

**EZine  25        Christmas 2020**

*As we approach the close of what has been an exceptional year,*

*YouthPact have collected a few resources that might support workers and young people reflect on their 2020 experience,*

*identify their feelings and emotions, make sense of the highs and lows,*

*consider who or what they might have to be grateful for and look forward with confidence, hope and optimism to 2021.*

**Young Voices '2020 in 4'** - date for submissions extended

In recognition of the competing demands on projects' time as we come to the close of what has been an exceptional year, we have extended the date for submissions to our Young Voices '2020 in 4' initiative, until **27th January 2021**. ‘2020 in 4’ words, lines, verses, images or sounds is about building on the excellent work of Peace4Youth projects are already delivering in supporting young people through this period of rapid change and helping make sense of their experience as Peace4Youth participants. To support workers in this process we have developed some ideas and suggestions for how they might approach '2020 in 4' with young people.  A huge thank you to projects that have contributed so far - further contributions are welcomed from individual young people (either those currently involved or that have moved on in the past 9 months), small groups/bubbles or delivery sites across Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland.  For more information or to talk-over an idea or approach, please contact Joe Hawkins, [joe@nyci.ie](mailto:joe@nyci.ie) or call/text/WhatsApp +447738 313 965.

[Click here for a PowerPoint copy](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/eYmHC5LLru0JVrczSi2j?domain=drive.google.com) of the ideas and suggestions and [click here for a Word version](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/_sbzC699vfoNn4C6ppx7?domain=drive.google.com).

**Journaling**

This short article from the website [Patient](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/3zLmC7XXwFmgOBCBGLq-?domain=patient.info/) looks at the value of journaling and its potential benefits for our mental health. At its simplest, "journaling is a way of recording your thoughts and emotions in writing", but it doesn't have to be all about negative emotions, "placing emphasis on the good stuff, can help to shift our mindset to a more positive one".  Helpfully, the article also includes suggestions for how to get started and that as well as writing, you can use images, pictures, colours and even squiggles, "as it is only for you".

[https://patient.info/news-and-features/could-keeping-a-journal-help-your-mental-health](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/888rC8EExSjG7ySMuizH?domain=patient.info)

**Guided Meditation**

This 12-minute '[Gratitude Tree](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/WcfAC9ggyFm05wCPdlzT?domain=positivepsychology.com/)' guided meditation video lends itself for use in an online session with a group of young people. It has the potential to be the basis of a longer, fully facilitated, session exploring [gratitude](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/beLtC0LLmu2xRAt3OMEq?domain=time.com/) and [why it may be good for us](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/FGhHCg22Ghl3LzsZt4J2?domain=positive.news/). It could also work as a directed task, where young people listen to the video as a group, then being given additional guidance and support to undertake further reflection on their own, before coming back together again later in the day to share their experience and some of the things they identified that they have to be grateful for.  We have drafted some practical guidance for workers that may be new to the process which can be accessed [here](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Fc6qpFPAYD8z5Nu5__W_1lJkaoPmHHvb/view?usp=sharing). Alternatively, the video could be shared with young people to listen to and practise in their own time.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64QzBuhsyuk](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/K6nZCj88kujr7xSxe2Qq?domain=youtube.com)

**Finding Hope When Things Feel Gloomy**

In this New York Times article (18/11/20) the [author](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/PgcVCk77lunEMJF0DljK?domain=nytimes.com) reflects that "creating [hope](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/SF-CCl77muorBYCNL_Z3?domain=positivepsychology.org.uk/) may be an uphill climb, but there are ways to get there". The article contains what the author describes as some of her "favourite ways to spark and [maintain hope](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/H0rICmyynh5xmQfwVhqa?domain=theconversation.com) in hard times" - which includes building [a hope kit](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/fTf8CnOOoUGEJRtzMWu5?domain=davidsusman.com/).

[https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/18/smarter-living/finding-hope-when-things-feel-gloomy.html](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/tKYcCoyy0hXn7ytmOUfS?domain=nytimes.com)

**Where Gratitude Gets You**

Many of us struggle with self-control and we assume willpower is the key to achieving our goals, but according to this episode of the [Hidden Brain](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/cmGUCp22qhz2jRs9HX_R?domain=hiddenbrain.org/) podcast, there’s a simple and often overlooked mental habit that can improve our health and well-being - the practice of gratitude.

[https://hiddenbrain.org/podcast/where-gratitude-gets-you/](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/zAdgCqZZruOQpMfgZtwK?domain=hiddenbrain.org/)

**And finally…**

Thank you for all your support in 2020 and we look forward with hope and optimism to continuing our work together in 2021



 YouthPact do not necessarily endorse any of the materials or links in this ezine.

If you have something to share with your Peace4Youth colleagues, send these to our administrator Seana Carmichael, [scarmichael@cooperationireland.org](mailto:scarmichael@cooperationireland.org).

Or, if you would prefer not to receive our newsletter please email STOP and your name in the subject heading to [*scarmichael@cooperationireland.org*](mailto:scarmichael@cooperationireland.org)

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