

Turning the page together.

As we celebrate the festive season and look forward to a brand-new year, this special bumper edition of Lena's Ezine is here to inspire renewal and reflection. Inside, you'll find resources and tips to help you pause, plan, and embrace positive change - alongside articles in support of key awareness dates like Grief Awareness Week and Dry January. Let's make this transition a time for growth and fresh possibilities!





Grief Awareness Week (2-8 Dec)

Grief: How to help and how to heal

Grief is one of life's most profound and personal experiences. Whether you're supporting someone who's lost a loved one or facing your own bereavement, it's important to remember: there's no 'right' way to grieve, but there are compassionate ways to work through it – together.

Supporting someone who's grieving

When someone you care about is grieving, it can be hard to know what to say or do. Here are meaningful ways to offer support:

01. Be present, not perfect

You don't need the perfect words – your presence is enough. A simple 'I'm here for you' can be more comforting than any advice.

02. Listen without fixing

Let them talk, cry, or sit in silence. Avoid trying to 'solve' their pain. Grief isn't a problem – it's a process.

03. Offer practical help

Grieving people often struggle with everyday tasks. Offer to cook a meal, run errands, or help with paperwork. Specific offers ('Can I bring dinner on Thursday?') are more helpful than vague ones.

04. Remember the long haul

Support shouldn't fade after the funeral. Keep checking in weeks and months later. Grief doesn't follow a timeline, and your continued presence and support matters.

05. Respect their way of grieving

Some people want to talk. Others need space. Some find comfort in rituals; others don't. Let them lead and follow with empathy.

Supporting yourself through grief

If you're grieving, know this: your feelings are valid, and healing doesn't mean forgetting. Here's how to care for yourself:

01. Feel what you feel

Sadness, anger, numbness, guilt – grief is a rollercoaster. Allow yourself to feel without judgment. Suppressing emotions only prolongs pain.

02. Seek connection

You don't have to grieve alone. Talk to trusted friends, join a support group, or reach out to a counsellor. Connection helps us carry the weight.

03. Create rituals of remembrance

Lighting a candle, writing a letter, or visiting a meaningful place can help you honour your loved one and process your loss.

04. Take care of your body

Grief is exhausting. Rest, eat nourishing food, move your body gently. Self-care isn't selfish – it's survival.

05. Give yourself time

Healing isn't linear. Some days will feel lighter, others heavier. Be patient and kind to yourself as you navigate this new landscape.



If you want to learn more, this month's free webinar is on **Grief & Loss**. More details, including the registration link, are available on **page 4**.





Grief Awareness Week Resources

Whether you're supporting someone or grieving yourself, remember: you're not alone. Compassion, patience, and presence are the greatest gifts we can offer – to others and to ourselves.



Books to comfort and enlighten

'Option B' - Sheryl Sandberg & Adam Grant

Blends personal loss with psychological research to offer resilience strategies.

'Grief Works' - Julia Samuel

A therapist's compassionate guide with real-life stories of navigating grief.

'How to Carry What Can't Be Fixed' - Megan Devine

An interactive journal that validates grief without rushing healing.

'A Grief Observed' - C.S. Lewis

A timeless reflection on mourning and faith after the loss of a spouse.

Podcasts to uplift and educate

'Open to Hope'

Hosted by grief experts, this podcast offers comfort and connection through interviews and personal stories.

'Headspace for the Workplace'

Focuses on trauma-informed leadership and grief support in professional settings.

'Let's Talk About Grief at Work' - Jennifer McCanna

Practical advice for managers and teams supporting grieving colleagues.

'Griefcast' - Cariad Lloyd

Comedians and guests share honest, often humorous reflections on loss and mourning.

Films/docs to spark reflection

'The Bear' (Disney+)

A chef grapples with the death of his brother, showing grief's impact on work and relationships.

'After Life' (Amazon Prime)

Ricky Gervais portrays a grieving widower navigating everyday life with dark humour and heart.

'Shrinking' (Apple TV)

A therapist coping with personal loss explores unconventional healing methods.

'The Leftovers' (Now TV)

A haunting series about global loss and the emotional aftermath of unexplained disappearance.

TED Talks worth watching

'How to Handle Grief at Work and Beyond' - Meredith Wilson Parfet Offers tools for navigating grief in professional environments.

