



The Yorkshire Cancer Help Centre

Supporting people with
cancer and their loved ones.

General information



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OUR STORY Over 20 Years of Success

On October 3, 1989 the YCHC opened its doors for the first time and we have been open twice a month ever since.

I was inspired to start a centre when a very close friend of mine was dying of cancer and I saw a series of programmes on TV about the work of the Bristol CHC.

Once I decided, with the support of two friends, to actually DO something about it, everything fell into place so easily. First I presented the idea to a group of healers and therapists and most of them agreed to join us there and then. It was amazing how we acquired our team of qualified volunteers, they just gravitated towards us, we didn't have to advertise. We quickly found lovely premises to rent and within a year we opened.

We have never had funding from any source, statutory or otherwise. We have relied solely on donations, legacies and the occasional burst of fund raising. Our services are free after an initial modest registration fee.

I don't know how many patients and carers we have seen over the years. Some come only a few times, some come for months and a few have come for years! We don't impose a limit. Sometimes we welcome people we haven't seen for quite a while. I often tell of a young man

who had a very poor prognosis who turned up one day during our introduction time. He held his fist in the air and said 'I've just passed my die-by date and I have phoned my consultant to tell him so!' A big cheer!

A very small percentage of the cancer population come to a centre like ours. Some come because they have been told that there is nothing more to be done for them (yes, we can and do help them). Many people come because they want to be involved in their healing process and, maybe, look at more aspects of their situation other than the medical.

My dedication and belief in what we are offering has not diminished over the years and I'm sure I speak for all our dedicated helpers, some of whom have been with us since the beginning. We, the volunteers, get a great deal out of it. Not only have we got to know a group of very special people, but at the end of a centre day, we often look at one another and say 'That was a good day!'. And it all seems very well worth while.

Esmé Paterson

*Self empowerment!
Many people come because they want to be involved in their healing process.*



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*"The body has
within itself the
power to heal."*

Hippocrates 500 BC

INTRODUCTION TO THE HOLISTIC APPROACH OFFERED BY THE YORKSHIRE CANCER HELP CENTRE

The YORKSHIRE CANCER HELP CENTRE bases its ideas on the belief that if we can participate in the process of our own healing, we can remove the sense of helplessness and the feeling of being a victim of illness. When we start to take care of ourselves, we gain strength.

At the centre, ways of living are taught, which include safe and gentle therapies that counteract disease and enhance health, by treating the whole person, body, mind and spirit.

Not everyone will find all these activities appealing, or relevant to how they feel about themselves, but if you really want to take an active part in your healing process, then look into all the various aspects of our programme. We are here to help and support your efforts.

Family and friends

We are also here to help and support close members of your family and friends and always encourage you to bring someone along with you to the centre.



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"The cure of the part should not be attempted without the treatment of the whole."

Plato

HOW TO USE OUR CENTRE

On your first visit you were introduced to the main aspects of what is called the holistic, or gentle approach to cancer.

However, this approach is an ongoing process, and if you feel it would be beneficial to you, effort and commitment is required on your part. This is not easy to do without help and support. We would, therefore, encourage you and your carer to come back when you can request counselling, or healing and learn about other aspects of our programme. You will also have the opportunity to talk to other cancer patients and to any of our experienced helpers.

Right: The patio at Saint Michael's Day Therapy Unit.

Below: Saint Michael's Hospice, Harrogate, where the Yorkshire Cancer Help Centre is based.





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*A trouble
shared is a
trouble
halved*

CENTRE DAYS

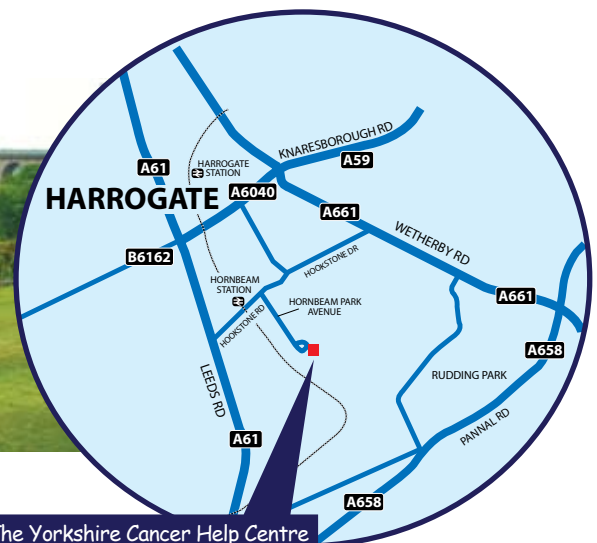
Held at Saint Michael's Hospice, Crimple House, Hornbeam Park Avenue, Harrogate HG2 8QL on the second and fourth Saturday of every month. Please note that we are not open on the fourth Saturday in December.

