkway Hospital 0845 850 1451

## Council

Solihull Council 0121 704 6000

## Utilities

Electricity power cut 0800 6783 105

Gas leak 0800 111 9999

Severn Trent Water 024 7771 5000

Severn Trent Water (emergencies) 0800 783 4444

## Travel

National Rail Enquiries 03457 48 49 50

Network West Midlands (buses) 0345 303 6760

## LOCAL COUNCILLORS

### SOLIHULL / SILHILL

#### Mike Gough

Tel: 07480 253181

Michael.gough@solihull.gov.uk

#### Peter Hogarth MBE

Tel: 0121 705 5455

phogarth@solihull.gov.uk

#### Wazma Qais

Tel: 0121 709 3404

wazma.qais@solihull.gov.uk

### ST ALPHEGE

#### Stuart Davis

Tel: 01564 776293

sdavis@solihull.gov.uk

#### Joe Tildesley

Tel: 0121 705 3086

joetildesley@solihull.gov.uk

#### Kate Wild

Tel: 07917 550 644

kawild@solihull.gov.uk

**Councillor surgeries** these are face-to-face meetings held by councillors for local people to raise issues in their area. Held at The Core Library, Solihull on the first and last Saturday of the month, 10am – 12 noon.

## local police contact for Solihull

Solihull police station

Telephone: 0845 113 5000



## Bathrooms

15 Bathrooms Galore 0121 783 9966

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13 Crossroads Service Station 01564 703 225  
22 AP Alloys 07972 852 758

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9	1	7	3	2	6	5	8	4
2	4	6	8	5	9	3	1	7
3	8	5	1	4	7	2	9	6
6	2	1	7	3	4	8	5	9
7	9	8	5	1	2	4	6	3
5	3	4	9	6	8	1	7	2
8	6	2	4	9	5	7	3	1
1	7	9	2	8	3	6	4	5
4	5	3	6	7	1	9	2	8

**Sudoku Solution**  
from page 27

S	O	C	I	A	L	B	I	G	O	T
P	H	E	C	H	A	R	U	I		
L	E	E	C	H	S	P	E	C	I	A
I	E	L	H	W	L	L				
C	O	R	T	E	G	E	I	D	L	E
E	I	T	N	A	P		R			
Y	O	G	I				L	A	U	D
S		C	U	P	A	K	S			
H	A	L	E		L	E	T	T	U	C
E	A	A	U	I	L	V				
A	N	T	L	E	R	S	N	I	E	C
T	E	O	H	U	L	R				
H	E	R	O	N			E	M	B	E

**Crossword Solution**  
from page 27



1. Blast from the past
2. A piece of cake
3. Prime time

**Mindbenders Solution**  
from page 16

# Dear Diary...

**D**id you ever keep a diary when you were younger? I did. I poured my angst-ridden heart out to its blank pages. I look back on those fat notebooks with a mixture of fascination and horrified amusement. They are a funny, embarrassing, touching testament to my teenage turmoil and inner weirdness.

I stopped journaling my thoughts at some point, but a few years ago, when I was gifted a rather beautiful notebook one Christmas, I started again. It was a good call. Writing in my diary helps me in many ways. I track my moods, my anxieties, the funny things my kids say, and the daily routine of writing helps me thrash out solutions to some of life's challenges. There are many benefits to keeping a diary. Here are my favourites.

**It organises your thoughts** - most of what we think and feel would be incomprehensible to anyone able to look inside our heads. Writing helps to articulate thoughts and make them comprehensible to our conscious mind.

**It improves your writing** - Not everyone aspires to be a journalist or a writer. But many of us have to produce handouts, talks or web content in the course of our jobs. Writing daily in a diary helps us improve our style and fluency.

**It helps set and achieve goals** - A diary is a good place to write down ambitions, aspirations and new year resolutions. Writing them down makes them real. They can then be used as a reminder, and to monitor progress.

