

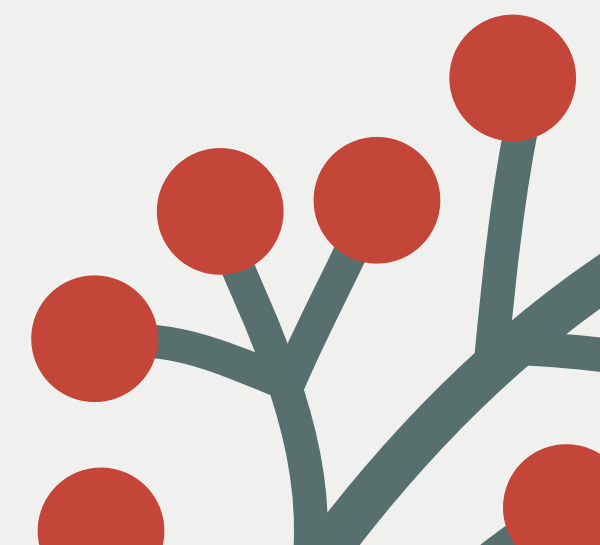
REASONS TO BE HOPEFUL IN THE HERE AND NOW

**INSPIRATION DURING THE HOLIDAYS
AND BEYOND**



AN ADVENT OF LIFTING EACH OTHER UP

DR. KRISTINE ABERCROMBIE



We all know Christmas can be a difficult time for many.

During advent myself and many of the amazing people in my life (in person and online) shared our favourite quotes.

My gift to you all this holiday season is a collection of 25 of these quotes, including a little guidance on how we can incorporate them into our lives.

My hope is that sharing words and insights that have provided many much comfort, may help you feel more connected and less alone with what ever you might be going through.

Together we can give each other some hope in the here and now.

Please feel free to share this e-book with anyone who you think may need support and lifting up, now or any time of the year.

Wishing you all a peaceful Christmas and New Year ☺

Kristine

Let's Talk Online Psychology Service

CONTRIBUTORS

@RoyTroy9j77

@SilentCries85

Helen Forrester

@Fullmoon_MH

Patricia Hackett

@northern_muse

@prettygoodjane

@MarlaStromberg.

@erezshek

Gypsy Pilgrim

@DonnaHu83907965

@NVRnorthampton

Morag Donald

@TheTimble

@MiniverPress

@EmotionalFatig1

@avris67.

Niki Keaveney

Kate Anthony



AN ADVENT OF LIFTING EACH OTHER UP

Day 1

**"WE RISK MISSING OUT
ON JOY WHEN WE GET
TOO BUSY CHASING
DOWN THE
EXTRAORDINARY."**

Brene Brown

#weareinthistogether

Day 1.

To start our journey together through this book, I thought I would share one of my favourite quotes by the lovely Brene Brown.

There is a theory in psychology called self-discrepancy theory.

Research shows that we often experience an imbalance in what is actually going on in our lives, our idealised version of our life, and how we think our life ought to be.

The bigger our perceived gap between these different 'lives' and the more we focus on them the more distress we experience. This gap can often become larger during Christmas and the New Year.

The discrepancies we experience through out the year grow in our minds. We chase this idea of the extraordinary even more, often missing the small things that can make us joyful. We are pulled in by the commercialism, societal expectations and our ideas of what Christmas should be.

I understand it is not always easy, but even when we are going through the hardest of times, focusing on the things we do have - food in our stomachs, a roof over our head, the ability to see and read - really can help.



Day 2.

This quote, was kindly shared with us by @RoyTroy9j77.

If you feel lost at the moment, remember you may not be lost at all.
You may simply be having a wander.

As you go through life you increasingly hear people reflect or joke about how nobody knows what they are doing. We are all making it up as we go along. As a young person you assume adults must at some level know what they are doing.

However, in reality we are all in a continuous state of wandering. Yes, we might seem to wander pretty far off track sometimes, but perhaps we are just taking the scenic route for a while.

If you feel you are travelling a rocky, somewhat tumultuous route at the moment, it does not mean you are lost, you are just in the process of seeing where the road might take you..





AN ADVENT OF LIFTING EACH OTHER UP

Day 3

**"GOD GRANT ME THE SERENITY
TO ACCEPT THE THINGS I
CANNOT CHANGE,
COURAGE TO CHANGE THE
THINGS I CAN,
AND WISDOM TO KNOW THE
DIFFERENCE."**

Reinhold Niebuhr

#weareinthistogether

Day 3.

Sharing a quote many of us will be familiar with and may agree how powerful it can be.

It was kindly shared by a woman who said it helped her through her twenties.

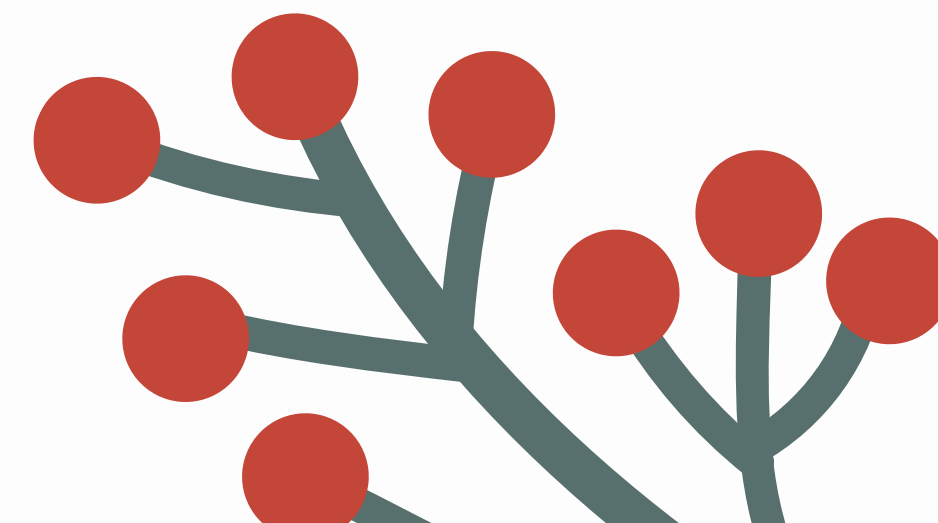
Here are a few things to ask yourself when reading these words and perhaps all those shared throughout this e-book:

What does reading this bring up for you?

How might reading these words influence how you approach Christmas and New Year?

What do you feel you can change and what are things that just are?

As is explained in AA, where this quote is central to their programme, know that although it uses the word 'God', God can mean whatever you need it too.