The centre is open from 10am until 4.00pm and a lunch is included.

NB: Four times a year there are FIVE Saturdays in a month which can cause confusion. Please check our website for the dates we are open.

You are welcome to return to the Centre as often as you wish. However, if you want to attend please book by phone as we need to know how many to cater for. Also, as a "Returner" it is a good idea to come in the morning as therapists are often free.

**Telephone: Ann Scott 0113 2749074 or
Karen Turner 01937 573166**



The Yorkshire Cancer Help Centre
at The Day Therapy unit,
Saint Michael's Hospice, Harrogate.



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"Use food as medicine, use medicine as your food."

RETURN VISITS

It is well known that healing and complementary therapies have a 'build-up' effect. The more they are experienced, the more beneficial the effect.

You are welcome to return as often as you wish to re-experience the therapies you liked and to try out other therapies we have on offer.

THE VOLUNTEERS' DUTY ROTA

All our helpers give their services voluntarily to the Centre. Due to their other commitments, some are able to attend more frequently than others. Every six months a new duty rota is set up and is honoured to the best of people's ability. Sometimes a substitute has to be found at the last minute.



From your, the patient's and carer's point of view, this may mean that someone who you liked, or was particularly helpful on one visit may not be there on your return visit. We hope you understand that this cannot be avoided and that all our helpers are equally dedicated and caring.



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IF YOU THINK
WE ARE DOING
A WORTH WHILE
JOB, PLEASE HELP
TO SUPPORT US
FINANCIALLY.

FINANCING OUR CENTRE

- We get no funding from any source and rely entirely on donations and the occasional fundraising event.
- All our helpers work on a voluntary basis. They do not even get travelling expenses and several of them travel a long way.
- Our services are free of charge after a modest registration fee.

Donations

Any donations you care to make will be shared with Saint Michael's Hospice.

Below: Celebrating our 20th Anniversary, Oct 2009.





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Information about the therapies



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"On our first visit to The Yorkshire cancer Help Centre we felt perfectly at home in a loving and caring environment. We had access to complementary treatments such as healing, reflexology and aromatherapy. These treatments have been important to me as I have felt that they have significantly improved the balance of the systems of my body following the toxic effects of chemotherapy treatment."

INTRODUCTION TO OUR THERAPIES

These are all the ways in which you can do something for yourself and discover your own self-healing potential. Some people take on the whole programme as it stands, others introduce different aspects of it into their lives gradually. The volunteers at the Yorkshire Cancer Help Centre will help you whatever you choose to do. The Centre offers a range of complementary ideas to promote and enhance elements of the various therapies on offer.

There follows brief descriptions of the therapies. If you would like more information please ask the relevant therapist, who will be very happy to answer your questions.





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"Your immune system should be using all its energy to fight the cancer cells, not trying to eliminate toxins and chemicals from processed food."

HEALTHY EATING

When cancer is diagnosed, you, your family and friends may feel helpless. Making basic changes in your everyday eating is something that you can do for yourself. Friends and family can give you the support and feel involved.

When you have cancer, it is particularly important to rest and boost your immune system by eating natural, living foods. 'Dead' foods (which are processed and may contain additives and preservatives) do not give anything to the body, but instead, put more strain on an already stressed immune system. Your immune system should be using all its energy to fight the cancer cells, not trying to eliminate toxins and chemicals from processed food.

At the Centre, we encourage healthy eating, which is good for everyone, not just for people who are ill. We are all being urged to make dietary changes for our general health. The main guidelines are:

- **REDUCE** our intake of **SALT, SATURATED FATS AND REFINED FOODS**. All of these put a strain on major organs and give us very little nutrition.
- **INCREASE** our intake of **FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES, FIBRE AND WHOLEFOODS**. All of these put less strain on the body and provide more nutrients.





