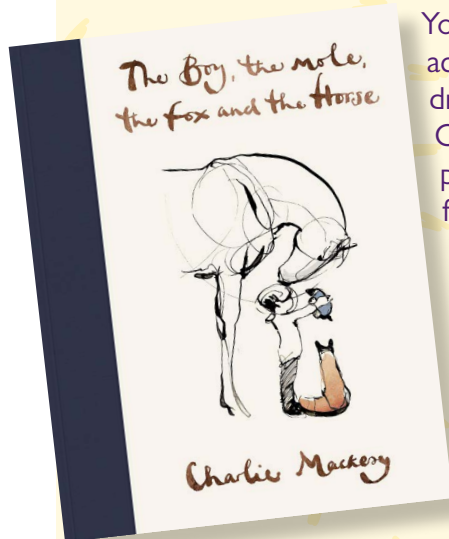




What can we learn from *The Boy, The Mole, The Fox and The Horse*?



You cannot fail to have come across the inspirational drawings and musings of Charlie Mackesy over the past year. Indeed, we've featured a few illustrations in previous newsletters. It's a seemingly simple fable about a young child and his adventures with some animal friends, but *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse* has proved hugely popular, offering hope

and inspiration to a myriad of readers. His wise sentiments have struck a chord with people of all ages from all over the world; especially pertinent during lockdown. But what are the messages the book contains that have captured the public's imagination so effectively? It's filled with reminders of the importance of being kind, caring for one another, being brave and keeping positive; key life lessons for us all in difficult times. If you haven't got a copy of the book, I urge you to buy it, gift it to someone you feel might be struggling, or keep it by the side of the bed to dip into when you're feeling a little low. Read more about the important lessons shared and for a link to listen to an audio version of the book, [click here](#).

For all those finding it difficult:
"THE SUN WILL SHINE
ON YOU AGAIN AND
THE CLOUDS WILL
GO AWAY."

Captain Tom Moore... a hero
amongst men and a shining
beacon of kindness and hope.
Rest in peace.

Foods to avoid if you suffer with anxiety

With Elaine



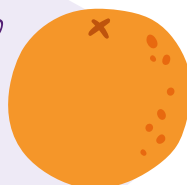
Did you know some foods can increase our levels of anxiety? **Processed meats** such as bacon and salami can contain nasty chemicals called nitrates, which are preservatives and enhance the colour; but these can affect the chemical levels in our brain and can also affect our good gut bacteria. As well as processed meats, caffeine, anything made with refined flour such as white rice, pasta and white bread, and artificial sweeteners such as aspartame and saccharine (which are found in fruit squashes and diet drinks) also increases our anxiety.

If, like me, you love the occasional fry-up or a bacon sandwich for breakfast, there is a new brand of bacon and sausages which is now being sold in all supermarkets called Naked which contains none of the unhealthy nitrates that contribute to anxiety. I can definitely recommend the bacon as it tastes exactly the same as other good brands. It is slightly more expensive but is worth paying out more knowing you are avoiding unnecessary chemicals.

The **best foods** to eat to combat anxiety are high in levels of probiotics and fibre, foods such as aged/fermented foods ie pickled vegetables; Miso; apple cider vinegar; cultured/live yogurt, and foods high in fibre such as beans, brown rice, apples, bananas and berries.

Quarantini time: Dranginecco

1 shot of Tanqueray Seville orange gin
Juice of half a fresh orange
Top up with Prosecco
Garnish with a slice of orange or orange peel



What about our family and friends?

by Andy Holter

For many months now we have been sharing ideas, activities and even coping strategies associated with wellbeing and mindfulness for self-help during these extraordinary times, and all the challenges that we have faced since March 2020.

In my last wellbeing piece, we talked about some of the effects that the pandemic is having on some of us as funeral professionals. Ever-increasing high levels of stress due to workload, excessive deaths, mortuary capacity reaching their limits or constant call outs throughout the night, resulting in fatigue, tiredness, exhaustion, high or low moods, behavioural changes and even shortness of temper: just a few of the physical and mental symptoms that we may display during these incredibly challenging times.

Whilst we are reminded of the frailty of the human race when it comes to infection or disease, we must also be mindful of the excellent scientists and experts that continue to develop vaccines and cures across the globe. With over 10 million people in the UK having received their first injection against Covid-19 which includes us, 'The Funeral Professionals': key workers standing together in the fight against this pandemic, we can finally see the light at the end of the tunnel and a slow reduction in the spread of the current strain. Hopefully a reduction in the loss of life will follow as we look to the weeks and months ahead.

It was whilst preparing this week's wellbeing piece that I was reminded by my partner that it is not just our wellbeing and mindfulness that is impacted by our profession, but also those we live with: partners, wives, husbands, parents, children or housemates. She quickly quoted me by saying: "What about the call outs at midnight, 2am, 4am and 7am? What about the constant conversations about death you have on the phone at home? Or even the work you bring home because you want to do your absolute best, what about when you're tired, exhausted or even short tempered!" Taking a moment and listening carefully, I thought to myself that it's funny as funeral professionals this is what we do – we always care for our clients,

we never want to let anyone down and we always look after people no matter what time of day it is. I then suddenly realised she was right (as she usually is!), that, whilst we're experiencing challenges, so are our partners and the people closest to us. Whilst we care very much about supporting our clients and not letting people down, it is equally as important not to let down those that you love and care for at home too.

As I took a moment to reflect a little more, the realisation hit me that not only did she have me to deal with (and that is no small feat!), but she also had home-schooling, constant cleaning, housework, cooking, and listening to the latest statistics of the pandemic, and then hearing all about it from me! So... the main point here is that we need to be mindful of the wellbeing of our partners, wives, husbands, parents, children, or housemates too.

Why not visit our wellbeing hub and share some of the resources available to help them to overcome the stresses, strains, and pressures of not only our work, but also our down time too. Make time in the evening or weekend to share in a game, creative drawing, painting, or even go for a walk or a cycle as a family – you'll all feel better for it.