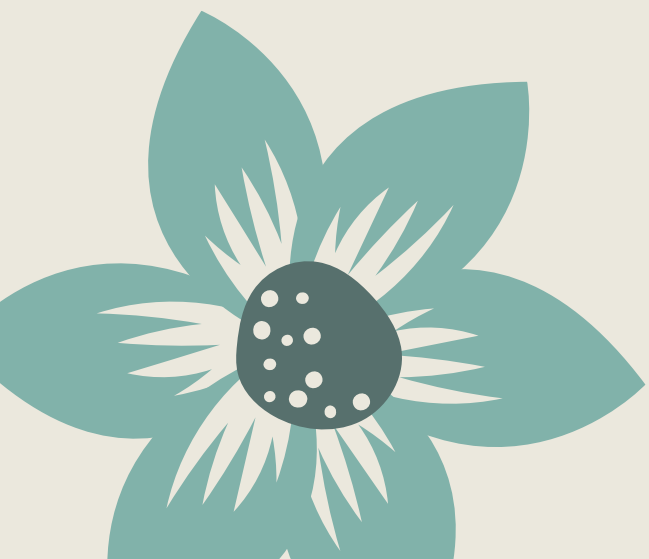
Day 4.

This quote was shared by the - stronger than she will ever know -
@SilentCries85.

Coming up to the holiday season this quote makes me think of the many things that can come up over Christmas, New Year and in life in general. that are out of our comfort zone.

Perhaps there is something that you are going to be doing that you are worried about or makes you feel anxious. These words can give us the courage to take the first step.

We never know what exciting places it might take us or how strong our wings might be.





AN ADVENT OF LIFTING EACH OTHER UP

Day 5

**"TALK TO YOURSELF
LIKE YOU WOULD
SOMEONE YOU LOVE."**

Brene Brown

#weareinthistogether

Day 5.

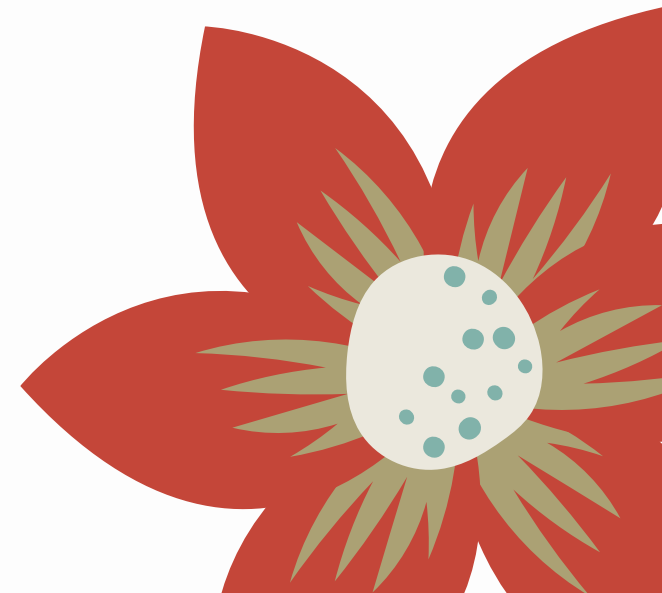
The quote for Day 5's advent calendar was shared with us by a therapy colleague and fellow Brene Brown fan, Helen Forrester at Worcester Counselling.

As much as events can bring a lot of fun and sense of togetherness for many, it can also bring a lot of stress and pressure. For others it can accentuate a feeling of loss and loneliness.

Our inner critic tends to come out in full force when we are feeling vulnerable. I imagine we would all benefit from taking note of these words from Brene Brown over the holidays.

We all deserve the kindness and love we would give another.

Perhaps this Christmas we can take a little bit of time to give it to ourselves.



Day 6.

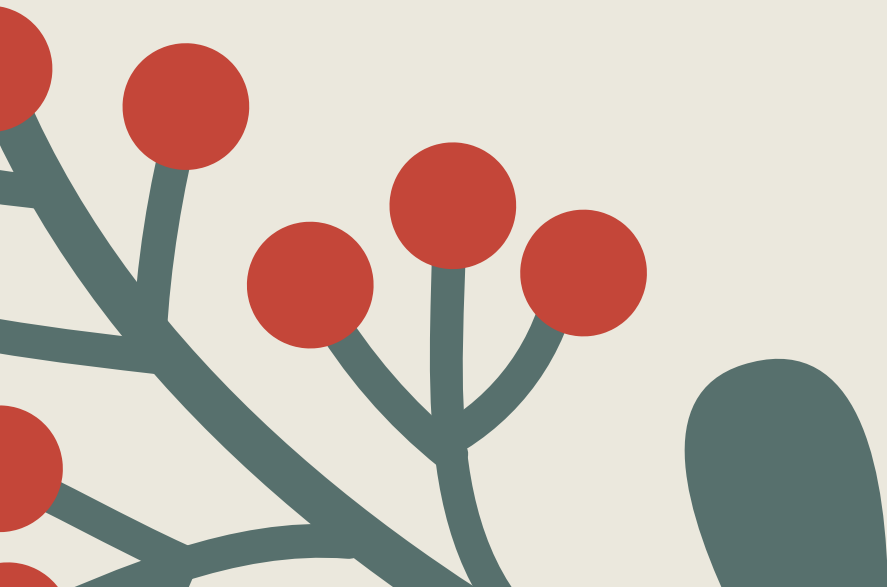
Let's see what insights are in store.

Following on from Day 5's message of self compassion Day 6's favourite quote was shared by the lovely Daphne @Fullmoon_MH.

It also beautifully brings together a part of winter which when you think of it is truly amazing - snowflakes.

Like snowflakes, each and every one of us are completely unique, an important thing to remember when we are being hard on ourselves and others. We all have our idiosyncrasies, both incredible and at times incredibly annoying 😊. That is part and parcel of the HUMAN condition.

Perhaps we can all take a moment to give ourselves and those around us the much needed gift of compassion. Let's have above all else a compassionate few weeks whereby we celebrate our uniqueness and our common humanity.





AN ADVENT OF LIFTING EACH OTHER UP

Day 7

**"WHAT IS SUCCESS? IT IS
WHEN YOU CAN GO BED AT
NIGHT AND YOUR SOUL IS
AT PEACE."**

Paulo Coelho

#weareinthistogether

Day 7.

We have a tendency as human beings to associate success with materialistic things, what we own, how much we earn and the like..

This quote, shared by my Aunt Patricia Hackett, is a timely reminder of what really matters in life.

Rather than focusing on lavish gifts, fancy decor and the many things we have been conditioned to see as being successful this holiday season, let's all try to appreciate and find peace in the 'simple things in life', and if we are blessed enough to have them, the people we love.