'3 Ways Companies Can Support Grieving Employees' - Tilak Mandadi Practical strategies for workplace grief support.

'How Should We Approach Grief in the Workplace?' - Rob Farmer Reframes grief as a learning process and shares personal insights.

'We Don't Move On from Grief, We Move Forward with It' - Nora McInerny A heartfelt talk on living with loss and embracing emotional honesty.

Free Online Webinar

Grief and loss

When: Wednesday 10th December 2025

Time: 10.00am to 11.00am

One of life's most difficult experiences is losing a loved one. It would be somewhat easier if grief followed a linear path, with stages that neatly fit into boxes. But big feelings can emerge all throughout the grieving process. This workshop aims to help participants understand how to support a person who is grieving.

This one-hour session will help you to understand:

- How to communicate effectively and compassionately with bereaved people
- Understand bereavement and the factors affecting the grieving process
- Understand a range of grief models
- How to provide support to those caught in the grieving process
- Strategies and skills for working with grief
- The importance of self-care and signposting for support

Please sign up for our free webinars as early as you can as places are allocated on a first come, first served basis. Check your spam/junk folder for the email confirmation with your Zoom link if it doesn't appear in your inbox soon after registering.



[Visit Enthuse](#) to register.

NB Maximum 500 places available)

International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3 Dec)



IDPD aims to promote the rights and wellbeing of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society.

1 in 6 people globally live with a disability, yet far too many continue to encounter systemic barriers that limit access to education, employment, healthcare, and social inclusion.

Disability awareness is about more than accessibility – it's about empathy, inclusion, and respect.

How can you show your support?

01. Talk about disability with family

Use age-appropriate books, shows, or stories to teach children about inclusion and respect. Discuss the importance of accessibility in everyday life.

02. Support inclusive media

Watch films, read books, or follow creators who share authentic disability experiences. Share what you learn with others to broaden perspectives.

03. Volunteer or donate

Support local disability organisations through time, donations, or advocacy. Look for inclusive community events and participate where/when you can.

04. Reflect and reframe

Consider how your home environment could be more accessible to guests or family members with a disability. Practice empathy by imagining daily tasks from another's perspective.



2025: Your Year in Review

The value of looking back to move forward

As the year winds down and the calendar prepares to turn, many of us instinctively look ahead to setting goals, making resolutions, and dreaming of fresh starts. But before we rush into the ‘new,’ there’s quiet magic in pausing to look back. Reflection isn’t about dwelling on the past – it’s about honouring it, learning from it, and using it as a springboard for growth.

Why reflection matters

Think of your year like a book. Would you skip the final chapter before starting the sequel?

Reflecting helps you:

- Recognise how far you’ve come
- Understand what worked (and what didn’t)
- Celebrate wins – big and small
- Let go of what no longer serves you

‘Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.’

(Melody Beattie)

A moment of gratitude

Gratitude isn’t just a feel-good buzzword – it’s a mindset shift. When we focus on what we’re thankful for, we train our brains to notice the good, even in tough times.

To get started, try this:

- Write down 5 things you’re grateful for from this year.
- Include at least one challenge that taught you something.
- Revisit this list when you plan your goals – it’ll ground you in strength.

The role of self-compassion

You’ll find that not everything went to plan – and that’s okay.

Self-compassion means treating yourself with the same kindness you’d offer a friend. It’s saying, ‘I did my best with what I had,’ and meaning it.

Planning forward with purpose

Once you’ve reflected, expressed gratitude, and extended compassion, you’re ready to plan – not from pressure, but from clarity.

Ask yourself:

- What do I want more of in the year ahead?
- What am I ready to let go of?
- What strengths did I discover this year that I can build on?

Set intentions, not just goals. Instead of ‘lose 10 pounds,’ try ‘nourish my body with movement and rest.’ Instead of ‘get promoted,’ try ‘grow in confidence and leadership.’

The end of the year isn’t just a finish line – it’s a mirror and a doorway. Look back with honesty, gratitude, and grace. Then you’ll be able to step forward with courage and hope.

Still not convinced? Below are 3 motivational TED Talks that beautifully explore reflection, gratitude, and self-compassion which might help you take the plunge and try it out.