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HEALTHY EATING

It is important that these changes in your eating pattern happen gradually over a few weeks. Our emphasis is not so much on 'forbidden' foods, but on eating a wider variety of high quality foods. Introducing new foods into your eating pattern is an enriching experience.

The key points are:

- Variety**
- Simplicity**
- Freshness**
- Wholefoods**
- Plenty of raw foods**

As everyone's needs are different, you will want to adapt an eating plan to meet your own dietary, emotional and social needs.

If you require more information ask the Day Director for the information on the Bristol Approach to Healthy Eating.

"Use food as medicine, use medicine as your food."





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"There is something unique in the sense of community spirit and fellow feeling which exists at the centre, and this has been a major factor in giving me back the strength and self-belief to continue to live with my cancer for as long as possible."

RELAXATION

Relaxation with visualisation is included on every Centre Day, learning to relax the body and mind at will helps us to cope with the stresses of life which we cannot change. The methods taught are most effective when practised at home on a daily basis. Tapes are available to help with this. A variety of relaxation methods are used, as everyone has different favourites. During the relaxation sessions patients stretch out in reclining chairs, or sit in upright chairs. Usually a relaxation for the physical body is followed by a guided visualisation which fills the mind with relaxing, peaceful and energising images. As the body cannot tell the difference between a real experience and one imagined in the mind, this has a very healing effect .

VISUALISATION

Visualisation is like day dreaming except that you deliberately create images daily, imagining yourself well, seeing yourself fit and whole. This helps to create a healing response in your body.

MEDITATION

Don't be afraid of the word 'meditation', it is simply a way of resting the mind. Rather as relaxation rests the body. It calms and restores us as we practise daily. It helps us to regain poise and balance.





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OXYGEN AND EXERCISE

Fresh air and gentle exercise add to a sense of enjoyment and well-being and increase your health and strength. Try to take some exercise every day, or, at least, do some deep, relaxed breathing at an open window.

CREATIVITY

Many people lose the art of playing and having fun when they grow up. We need those moments when we do something purely for enjoyment without having to achieve something, or produce an end product. This crisis in your life could be the opportunity you have needed to express yourself creatively through anything that gives you pleasure and makes you feel good.

Being creative is a way to bring about more freedom in your life.





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"By visiting the Centre it has been nice for us to be able to relate to other people in a similar situation and talk over problems which we have experienced."

Brian & Dot

HEALING

Spiritual (not physical) healing is the oldest of the healing arts. Sometimes called 'laying on of hands', it is a gift that we all possess to some degree. Receiving healing increases and accelerates our own natural healing ability, helps with pain, calms and rebalances us and may be seen as an oasis of peace and stillness. If you wish to see a healer locally, we can give you some addresses.

What is felt during treatment?

Patients often feel heat and sometimes coolness from the hands of the healer. Most experience a feeling of relaxation and peace.

Is it necessary to have faith for it to work?

Undoubtedly a belief that the healing will work does help, but there are numerous examples of people being helped who do not have any faith in healing. As the healing begins to work and the patient feels better faith in the treatment follows naturally.

What can I do to help the healing?

During treatment try to relax as much as possible and mentally open your mind to receiving the healing. Even if you have no faith in it, by keeping an open or unbiased mind, it can assist the flow of healing energy.

Most people experience a feeling of relaxation and peace from healing.



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"The centre helped me to shape my feelings after my diagnosis and has given me a chance to relax and learn about complementary therapies."

John Robinson, visitor

COUNSELLING

To be told you have cancer comes as a shock to both yourself and those close to you. Strong feelings may be aroused which may make you feel weepy, depressed, angry, powerless and afraid. You may have questions about why this has happened to you now. You may want to talk about death, or may not even wish to think about it. There may be other stresses in your life that you want help with.

A counsellor will listen and through listening, help you to come to terms with your particular problem.

We can give you some addresses to help you find a counsellor if you wish. There are, of course, counsellors at the centre.

The centre provides a safe space to talk through your worries.





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"Our eyes were opened to new ways, not only of coping with Ian's illness, but of living our lives, from which I shall continue to benefit."