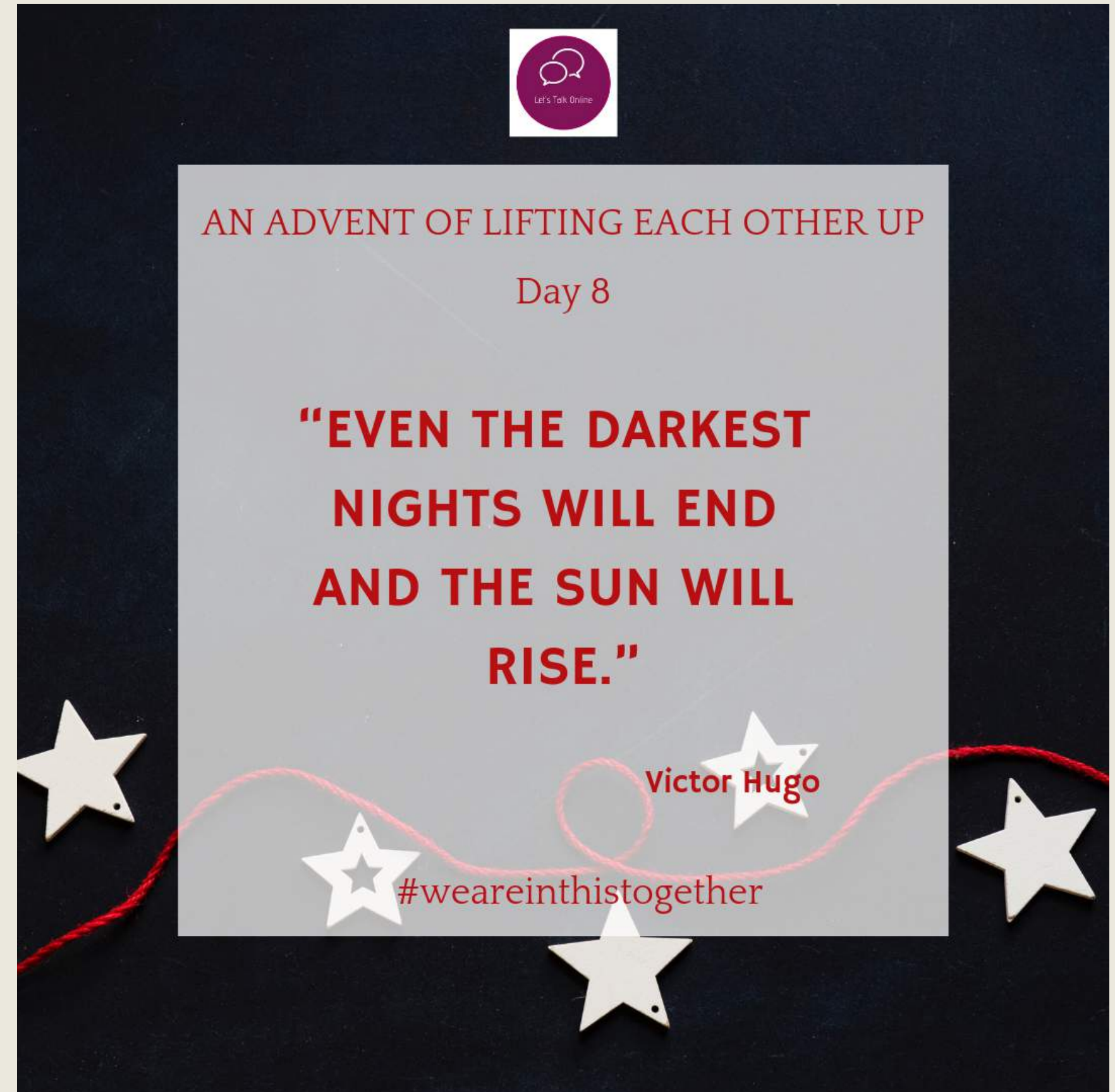
Day 8.

This quote was shared by an online friend of mine from Alaska @northern_muse. I thought it beautifully followed on from Day 7.

We often find our soul is not at peace for so many reasons. Very simply put 'life can be blooming tough'.

If you are having a tough time at the moment, I hope these words give you the comfort to know that the sun will at some point glimmer or shine through again.

And remember, all those other times you didn't think you could keep going - YOU DID! ☐





AN ADVENT OF LIFTING EACH OTHER UP

Day 9

**"WHEN YOU SLOW DOWN,
THE WORLD SLOWS DOWN
WITH YOU."**

HAEMIN SUNIM

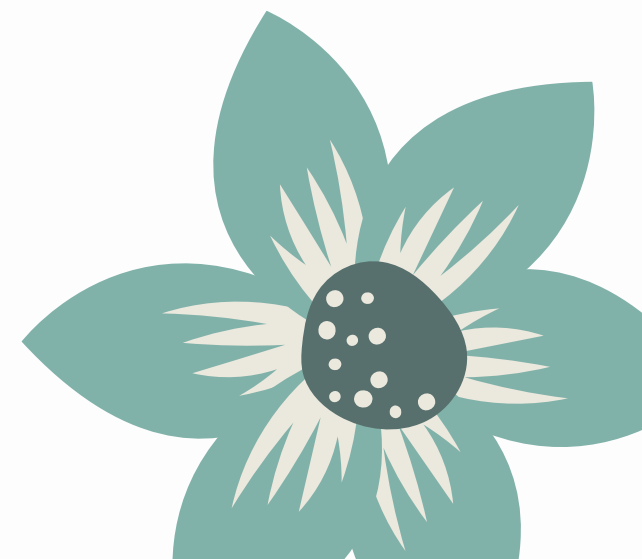
#weareinthistogether

Day 9.

The pressure (and excitement) that often comes with this time of year can leave us feeling like we are chasing our tails (physically, emotionally or both). This quote was shared with us by the beautiful @prettygoodjane.

The busier we are, in mind or body, the more important it is to slow down. Not always easy I know. A good first step is just to intermittently ask yourself over the next few weeks.. 'What do I need today?'

You may be surprised how much this can help. We are not particularly used to asking ourselves this very important question 😊



The quote for Day 10 of our advent calendar was shared by a fellow therapist and online friend @MarlaStromberg.

I really feel this one needs few words.

Let's all be mindful of how much we can underestimate the impact a small act of kindness can have on one another.

Let's look out for each other this holiday season and that includes being kind to ourselves.





AN ADVENT OF LIFTING EACH OTHER UP

Day 11

**"DON'T TRY TO WIN
OVER THE HATERS; YOU
ARE NOT A JACKASS
WHISPERER."**

Brene Brown

#weareinthistogether

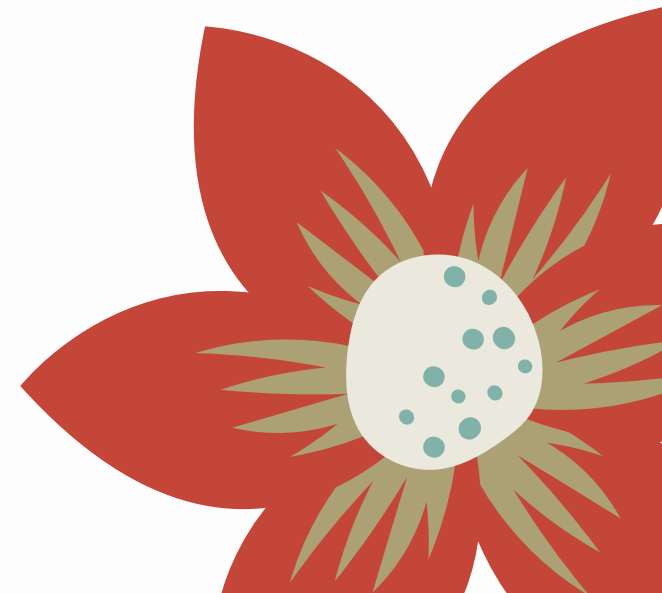
Day 11.

