

SATURDAY 30TH SEPT 2023

With Lavinia Donling

BOXES & BOXES

This is the first weekend of not packing, not cleaning, not driving from one house to another. No, now we are in the new house, we are unpacking. The EPS office is currently housing a LOT of boxes - ugh, how have we accumulated so much stuff. In fairness, there is so much stuff because we are coming together as two houses for the next phase of our lives. There is a lot of sorting. For many people with Autism and ADHD, 'once the challenging bits of the project has been done, completing/finishing the boring parts' is challenging for many individuals with PDA. For John and Yasmin, especially, this is tough going. I, on the other hand, like doing the unpacking and putting things together in groups for further sorting. Whilst the number of boxes is overwhelming for sure, there is something very satisfying by seeing a growing collection of empty boxes and things in their new home. However, we came across another



challenge. We needed to do a food shop - not huge - but familiarity with our local stores was a wrench for us all yesterday! We are in a triangle of 3 towns - very luxurious - but not familiar although we are very familiar with the Tesco, Morrisons, Lidl's. We know that having a late lunch helps - less people, less noise, less having to wait for the food order - but it was still quite overwhelming. Later we discussed what was wrong - we had certainly run out of energy (some people refer to the same as running out of spoons) - but we figured out that we have been surviving on depleted energy for some weeks with the whole process of moving and still providing a necessary service for our clients.

I already need to apologise for those of you anticipating reports this last week, when it will be next week as I did not have the opportunities to complete them. Now that we are properly in our new abode with the wifi now sorted, we can start making up for lost time.



OTHER NEWS

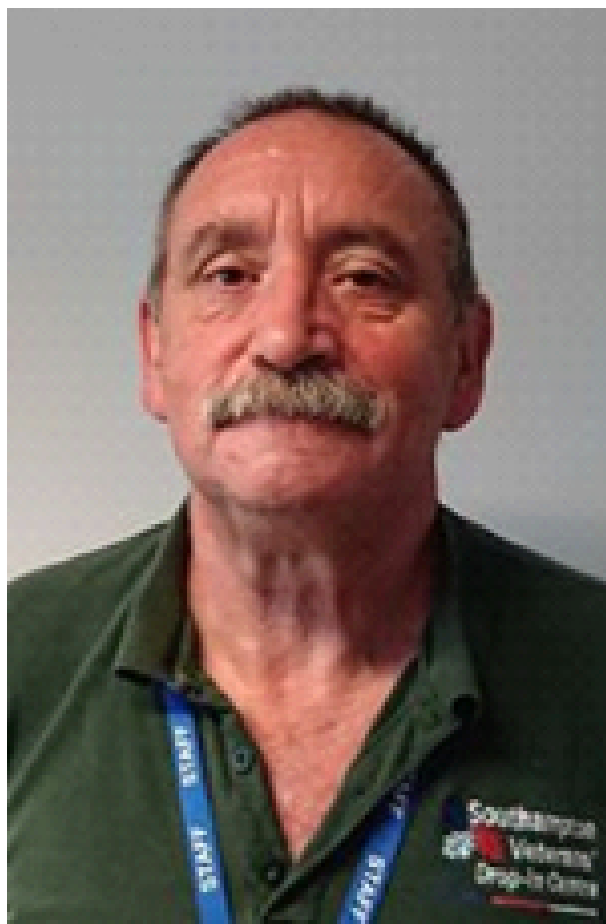
This week we had two pieces of information – the first was confirmation and subsequent payment for one family to have a year's worth of EOTAS package. The second was for another family where the LEA have agreed to pay the same. Yet, the demands for recovery, from the LEA for the first case, and the school for the second, have been unrealistic and show a real lack of misunderstanding. There is an insistence of speed for recovery. Very occasionally, John gets a call from an irate professional from school demanding to know why I have not liaised with them before completing the Mental Health assessment. Schools only see the young person during the day – and they do not see the negative impact from the school day experience, unlike the family at home. Parents do not sit and think up reasons as to why their child should not attend school. Nor do they spend countless hours liaising with school their concerns without considerable validity. Yet parents and carers repeatedly complain of not being consulted, ignored, or, worse, their concerns dismissed. Hence, why parents chose to come to us. Whilst I am happy to liaise with professionals, I do not wish to have my professional judgment tainted by their professional opinions prior to the assessments. I much prefer to hear the family's viewpoints as they live with the young person 24/7, but I also wish to see and hear the young person's viewpoints. Schools need to consider why parents keep arguing and advocating for their child. I hear some awful stories about how some professionals treat our young people – which is no less than bullying – and can cause some extensive trauma, that in time needs unpicking and resolving at the expense to the young person and their family.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS DAY