‘How Gratitude & Reflection Saved My Life – David O’Mahoney

A former soldier shares how journaling and gratitude helped him recover from trauma and rebuild his life.

‘Gratitude doesn’t change your past, but it changes how you carry it.’

‘Self-Reflection: A Journey to Improvement’ – Maria Li

Maria Li explores how intentional reflection can lead to personal growth, even when it’s uncomfortable. A great talk for anyone setting goals with more self-awareness.

‘Rediscover You: The Power of Self-Reflection & Emotional Wellness’ – Yahshikiah Huges

This talk blends emotional intelligence with practical tools for self-reflection, especially useful during transitions like year-end reviews or life changes.



Printable Reflection Worksheet

Use these six prompts to reflect on the past year with honesty, kindness, and clarity. There's no right or wrong way to answer – just write what feels true.

01. Gratitude & reflection

What are three things I'm grateful for that emerged from a difficult time this year?
How has reflection helped me reframe a challenge into a strength?

02. Personal growth through self-reflection

What's one moment this year where I surprised myself with growth or resilience?
What did I learn about myself that I hadn't noticed before?

03. Emotional wellness & rediscovery

What emotions have I been avoiding, and what might they be trying to teach me?
What does 'rediscovering myself' look like in the year ahead?

04. Living with loss & moving forward

What loss or change have I experienced this year, and how has it shaped me?
How can I honour what I've lost while still embracing what's ahead?

05. Relationships & happiness

Who are the people that made my life richer this year, and how can I nurture those connections?
What small daily habits bring me joy, and how can I protect them?

06. Final reflection

What am I most proud of this year?
What intention do I want to carry into the new year?



Dry/Drink Less January

Alcohol: Take back control and feel better fast

Whether you're looking to drink less or stop altogether, small changes can lead to big improvements in your health, mood, sleep, and relationships. Here's how to get started – and stick with it.

Alcohol is deeply woven into our daily lives but drinking too much – even occasionally – can affect your energy, mental health, and long-term wellbeing. Cutting down or quitting can help you:

- *Sleep better and wake up refreshed**
- *Improve your mood and reduce anxiety**
- *Save money and boost productivity**
- *Strengthen relationships and self-esteem**

Thinking about quitting completely – for Dry January or longer?

If alcohol no longer fits your lifestyle or goals, quitting might be the best choice. Here's how to make it easier:

Know your why: Write down your reasons for quitting ie health, relationships, clarity – and revisit them often.

Build a support network: Join online communities, attend local support groups, or talk to a counsellor.

Celebrate milestones: Mark your first week, month, or social event without alcohol. Reward yourself with something meaningful.

Expect challenges: Cravings, social pressure, and emotional triggers are normal. Plan for them and have strategies ready.

You're not alone

Thousands of people are rethinking their relationship with alcohol. Whether you're cutting back or quitting, you're making a powerful choice for your wellbeing. Every alcohol-free day is a win, and every step forward counts.

For more information and resources, check out the alcohol and mental health section of [Lena's Support Hub](#).

Tips to help you cut down or stop completely

01. Set clear goals

Decide how many days a week you want to drink and how many units you'll allow. Use apps or journals to track your progress.

02. Plan ahead

Before going out, set a drink limit and stick to it. Choose venues that also offer alcohol-free options or suggest activities that don't revolve around drinking.

03. Switch it up

Opt for lower-strength drinks or smaller servings. Try alcohol-free beers, mocktails, or sparkling water with lime – they're refreshing and satisfying.

04. Have alcohol-free days

Commit to at least 2–3 alcohol-free days per week. Your body and brain will thank you.

05. Tell Someone

Let friends or family know you're cutting back. Their support can help you stay accountable and avoid pressure to drink.

Dry January Resources

Below are some ideas for books, podcasts, films, and talks that support and explore themes relevant to Dry January, including addiction, personal growth, and recovery.

Books to educate and inform

'This Naked Mind' - Annie Grace

A science-based approach to changing your relationship with alcohol, ideal for readers seeking empowerment without shame.

'The Unexpected Joy of Being Sober' - Catherine Gray

A relatable and uplifting memoir that reframes sobriety as a positive lifestyle choice.