We talk a lot in life about being kind to others. What we don't talk about enough is being kind to ourselves. It can be hard to know how to find that balance between being there for another and putting up boundaries and doing what WE need.

Another Brene Brown quote has been shared, this time by mental health advocate @erezshek.

We will all have haters, people in our lives who may treat us in a way that is unacceptable. Sometimes at Christmas, people who are struggling in their own way, can push these boundaries even further - acting out in many ways.

Remember your worth! Love yourself!



Day 12.

This quote, shared by a friend, follows on beautifully from Day 11 as an important reminder to take care ourselves.

Self care is not selfish, it is essential.

The new year can be a great time to 'go back to basics' in terms of self care. Things that might seem simple can be easily overlooked.

Are you drinking enough water, getting enough sleep, eating regularly, resting enough? If not, what kind of things can you put in place to help you achieve this?

As you go through to the new year try to take time everyday to think of at least one thing you can do for YOU.





AN ADVENT OF LIFTING EACH OTHER UP

Day 13

**"FOR A SEED TO ACHIEVE ITS GREATEST
EXPRESSION, IT MUST COME
COMPLETELY UNDONE. THE SHELL
CRACKS, ITS INSIDES COME OUT AND
EVERYTHING CHANGES. TO SOMEONE
WHO DOESN'T UNDERSTAND GROWTH,
IT WOULD LOOK LIKE COMPLETE
DESTRUCTION."**

Cynthia Ocelli

#weareinthistogether

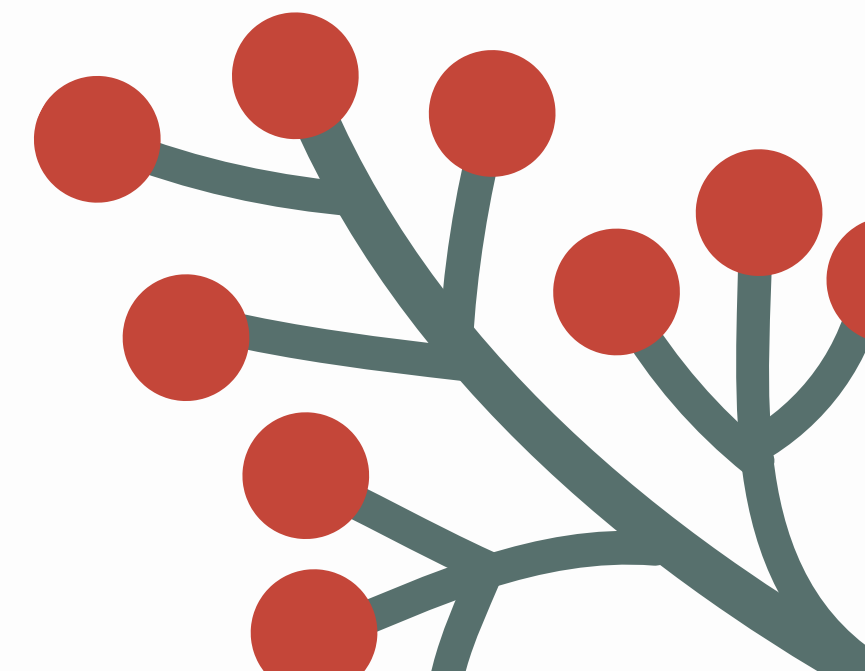
Day 13.

Day 13's quote was shared with us by a dear friend of mine, whose further insights into life you can find on her Facebook page - Gypsy Pilgrim.

I imagine we can all relate to the fact that growth rarely comes without some sort of suffering. When someone comes to see me for therapy I always explain that things can often feel worse before they get better.

When we are going through a particularly hard time in life emotionally, or someone we care for is, it can understandably be hard to hold on to the possibility that this is in fact one of those periods of growth, rather than the complete destruction it feels like or appears to be.

Some words of comfort to hold onto this holiday season and beyond.



Day 14.

Shared with us by @DonnaHu83907965.

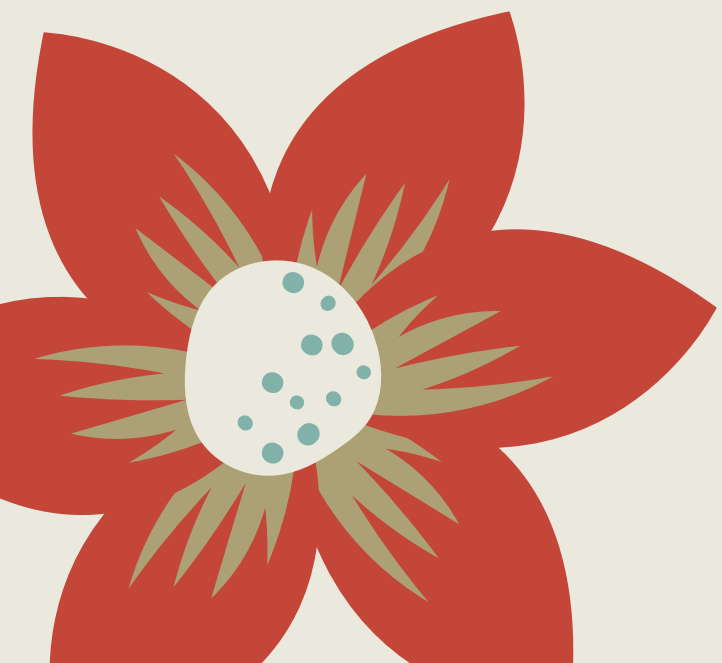
I thought it followed on perfectly from Day 13.

There is a strange dichotomy to life. We cannot appreciate happiness without sadness, life without death, or compassion without suffering.

Reading these words makes me think about how we, as a society, need to reflect on what we define as beautiful, as strong and as weak.

What do they bring up for you?

How can your reflections help you think differently about yourself, others and your experiences?





AN ADVENT OF LIFTING EACH OTHER UP

Day 15

**"START WHERE YOU
ARE. USE WHAT YOU
HAVE. DO WHAT YOU
CAN."**

Arthur Ashe

#weareinthistogether

Day 15.

This quote was shared with us by @NVRnorthampton, a company doing great work for young people whose difficult life experiences have led them to become aggressive or violent.

Wise words for us all during any circumstances. How can they help you cope with any stresses you might be under over the next few weeks?

