



Let's continue the conversation on mental health

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Ahead of World Mental Health Day tomorrow, we're encouraging Table Tennis England members and the sport's community to look out for each other and to have positive conversations about mental health.

Mental health has never been more important than now, with our daily lives changed considerably as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

With mental health charities reporting higher levels of anxiety and feelings of isolation across society, we are encouraging everyone to reach out to friends, family and colleagues.

It is well known that exercise such as playing table tennis can have a positive impact on our mental health, as the graphic below illustrates.



Looking after your **mental health** with **table tennis**



THE INSIGHT

Mental health problems are a leading cause of disability:



Even as restrictions are easing, COVID-19 continues to impact on mental health for certain groups including young adults:

Almost one third of UK 18-24 year olds..

.. report feelings of hopelessness as a result of the pandemic²

Research among the table tennis community has found:

54% of players have experienced a negative impact on their mental health since the outbreak³

THE EFFECT OF EXERCISE

A report from the Mental Health Foundation shows:



Low intensity exercise is best at increasing positive moods⁴



Physical activity such as table tennis can be an alternative treatment for depression and anxiety⁴



Just 10 minutes of this type of activity can improve mental wellbeing and quality of life by increasing self-esteem and relieving stress⁴

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(Table tennis) gives me something to look forward to everyday and it takes my mind off things. I've met new people and made new friends. I like that it improves my concentration, my hand eye co-ordination and when I've finished I feel like I've achieved something

Andrew - Wellingborough Ping Pong Parlour participant who lives with schizophrenia and Asperger Syndrome.

References: 1. mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/fundamental-facts-about-mental-health-2016.pdf 2. mentalhealth.org.uk/news/millions-still-feeling-hopeless-lockdown-eases-new-briefing-mental-health-foundation 3. tabletennisengland.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Ready-to-return-player-survey-responses-V3.pdf 4. mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/How%20to...exercise.pdf

Whether you're discovering table tennis for the first time, or re-discovering it, visit tabletennisengland.co.uk

Table Tennis England Board member Doug Livingstone, who is playing a key role in helping to end the stigma of mental ill-health in the workplace through his [work with the mental health action group InsideOut](#), references the positive impact that playing table tennis has had on his mental health.

Doug has recorded a message to co-incide with World Mental Health Day, which you can watch below:

Among the other examples of the positive impact of table tennis, [click here](#) to read how the sport has helped Lyndsey Simpson of Blackpool TTC to overcome mental health issues and, below, find out how table tennis has helped people to build positive relationships in Mansfield, part of our Power of Ping! series.

The mental health message is reinforced from the very top of the English table tennis tree, with No 1 player Liam Pitchford and men's coach Gavin Evans both having released messages to our members during the current restrictions – you can watch those videos again below:

So, on World Mental Health Day tomorrow, and every day, please look after yourselves and each other and start a conversation about mental health.

[Click here](#) to find out more about World Mental Health Day 2020 on the Mind charity's website.

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