

My name is John Hanson and I am the Mental Health Lead and Mental Health First Aider for St James. As someone who struggles with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) this period of lockdown and the ongoing situation with Covid 19 brings some major challenges.

These situations and the restrictions that they impose will affect people's mental health and I just want to encourage you that help is always available whenever you need it.

Mind in Somerset are an invaluable support service for anyone who needs help, no matter the scale of the problem. They are contactable on their Mindline service on 01823 276892, they are there to listen, support, understand and talk to you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Alternatively you can visit their website www.mindsomerset.org.uk or e mail them at info@mindsomerset.org.uk

My experiences of having a mental health illness is that it is not something that I am ashamed of, its part of who I am. We all have mental health it just fluctuates from being poor to good on any given day dependant on circumstances. What I'm ashamed of is the stigma that others label those of us with mental illness with.

If you are struggling, then I can be contacted on 07488 290906 if you need signposting to a particular support service or even if just if you need to talk.