Here are some ideas:

- 1) When you begin to become overwhelmed by all the things you need to do, make a list. Prioritize them by putting a number beside each, starting with number 1.
- 2) It can be very easy to do more, spend more and indulge more this time of year. Using more than we have whether that is energy, time or money, can feel good at the time but not so much later. As always moderation and self care is key.
- 3) We all have different abilities, energy and needs. It is OK to do what YOU need/can, regardless of what everybody else is doing?

In summary it is OK to be YOU during this Christmas period and every other day of the year.



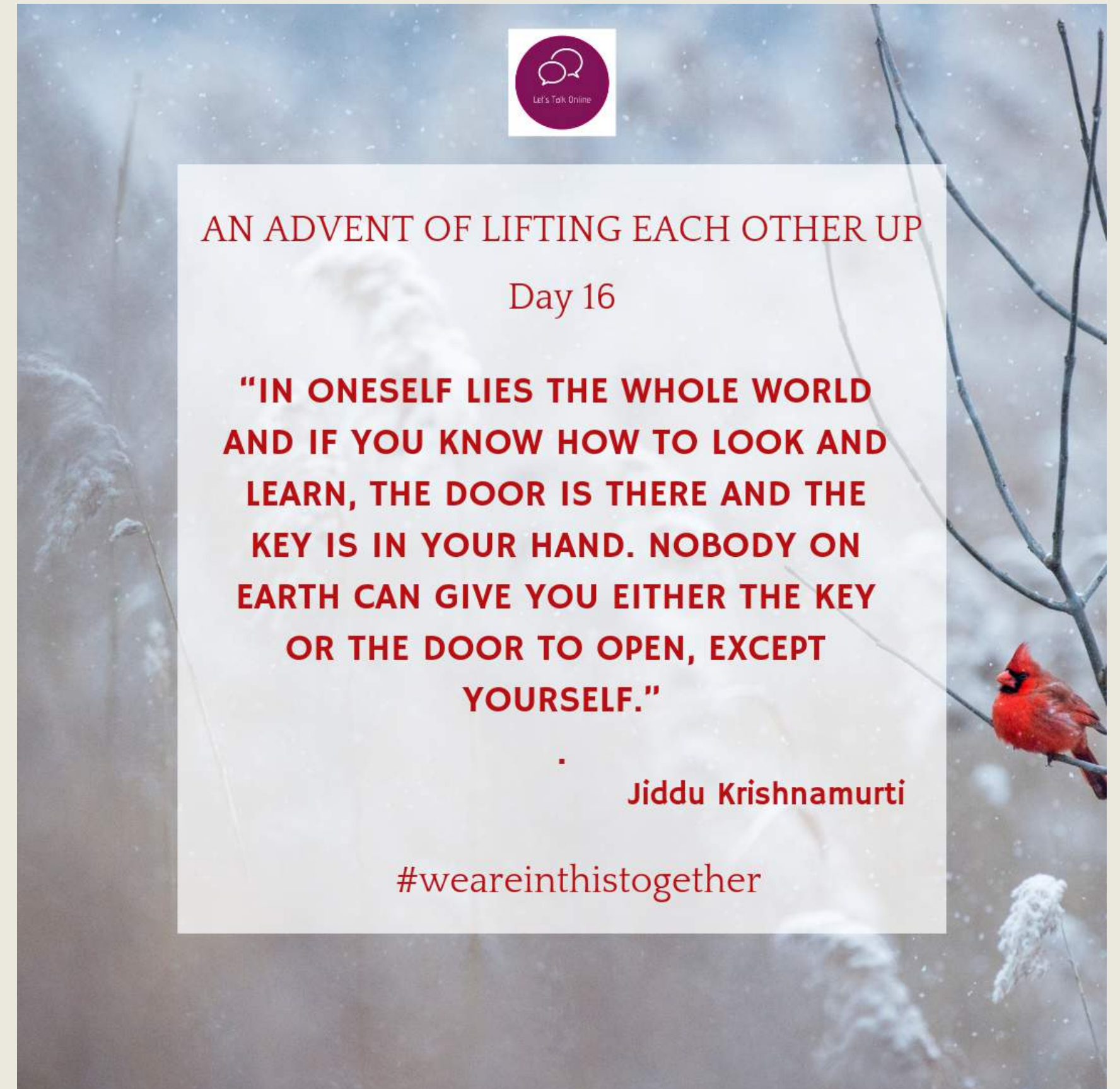
Day 16.

Shared by the lovely Morag Donald, Reiki Master Teacher, here in Fermanagh, Northern Ireland.

This quote reminds me so much of the process of therapy, whereby myself and a client work together to help them learn how to find their way. However, when it comes down to it WE are the only ones that can find our own key and our own door.

This in itself can be a difficult but most liberating lesson to learn, something I imagine we all grapple with.

What I wish for all of you is to be a step closer to finding or learning how to find YOUR key and YOUR door, for whatever you are struggling with right now.





AN ADVENT OF LIFTING EACH OTHER UP

Day 17

"GRIEF I'VE LEARNED, IS REALLY JUST LOVE. IT'S ALL THE LOVE YOU WANT TO GIVE BUT CANNOT. ALL OF THAT UNSPENT LOVE GATHERS UP IN THE CORNERS OF YOUR EYES, THE LUMP IN YOUR THROAT AND IN THAT HOLLOW PART OF YOUR CHEST. GRIEF IS JUST LOVE WITH NO PLACE TO GO."

Anonymous

#weareinthistogether

Day 17.

For everyone who has love that has nowhere to go this Christmas ☐.

Reading this quote brings tears to my eyes, as I am sure it does for many of you.

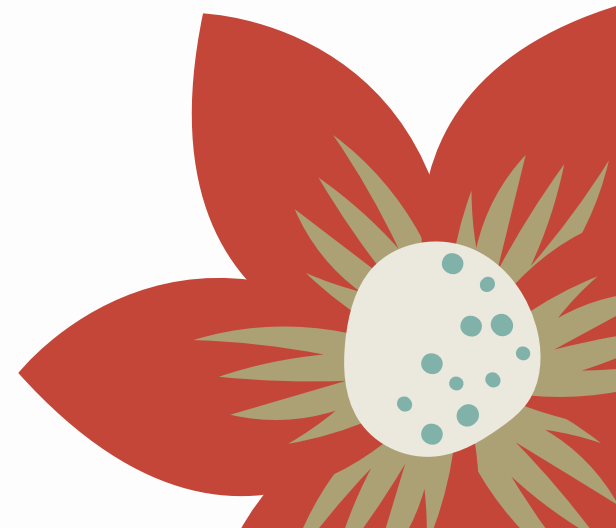
Losing those you love or knowing someone you love is soon not going to be with us anymore is incredibly painful, devastating even. For me this quote describes why, perfectly.

'Losing' someone exists alongside a deep love. Although we keep loving them in our hearts (perhaps even more so than before) when they are gone, we hold that love for them, without them.

