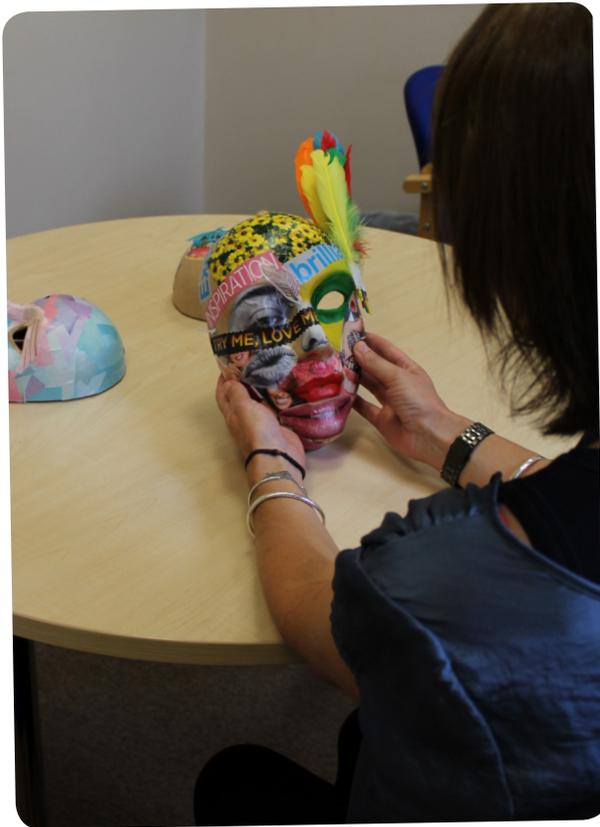


Our Living Well service offers a range of therapeutic sessions designed to help patients who are struggling to cope with everyday life. For more information on the services which we offer, visit www.pth.org.uk.



We are privileged to care for people like Marilyn and her family, at probably the most difficult time in their lives, but we can only do this with the generosity of our local community.

We have to raise over £20,000 every day in order to provide care, free of charge, to our patients and their relatives.

For further information about how to support Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice Care, contact our Fundraising team on:

01252 729446
support@pth.org.uk

Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice Care

Waverley Lane, Farnham
Surrey GU9 8BL

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Our patients are inspiring...

“It was very thought-provoking.”



Living
Well

Marilyn's Story

The benefits of our Behind the Mask creative therapy group.

Phyllis Tuckwell[®]
Hospice Care
...because every day is precious

September 2018

Marilyn's Story



“When others ask us how we are, we often say ‘fine’, even though we may not really be feeling ‘fine’,” says Marilyn, one of the patients currently accessing our new range of Living Well services. “It’s a word we all use a lot. We use it to hide our feelings, thinking other

people don’t notice.”

Marilyn is being cared for through our new Living Well service, which is designed to support patients and carers who are living with an advanced or terminal illness, and who need some help in coping with everyday life. It offers a range of sessions, each of which focus on a different aspect of care – some help improve patients’ physical strength, movement and stamina, while others promote mental relaxation, give tips on managing stress and anxiety, provide practical advice on taste and dietary changes, or offer patients and their carers a creative way to express their feelings, through art, gardening or cooking.

At our Behind the Mask sessions, patients are encouraged to consider their emotional response to the illness which they are living with, and think about how they may hide their true feelings from those around them.

“We all wear a mask,” says session leader Sophie Bice, who is one of Phyllis Tuckwell’s Counsellors. “It’s the face that we present to the world, which shows us as we want to be seen and thought of by people. That mask hides the parts of us that we want to keep secret, that we find difficult to share or that we do not want to burden others with.”

Behind the Mask is three-part mask-making workshop for patients and carers, which encourages them to think about the metaphorical mask which they wear, and explore what it may be hiding. The first session explores the ‘outer face’ that



we present to others. Patients and carers are encouraged to consider how they want to be seen and understood in the world, and what they want people to know and think about them. They discuss the values, qualities and characteristics they feel that they want people to see in them, and how this may differ between their family and friends, their acquaintances and any professionals they speak to at Phyllis Tuckwell.

“In the second session we explore the ‘shadow side’,” says Sophie, “those aspects of ourselves that we keep hidden. What do we feel ashamed of? What can we not reveal about ourselves? This could be feelings or attitudes that we believe might worry or upset those around us, as well as feelings and beliefs that we find difficult to share. We might be hiding emotions, fears, negative beliefs or other similar thoughts.”

At the end of the three sessions, everyone leaves with a better understanding of the two sides of their own mask: the side which we put on when we are around other people, and the side with the feelings and emotions which we keep hidden.

“It was a very thought-provoking two-week workshop,” says Marilyn. *“In the first session we talked about how we put on a face when we see other people; how we say we are ‘fine’, even though we may not really be. It was a fun-filled morning with a lot of banter and everyone in the group shared a little of their story. At*

the Hospice and Beacon Centre we don’t have to pretend that we are ‘fine’, and we all spoke openly about ourselves. It was a funny, happy session and we had a very good discussion.”

“At the second session we all sat around the table, having a chat and a laugh. As we started to work, the mood changed dramatically. We did the inside of our mask – to show how we feel when we are not really fine. We talked about feeling scared and frightened. No-one was very chatty – we were all thinking of how we felt inside. These feelings can make you feel very lonely at times, and at other times sad or scared. It was a very good exercise and we had a good discussion.”



“I took my mask home,” continues Marilyn. “I wanted to show my family and friends the good work we do at the Hospice and Beacon Centre. It’s so good for our wellbeing. It then became a good topic of conversation at home. It was nice to have some feedback from my family and discuss with them the two sides of ourselves that we portray. I recall one of my little grand-daughters saying ‘that is you Nanny, both sides are you. We see you when you laugh but we also see you when you are sad’. The staff helped us in all three sessions, talking about things and discussing situations. I would like to thank them for arranging this Living Well group. I would not be where I am without their help and support.”