Tomorrow is officially October, and World Mental Health Day is on the 10th this year. We will be doing vignettes to talk about different presentations in raising awareness of what our young people experience. One teenager very kindly put into words their difficulties around school – this will be uploaded again for those to read.

NED'S MEETING

Next week is our annual NEDs meeting to consider plans for the next year. We welcome any feedback or questions you wish to put to the NEDs to consider, so please send them in to info@the-m-wordcic.co.uk and address to the NEDs. Our NEDs work very hard for us in and around their family life and day to day commitments. Ron and Ginny have been with us since TMW started, Katie followed a year later, and Wendy a year later. Given that Volunteers last an average of nine months, we are extremely fortunate to still have all four still with us. Big thank you to all of them who are so willing to support me move forward with TMW. Now I said to you last week, Sergeant Victoria Pimm and I will be announcing details about our first major fundraising event (so exciting) – at a very grand location. I can now confirm we are to have our first fundraising Ball on Saturday November the 11th at Sandhurst Military College! This is all down to Sgt Pimm working on site and who knows who best to speak to in order to pull this fundraising event off. It was a poignant coincidence that Saturday is the 11th of November. Armistice Day is on the 11th where, at the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month, it was agreed to stand down and end World War 1. It is a special remembrance for those that fought to save our country – “we will remember them”. Whilst TMW is well known for supporting young people and families around Mental Health and Autism, we also support Veterans who struggle with their mental health, especially leaving the forces.



This event is to raise the profile of TMW and what it offers. Tickets go on sale this week. There are VIP tickets (first come, first served) to sit at the top table, as well as the regular tickets with a free entry to the prize draw, the opportunity to dress up in fancy swag, to talk with others, eat gorgeous food and drink lovely wine in such beautiful surroundings. For more information - info@the-m-wordcic.co.uk



Have a good weekend!

Lavinia



TO Be Myself Wellness Journal £10.50
To get your own copy email us at info@the-m-wordcic.co.uk

Unveiling the Mask

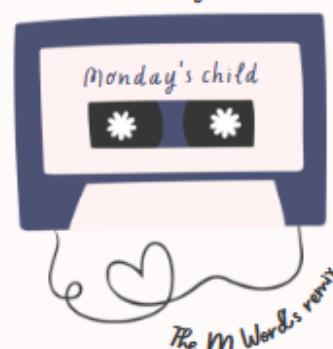
NOT JUST SUPER HEROES WEAR A MASK - PLENTY OF WOMEN DO TOO.

#AUTISMINWOMEN #ADHDINWOMEN

MANY WOMEN HAVE TO PUT ON THEIR MASKS TO BE THE WARRIOR, THE ADVOCATOR, THE PROTECTOR. BUT THEY ALSO PROVIDE THE SAFE SPACE, COMFORT ZONE, PUNCH BAG. DO YOU CONSIDER THAT, WITHOUT THE MASK, YOU DISPLAY TRAITS OF AUTISM AND/OR ADHD?

TICKETS COST 7:50 PER SESSION. STARTS 20:15 TO 21:45 FORTNIGHTLY ON THURSDAY THE 16TH OF FEBRUARY. PLEASE PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS THROUGH INFO@THE-M-WORDCIC.CO.UK

Children's Mental Health Week
6-12 February 2023



Children's Mental Health Awareness week.
Keep an eye out for The M Word's remix of
'Monday's Child'

£7.50 per session from 20:15-21:45 starting Feb 16th