The holidays and any other particularly poignant events we associate with them can make that love even stronger, bitter sweet, painful and lost.

When you feel whatever grief feels like for you, know that what you are feeling is love...and remember, there is no right or wrong way to grieve.

This quote was shared by @TheTimble.



Day 18 .

Shared by @MiniverPress

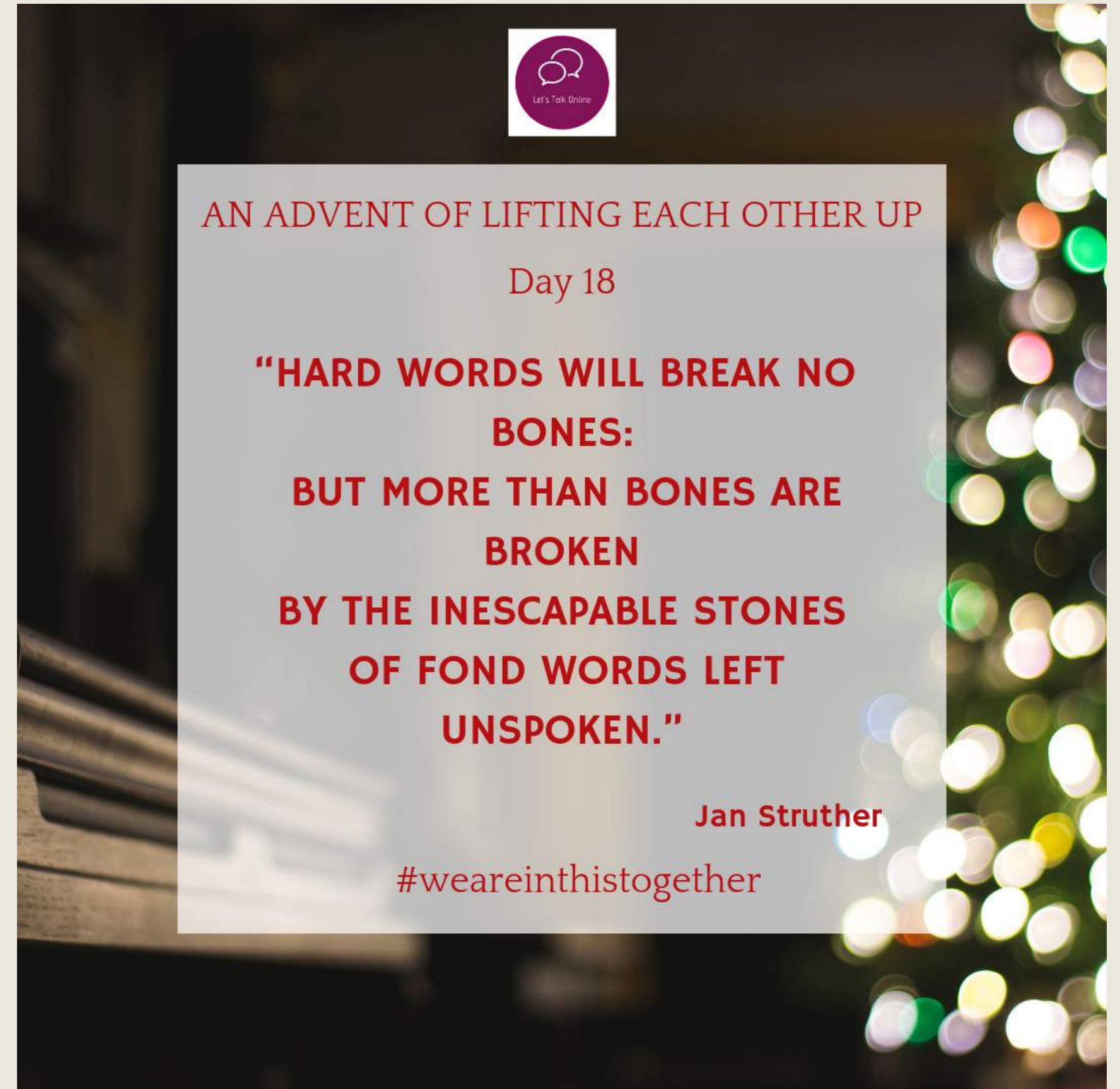
A reminder of the importance of lifting each other up.

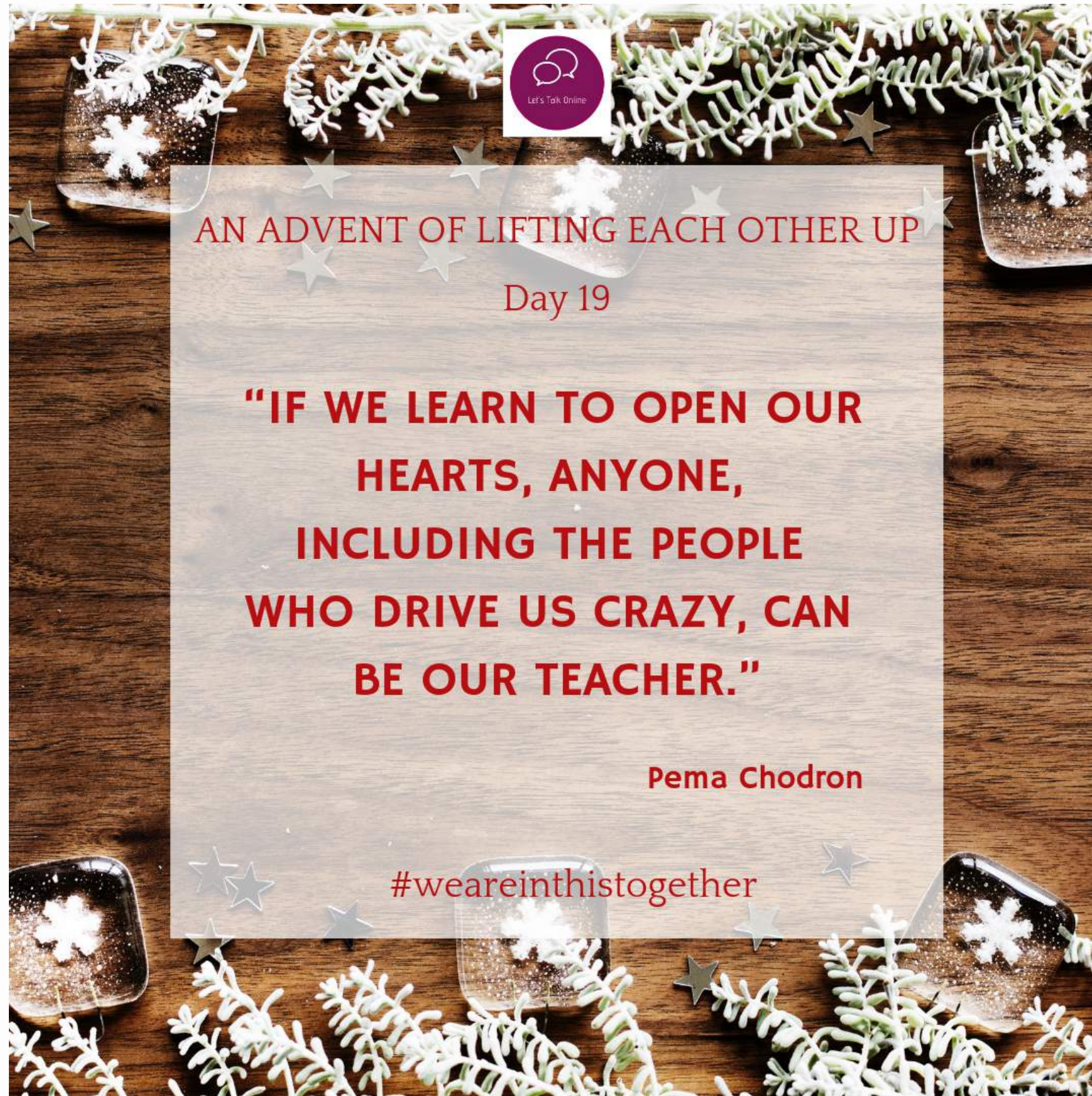
Let's give each other the gift of kindness this Christmas by being mindful of the words we choose when speaking too and about each other.

