Covid – 19 Update:

We have now been in this rather strange territory of being in Lockdown for an extended period. As time passes, we have become more used to a very different way of living our lives. Much has shown that we have been determined to support each other through this crisis, however, the easing of lockdown poses further concerns for many. The pace of change for some feels too slow, and for others the thought of engaging with people evokes fear and they want to stave off the time they emerge into the world again. For all there is uncertainty about what may evolve. The measures we have taken to disrupt the spread of the virus has created a lot of challenges for us all, but for many the strain has been felt more intensely. For the majority of us, the circumstances currently imposed on us supersedes any other collective experience we have had to contend with, and we have yet to understand the full impact. We as a service are aware that although this has been primarily a physical health crisis, the uncertainty, fear, loneliness, and loss inherent in the situation, has brought about a mental health crisis too. External pressures impact on how we feel, and these difficult feelings have been overwhelming for many. It may well be that some of you feel you need mental health support to sustain you through the complexities of the times. We are here to help. Click link to find out how.

We at Riverside, have of course taken our responsibility for each other, for the people around us and our society, very seriously. We feel pleased that we are here to support the communities which we know and where we have worked for over 30 years. We have grown to understand the diverse communities, each with its own identity, and the people within it. We want to support those who feel counselling could help them through difficult times. We are well positioned to make ourselves available to individuals in the community who feel they need mental health support.

In accordance with government measures, we have adapted the way we offer counselling, so we are now working with our clients either via a video call or on the phone. Having transitioned to online working with our existing clients we are also able to work with new clients if online counselling would be helpful to them. This form of counselling is different from face to face counselling so those contacting the service will be asked some initial questions to ascertain whether online counselling is appropriate to meet their need. Following this they will be offered an initial consultation to discuss things further so they can find out more about how things work, and we can understand their concerns in a little more detail. Then if agreed, by both counsellor and client, they can begin working online with one of our professional counsellors.

Please do get in contact if you feel having a safe and confidential ‘space’ could be of value to you at this time and please remember that cost should not be a barrier to getting the help you need. We appreciate for many finances are tight and we will definitely take this into consideration.  **We are also offering free sessions to frontline workers who we all know are working in difficult circumstances and particularly need our support.**

As the situation remains uncertain, we are continuing to work online until we feel it is safe to work with clients face to face again. This will not be before September, but we will be assessing the situation regularly and some online counselling will continue, on a more ongoing basis if appropriate for particular clients and counsellors. Please be aware the service will be taking a break during August when we will be closed.

Affordable fees and free sessions are made possible by donations from trusts, grants and fundraising, on which we are dependent to keep the service accessible. Please do visit our ‘support us’ page to see how you can help us increase capacity so we can meet the increase in demand.

We also have details of resources on our website which you can access to support your mental wellbeing on our ‘Other Useful Resources Page’. We do appreciate that there are very real concerns people will be facing and we hope that these resources can be of support to you and your families. We are continuing to add to the website information that we feel may be useful to you, so do come back and visit the site.

Our continuing professional development events, courses and groups are also on hold for now.  We will endeavour to confirm new dates when restrictions allow.

Although things feel uncertain and unsettling, it is also a time perhaps when we can slow down and take time to reflect and learn new ways of being in touch; to maybe change old habits and routines. It is perhaps a time to be kinder to yourself. It’s more important than ever that we all act responsibly and help each other. Riverside is here and we would like to support you.

Take extra good care of yourself and everyone else and please do visit our website for updates.