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Spring



# THE STAG

PROJECT:TALK's Quarterly Newsletter

## FEATURED ITEMS

Celebrating achievements and sharing good news  
from PROJECT:TALK

Mental Fitness Month

Our Language: why it is important

Stress Awareness Month and Tips

SASS: Peer Support Group

Investment in Community Funding

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## WELCOME

Welcome to the second edition of our newsletter, where we aim to highlight the great work done by the PROJECT:TALK team.

Within the last few months we have seen the development of many projects, each of which aims to pioneer mental fitness and help strengthen our communities. Be this through peer support groups, TOOLS TO TALK training or fundraising, we are constantly looking for new ways to implement positive mental fitness into day to day lives.

Whilst we are excited to see what's ahead it is also important to thank everyone that is involved with and has supported PROJECT:TALK over the last year, as without each contribution this important work could not be done.

I hope you enjoy reading about everyone's achievements and if you haven't been already, are inspired to start your own mental fitness journey with us.

- Daisy Wigg, editor

"I started PROJECT:TALK to help highlight a new way to engage with and revitalise mental fitness; this affects each and everyone of us and so embracing it can help us feel empowered, boost productivity, relationships and have a positive outlook on life."

### DAISY, CO-FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR

"I started PROJECT:TALK to help communities take charge of their mental fitness, feel well-equipped to support each other, and develop a sustainable network of resources that help individuals within seize opportunities and navigate life's challenges."

### GEORGE, CO-FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR



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# MENTAL FITNESS MONTH 2022 - MAY -

This years Mental Fitness Month is all about  
**connecting in times of conflict.**

The modern world can be an overwhelming and isolating place and with the news full of stories of hostility and division, it is more important than ever to value community and communication.



During this month we are encouraging people to learn from each others experiences and to develop relationships grounded in empathy and support. It is important to acknowledge the impact conflict can have on our Mental Fitness and the vital role connection and community has in these times.

As part of this campaign you can look forward to TOOLS TO:TALK workshops and WALK TO:TALK events, such as 'KMs for Community' taking place on Strava.



Any donations during this period will support ongoing work to develop supportive educational communities. Through listening to lived experiences we will strive to make safe and supportive communities for all who have experienced and been affected by conflict.

Last year we ran our first MFM, 'Around Your Mind', raising a total of £2,001. This year, with your help, we hope to raise more money and awareness to support community mental fitness.

So, please join us during this exciting period and learn invaluable lessons about connecting in times of conflict. Keep an eye on our social media pages and website for more information on how to take part.

**To donate to project talk please follow the link below:**  
**<https://projecttalk.enthuse.com/donate#!/>**

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## OUR LANGUAGE: WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

Using the correct language when talking about mental health is vital to its normalisation and recognition. The many terms used and range of vocabulary, both medical and colloquial, can become confusing but this is not a reason to avoid conversations. Educating ourselves and others is an important thing to do, as not only does it widen the mental health conversation but makes sure it is being done so in a safe and productive way.

Allow yourself to be corrected and feel comfortable in correcting others. Sometimes we can be unaware of the effects our words have, be that positive or negative, but the important part is learning from any mistakes. No one is going to be perfectly politically correct all the time, so allow yourself to learn and grow.

[Mental Fitness Ambassador](#) training provides you with knowledge on how to approach these conversations, in reference to both yourself and to others. Furthermore, great resources can be found online about the language around mental health and the ways in which we should use it. <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/a-z-mental-health/>



## STRESS AWARENESS MONTH

April marks Stress Awareness Month, a time in which we can reflect upon the inducers of stress and learn coping mechanisms to help. Whilst stress is an emotion that we deal with throughout the year, this month gives us an opportunity to gain extra insight into the role it plays in our lives.

PROJECT:TALK's Mental Fitness Ambassador scheme aims to provide communities with the tools needed to support our mental health on the day to day, especially in an increasingly complex and stress-inducing world. When these support systems are in place, we are better equipped to deal with more pressing issues that can arise.

*With exam season and deadlines approaching, we would like to offer some helpful tips for this often stressful time.*

### TAKE BREAKS

Whilst it is important to revise and work you also need to rest. Allow yourself to re-charge and re-group when needed. You could go for a walk, make some food or go out with a friend.