Let's also not forget the power of fond words. We too often think fond words about another, but do not think to tell them.

Hearing kind words can change someone's whole day and perhaps even go some way to helping them heal from the too common experience of being belittled and put down.

Who do you want to give the gift of letting them know how awesome you think they are this Christmas?





Day 19.

I was reminded of this quote by a client who gave me permission to share it as part of this advent calendar.

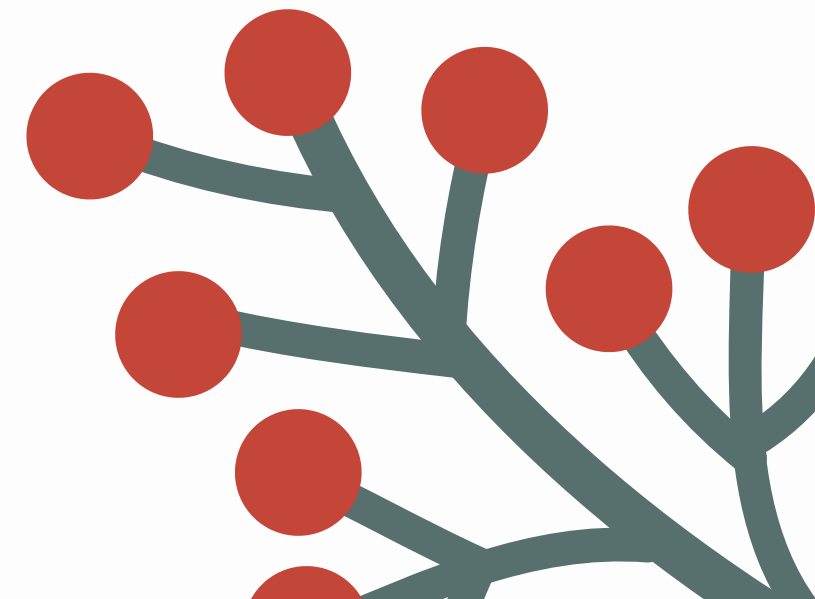
For many, the holidays bring together a whole mishmash of people into their lives.

Inevitably, at times people will drive each other a little, or even a whole lot, crazy.

Are you ready to be open to lots of life lessons over the next few weeks?

Who might teach you patience, the importance of self care, something about your self you did not know before?

Often the people who challenge us can be the ones who teach us the most.



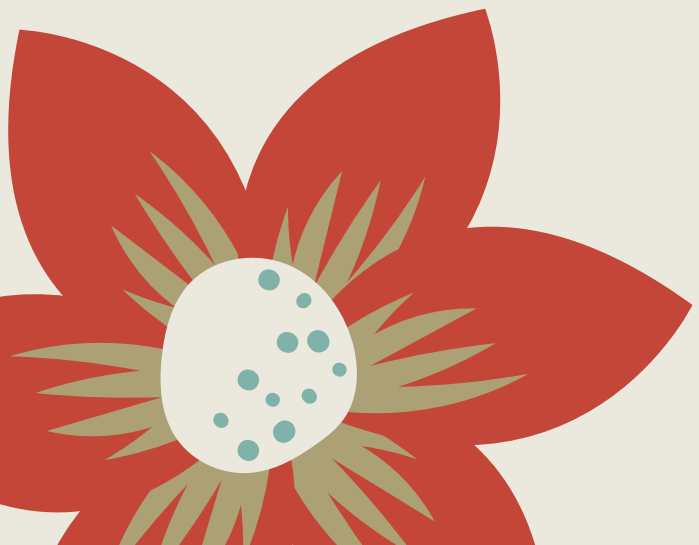
Day 20.

This quote is another one of my personal favourites and is actually a verse from a poem by the belated Maya Angelou - who has undoubtedly helped many of us 'be better'.

So many of us have lost people and feel their loss deeply this time of year. I am thinking a lot about my own family and community this last few days.

But how beautiful is it that within sadness we can feel the gratitude of the strength they have given us and inspiration to be the best version of ourselves.

Here is to all those who are no longer with us, yet live within us.



AN ADVENT OF LIFTING EACH OTHER UP

Day 20

"AND WHEN GREAT SOULS DIE, AFTER A PERIOD PEACE BLOOMS, SLOWLY AND ALWAYS IRREGULARLY. SPACES FILL WITH A KIND OF SOOTHING ELECTRIC VIBRATION. OUR SENSES, RESTORED, NEVER TO BE THE SAME, WHISPER TO US. THEY EXISTED. THEY EXISTED. WE CAN BE. BE AND BE BETTER. FOR THEY EXISTED."

Maya Angelou

#weareinthistogether



AN ADVENT OF LIFTING EACH OTHER UP

Day 21

**"BE YOURSELF BECAUSE
EVERYONE ELSE IS
TAKEN."**

Oscar Wilde

#weareinthistogether

Day 21.

Shared with us by the lovely @EmotionalFatig1.

I hope these words help us all along the difficult journey of allowing ourselves to be who we are.

Be funny

Be sad

Be outgoing

Be quiet

Be happy

Spend time alone

Spend time with others

Enjoy being creative

Enjoy learning

Be unsure what you enjoy

Be all of these at once...

...or none of them at all.

Do and be whoever you need to be.

The position is vacant and you and you alone can fill it



Day 22.

Shared by @avris67.

Many of you may be feeling that you can not keep going, that your life is over, perhaps a deep feeling of hopelessness. This time of year can often accentuate these feelings because of the commercial and societal pressure for it to be a joyous and family time.