**You can record ideas** - It could be ideas for birthday gifts, holiday destinations or the name of the shop in which you saw the perfect curtains for the bedroom you're currently decorating. The benefit of a diary is that it can all be recorded in one place, whenever it comes to mind.



**It's a stress-reliever** - It can be helpful to 'brain-dump' anxieties, frustrations and pains into a diary. Teenage me waxed lyrical about problems with my parents, teachers and how worried I was that no boy would find me attractive while I had braces on my teeth. Adult me expresses concerns in my diary as a good way to free up any tension that prevents me from feeling content in my life today.

**You can reflect** - Life races by at breakneck speed. We get caught up in day-to-day responsibilities and expectations. Journaling our thoughts is a good way to hit the pause button, take a step back and reflect. Whether it's gratitude for something someone has done for us, or simply what we achieved today, a little daily reflection means can look back at our life after a few months or years and see how we've changed. We can note how our priorities have shifted and what we might do to be a better person in the future.

**It's a memory prompt** - Our brain is more likely to store information that we write down. Teachers know that when you write new knowledge down your brain makes stronger connections with the information which means you'll be able to recall it more easily in the future.

**It boosts creativity** - Diary-writing a great way to unleash creativity. Everyone has the potential to be creative, but most of us don't take the time. You can start a novel, jot down ideas for outfits, plan a themed party, doodle or sketch.

**It's your diary...have fun with it.**

**By Sarah Davey**

# How I beat **type 2** diabetes

By John Spring

**W**hen his diabetes doctor suggested he should share how he put his diabetes into remission, John Spring went one better, he wrote a humorous book about it.



**I've now been in remission from type 2 diabetes (T2D) for eight years**, so I guess I must be doing something right. Being in remission means that T2D isn't damaging me anymore. The newly diagnosed will have been

made well aware of the longer-term havoc it can do to their bodies. Unless, when they were told, they put their fingers in their ears and started humming, "La, la, la, I'm not listening". Which is exactly what I did for several years.

5% of the UK's adult population have been diagnosed with T2D, and another 1.3% don't know they have it yet. By the year 2035, 10% of us will be type 2 diabetic. **That might make the recently diagnosed feel a little better**, as there is some safety in numbers, but the NHS isn't too keen on the prospect.

New patients may not be feeling any immediate effects of T2D, so it becomes easy to be complacent. You can liken it to a mild acid flowing around your body, slowly eating away at your nerves, your organs and your eyes. It is the end of this slow production line of diabetic damage that the NHS is now contending with. **I'd read about rapid weight loss having a high success rate in putting T2D into remission** and the NHS is now trialling liquid-based diets of 800 calories per day.

There's also bariatric surgery, but it isn't infallible as a patient's bad eating habits can find

ways around it. Likewise, you probably don't want to survive on liquids for the rest of your life, especially if they don't contain alcohol.

I devised my own practical regime for losing weight fast. The most positive benefit of this workable approach was that I learned how to avoid temptation by becoming the master of my own food. I also learned how to fit exercise into my busy life. These are the lessons that have kept me in remission.

I started by identifying the heavy hitters in my diet. I then developed workarounds to drastically reduce my consumption of those.

**I also pre-prepared my own breakfast and lunch, thus avoiding the calorific temptations lurking in coffee shops and lunchtime sandwich bars.** My home cooked dinners featured healthier ingredients and I soon realised that there really is no such thing as a low-calorie takeaway. They are all evil.

I discovered convenient exercise by walking set routes every day and I built up to being the world's most unlikely runner. After four months I had lost four stone and my blood sugar came down from 60 mmol to 42mmol (48 mmol is the diabetic threshold). Most importantly I'd also equipped myself with the knowledge of how to maintain that weight loss.



**The low-calorie liquids or the surgeon's knife may well kick T2D into remission, but they're arduous procedures to undertake.** Staying in remission is also hard work, but that has been made easier for me by using a new lifestyle to beat this lifestyle related disease.



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