AROMATHERAPY

Aromatherapy is the use of essential oils from plants for their therapeutic properties. It is an ancient therapeutic treatment which enhances the physical, emotional and mental well-being of the individual. Essential oils are pure aromatic essences extracted or distilled from flowers, trees, herbs and fruit. These oils have unique complex properties of the plant in concentrated form, often referred as the 'life force'. The therapeutic properties of the oils are achieved by absorption through the skin during massage. The combination of the use of appropriate oils with a gentle massage, can, in the hands of a trained and sensitive therapist, become one of the most natural and effective treatments for stress and stress-related disorders.





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REFLEXOLOGY

Reflexology is a natural therapy based on the principle that the body is represented in the feet (and the hands). The reflexologist uses hands to apply gentle finger pressure to the feet to restore and maintain the body's natural equilibrium.



It improves blood, nerve and energy supplies to all systems and organs of the body (the mind being an integral part of it) thus encouraging the body to heal itself at its own pace. Tensions are eased, circulation and elimination are improved. Reflexology treats the whole person.

Although some areas of the feet maybe sensitive when they correspond to an imbalance of the body, the treatment is pleasant and relaxing. It is like a 'tuning' of the body.

Reflexology
treats the
whole person.

INDIAN HEAD MASSAGE

Indian Head Massage is carried out to the head, neck and shoulders, whilst seated in a chair (no clothes are removed). It helps to relieve stiffness and tension in the neck and shoulders. However, its effect is not just physical: it works on an emotional level too, calming the spirit, promoting relaxation and relieving stress. Massage to the scalp provides an invaluable treatment for stress-linked problems like headaches and eyestrain.



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REIKI

The Japanese word Reiki means 'Universal Life-force Energy'. It is a simple, natural and safe method of healing and personal development that anyone can use.

Reiki is a simple technique that can be used for stress reduction and relaxation. It allows anyone to learn how to tap into the unlimited supply of life force energy, to improve health and enhance the quality of life.

A Reiki treatment feels like a wonderful glowing radiance that surrounds and flows through you. The process affects the whole person including, body, emotions, mind and spirit. It creates many beneficial effects including relaxation and feelings of peace, security and well-being.

"I have no doubt that I would not be feeling as well today, nor leading as normal a life as I am, were it not for the care and understanding of the volunteer counsellors and therapists at the Yorkshire Cancer Help Centre."



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FLOWER REMEDIES

The remedies are all prepared from the flowers of wild plants, bushes and trees, and none of them are harmful or habit forming. They are benign in their action and can result in no unpleasant reactions and may be taken in addition to any medication already in use.

They are **not directly** used for physical complaints, but for the sufferer's worry, apprehension, hopelessness, irritability etc., because these states of mind not only hinder recovery of health and retard convalescence, but are generally accepted as primary causes of sickness and disease.

The **Bach Flower Remedies** were the original ones, but now there are many other ranges of flower remedies to explore which address themselves to specific conditions and emotional states. If you are interested in pursuing this form of healing we have books and leaflets for sale at the Centre.

Flower remedies are a highly recommended general remedy for stress and trauma.



The **Bach Rescue Remedy** (and its equivalents in other ranges) is a highly recommended general remedy for stress and trauma. We have this available for sale at the Centre .

If you would like more information and advice, phone Karen on 01937 573166.



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METAMORPHIC TECHNIQUE

The Metamorphic Technique is a unique contribution to the holistic field where change, transformation and healing are sought. Instead of concentrating on symptoms or difficulties, the practitioner acts as a catalyst. The contact is established through the practitioner touching lightly the spinal reflex points on the feet, hands and head. Because of its simplicity and the fact that it is usually very pleasant and relaxing many people are happy to use this technique frequently resulting in a sense of peaceful relaxation.

DEEKSHA

Oneness Deeksha is the process by which we are reconnected with that quiet, intelligent centre of ourselves. It is a gentle process of awakening from a state of isolation into an ever deepening experience of connection with ourselves and the world around us.

During Oneness Deeksha, the Deeksha-giver gently places both their hands on the crown of your head for one or two minutes. There is nothing for you to do, nothing is asked of you, it is a gentle wave of Grace that passes through your being.



Who can receive Deeksha? People of any age or background, of all religions or none.