### PERSPECTIVE

One essay or test will not define your entire degree. Try and think holistically and reward yourself for the work you have already done to get this far.

### ACCEPT HELP

There are lots of organisations and supports groups there if you need them. Life can be difficult enough without the pressure of deadlines, it is only natural to need more support during this time.

### WANT TO:TALK

You could join a support group at your local PROJECT:TALK society or one of our 1:1 WANT TO:TALK Peer Support schemes. These are available to you at all stages of mental fitness.

*for more info email [peersupportcomms@projecttalk.org.uk](mailto:peersupportcomms@projecttalk.org.uk)*

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## **SASS: SEXUAL ASSULT SURVIVOR SUPPORT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL**

SASS is a student run support group that runs weekly at the University of Bristol funded and supported by PROJECT:TALK. They hope to provide a safe space for survivors to talk about their experiences of sexual assault, harassment and the anxieties that surround dating and relationships.

With modern reports exposing that 97% of women aged 18-24 within the UK have experienced sexual harassment, it is ever more important for safe spaces like this to exist.

Sessions begin in a relaxed and welcoming way, by making a cup of tea and having check ins to see how everyone has been. A group conversation then proceeds surrounding the chosen topic of the week, such as relationships or anxiety, with activities provided during the session to help people relax and create a comfortable environment. Each session lasts for an hour and after a check-out, to ensure everyone is okay following the week's topic, our facilitators stay behind to enable those that wish to have a more private and personal chat.

The sessions alternate between two types: Trigger warning sessions and Non-trigger warning sessions. This variety allows SASS to be a safe and open place to all, as no two people's experiences are the same and we each process in different ways.

Trigger warning sessions open up the floor to conversations that detail experiences of sexual violence, allowing those who wish to share their stories to do so. Whilst this can be very helpful to some, it is important to note the emotional and serious nature of these conversations and therefore it is not advised for those who may struggle to hear such things. Non-trigger warning sessions include no discussions containing detail of sexual violence, on either a personal or general level.

There has been great feedback from those who attend, staying how they find the group to be a very supportive place and appreciate the option of different types of sessions.

If you would be interested in attending a SASS session you can find further information at:

<https://www.projecttalk.org.uk/sass> | Instagram @uob.sass | Email [uob.sass@gmail.com](mailto:uob.sass@gmail.com)

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## INVESTMENT IN COMMUNITY MENTAL FITNESS INITIATIVES: SPRING 2022 FUNDING ROUND

If you have an idea that could help the mental fitness of your community we want to hear from you!

Up to £300 of funding is available to create a community driven initiative. Through working with PROJECT:TALK and having access to our resources and mentoring, you and your ideas could make a great difference to the lives of many.

Mental fitness and community go hand in hand. We aim to create a supporting environment, that reaches out to all who need it. So if you want to help us in this positive and fulfilling journey please apply below.

<https://linktr.ee/projecttalk>

Once applications have been received they will be reviewed by the PROJECT:TALK team and shortlisted. Those shortlisted will be invited to a meeting to discuss their proposals in further depth, and once a decision has been made the project will aim to be started within a month of approval.

### Criteria:

1. Initiative must have a primary aim of supporting mental fitness through a community-focused approach.
2. The applicant must be a PROJECT:TALK certified Mental Fitness Ambassador. If not already qualified as a MFA, free training can be undertaken within the first month of partnership.
3. The initiative must be sustainable, both practically and financially.
4. As we like to inspire new ideas and innovative approaches, we will preferentially select initiatives that do not already exist or are in early stages of development.



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# [PROJECT:TALK]<sup>®</sup>

PIONEERING MENTAL FITNESS

## JOIN THE PROJECT:TALK CIC TEAM COULD YOU BE OUR NEXT...

- COMMUNITY SUPPORT MANAGER
- COMMUNICATIONS TEAM (SOCIAL MEDIA ASSISTANT)
- EVENT ORGANISER
- IT & TECH MANAGER
- TOOLS TO:TALK ASSISTANT MANAGER

Join our team of passionate volunteers in pioneering mental fitness.

Apply now at

[projecttalk.org.uk/apply](https://projecttalk.org.uk/apply)

FIND OUR MORE AND APPLY NOW

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