'Quit Like a Woman' - Holly Whitaker

Challenges societal norms around drinking and offers a holistic recovery model, especially relevant for workplace wellness discussions.

'The Sober Diaries' - Clare Pooley

Honest and humorous reflections on early sobriety, parenting, and rediscovering joy.

Podcasts to uplift and educate

'The Addicted Mind' - Hosted by therapist Duane Osterlind

This show blends expert insights with personal stories, ideal for mental health professionals and employees.

'Recovery Elevator'

Focuses on early sobriety and community support, encouraging listeners to embrace a better life without alcohol.

'Show Up and Stay'

Features a series on sober-positive workplaces, bridging recovery and professional wellbeing.

'Sober Standard Podcast'

Offers motivational content and practical advice for those navigating sobriety in everyday life.

Films/docs to spark reflection

'28 Days' (Netflix)

Sandra Bullock portrays a woman navigating rehab and self-discovery, with themes of accountability and healing.

'Clean and Sober' (Amazon Video/Apple TV)

Michael Keaton plays a businessman confronting addiction, offering a realistic look at recovery in professional life.

'Dopesick' (BBC iPlayer/Disney+)

Though focused on opioids, this series highlights systemic addiction and recovery, relevant to workplace mental health conversations.

'The Way Back' (Amazon Prime/Video/Apple TV)

Ben Affleck stars as a former athlete battling alcoholism, emphasising resilience and personal growth.

TED Talks worth watching

'Sobriety Rocks - Who Knew!' - Janey Lee Grace

A vibrant talk on how ditching alcohol transformed her life and career.

'Gray Area Drinking' - Jolene Park

Explores the spectrum between social drinking and addiction, relevant for high-functioning professionals.

'Everything You Think You Know About Addiction Is Wrong' - Johann Hari

A powerful reframe of addiction rooted in connection and compassion.

'The Secret to Self-Control' - Jonathan Bricker

Offers science-backed strategies for behaviour change, applicable to alcohol and other habits.

Festive Mocktail



Ingredients

- 1/2 cup cranberry juice (unsweetened or cocktail)
- 1/2 cup sparkling water or club soda
- 1 tbsp fresh lime juice
- 1 tsp honey or maple syrup (optional)
- Ice cubes
- Fresh cranberries, lime slices and mint leaves for garnish

Instructions

1. Fill a glass with ice cubes.
2. Add cranberry juice, lime juice, and sweetener (if using).
3. Top with sparkling water and stir gently.
4. Garnish with cranberries, lime slices, and mint leaves.

Tip: For extra flair, rim the glass with sugar and crushed mint.

Free Online Webinar

Dry January and beyond

When: Wednesday 7th January 2026

Time: 2.00pm to 3.00pm

This webinar will explore the benefits of Dry January and how to build a healthier relationship with alcohol beyond the month.

It covers the physical and mental advantages of taking a break from drinking, helps participants understand their habits, and provides practical tools for navigating social situations and stress without relying on alcohol.

The session also focuses on setting realistic goals for mindful drinking throughout the year, encouraging open discussion and personal reflection to foster long-term wellness.



[Visit Enthuse](#) to register.

NB Maximum 500 places available)

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Blue/Brew Monday (19 Jan)

Blue Monday was created in 2005 as part of a marketing campaign for a UK travel company and falls on the third Monday of January – a time when post-holiday blues, cold weather, and financial strain can (supposedly) take a toll.

Brew Monday flips the narrative, encouraging people to connect over a cuppa and check in with one another – on Monday 19th – but on any given day when you can see that someone is struggling. Meaningful conversation and human connection are powerful tools for mental health – they remind us we're not alone, help us feel seen, and create space for healing.



All-year Round Support.

The festive season can be uplifting and rejuvenating, but we know it can also be challenging for many reasons. We want to remind you that support from Lena is available all year round. If you're finding things difficult, please don't hesitate to reach out.

We're here for you, 24 hours/7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Call us on your helpline number (especially for immediate support over the holidays).

Email us at support@lenabyinspire.com, or

Use the online 'Add me' referral form on the [Lena Support Hub](#).



However, you choose to spend the holidays, may they bring moments of peace, joy, and renewal. All of us here at Lena, wish you a restorative and uplifting festive period, and a fresh healthy and mindful start to the new year.