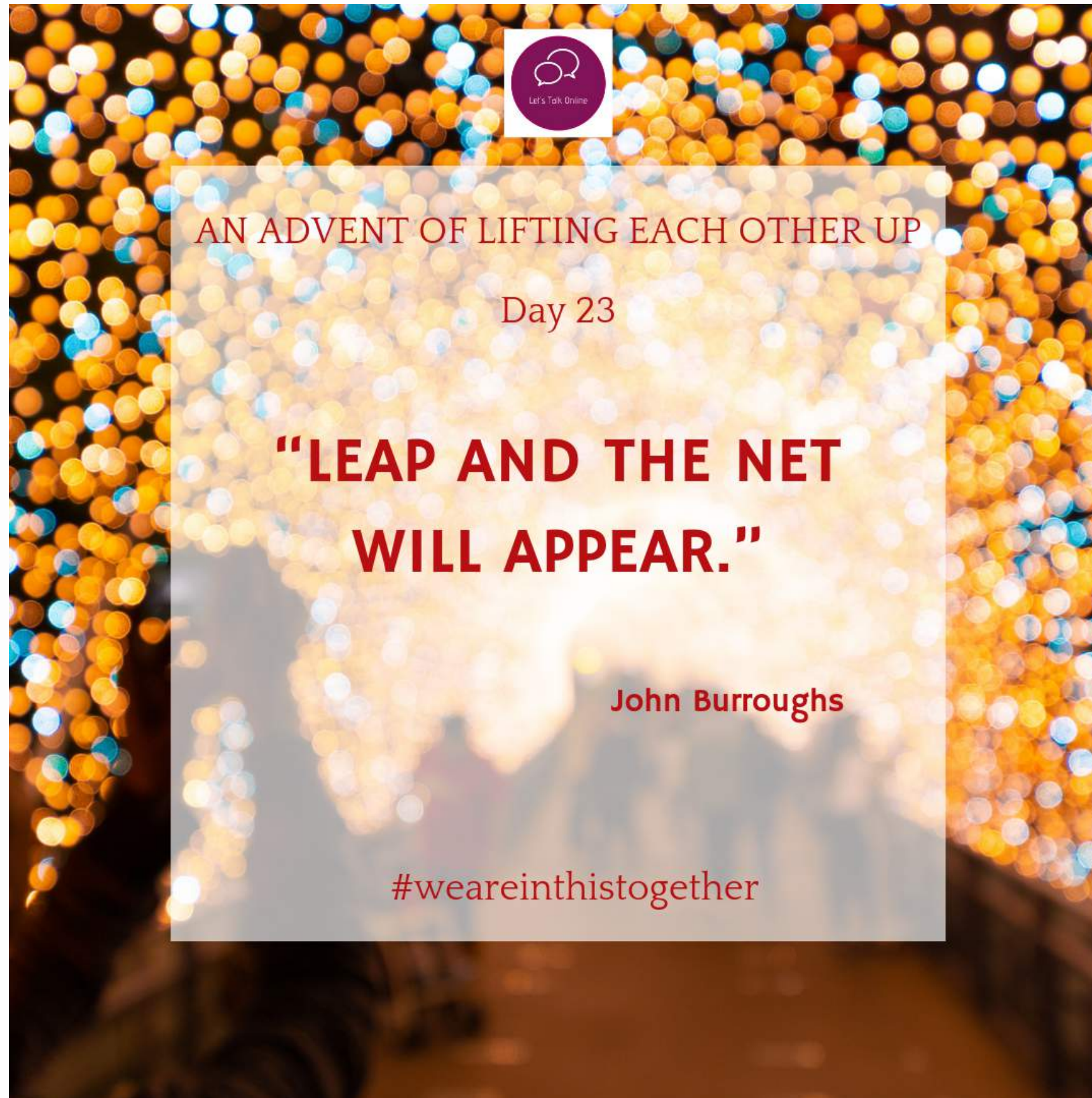
Finding hope during these moments can be incredibly difficult, but as we all know it is often even a fragment of hope that keeps us putting one foot in front of another.

Hope and our possible transition into a butterfly does not necessarily mean that our problems will go away. Sometimes they do, sometimes they do not. What we can change is our ability to react differently to our situation and suffering, to learn to survive along side our pain.

Your butterfly might not look like what you hoped, but one thing I do know is even if the transformation is tiny, we never really remain the same.

Hope may be a tiny word, and sound simple, but can take digging deep to find. Reach out to someone if you need to - keep safe.





Day 23.

My dear friend Niki Keaveney shared her favourite quote with us all.

I imagine we have all heard the phrase 'A leap of faith'. Hearing the words 'Leap and the net will appear', added another beautiful layer of depth to this idea for me.

In life we are constantly taking leaps of faith as the one thing we can be certain of is uncertainty. Helping people exist alongside this existential reality is a large part of what therapy is about. The other part is supporting them in their journey of finding the courage to do some of the things they are fearful of, despite this uncertainty.

This is a lovely reminder that it is often not until we take the leap, that our support and strength will become clear. If you are taking a leap of faith this holiday season, and feel frightened, I hope these words give you some comfort within your courageousness.



Day 24.

Over Christmas and New year we often find ourselves reflecting upon our lives, our past and our future.

Given our minds tendency to focus more on our perceived mistakes than all the things we have achieved, it can be really helpful to step back and see the choices we have made and will continue to make, in a different light.

This quote shared with us by Kate Anthony, owner of the Online Therapy Institute, provides a lovely insight into the process of decision making.

We make choices, big and small, everyday and will continue doing so for the rest of our lives. Some we make by careful evaluation, others by instinct and more often than not through processes outside of our consciousness.

Choosing is an inherent part of life, and inherent in the choices we make are mistakes. So, what ever choices you have made or will make, well done for choosing.



AN ADVENT OF LIFTING EACH OTHER UP

Day 24

**"THE CHOICE MAY
HAVE BEEN MISTAKEN,
THE CHOOSING WAS
NOT."**

STEPHEN SONDHEIM.

#weareinthistogether



Day 25 - Christmas day.

For our last day of advent I shared something I often find myself reflecting upon with clients - The idea that it is OK to be happy.

Thankfully, due to mental health being talked about more these days we often see things posted online about how it's OK not to be happy or OK . This is more than OK, it is part of being human.

There can be times in our life however that we might need to be reminded that it is OK to be happy, to smile, to laugh. In fact, a lot of times in life we can be happy and sad at the same time.

If something has happened in your life, whether a loss, knowing loved ones are suffering, or you are suffering - if a moment of happiness comes, grab it with both hands while it lasts.



Written by:

Dr. Kristine Abercrombie

Chartered Clinical Psychologist

Founder , Online Therapist and Supervisor @

Let's Talk Online Psychology Service

Website:

www.letstalkonline-psychology.com

Email:

info@letstalkonline-psychology.com

Phone no:

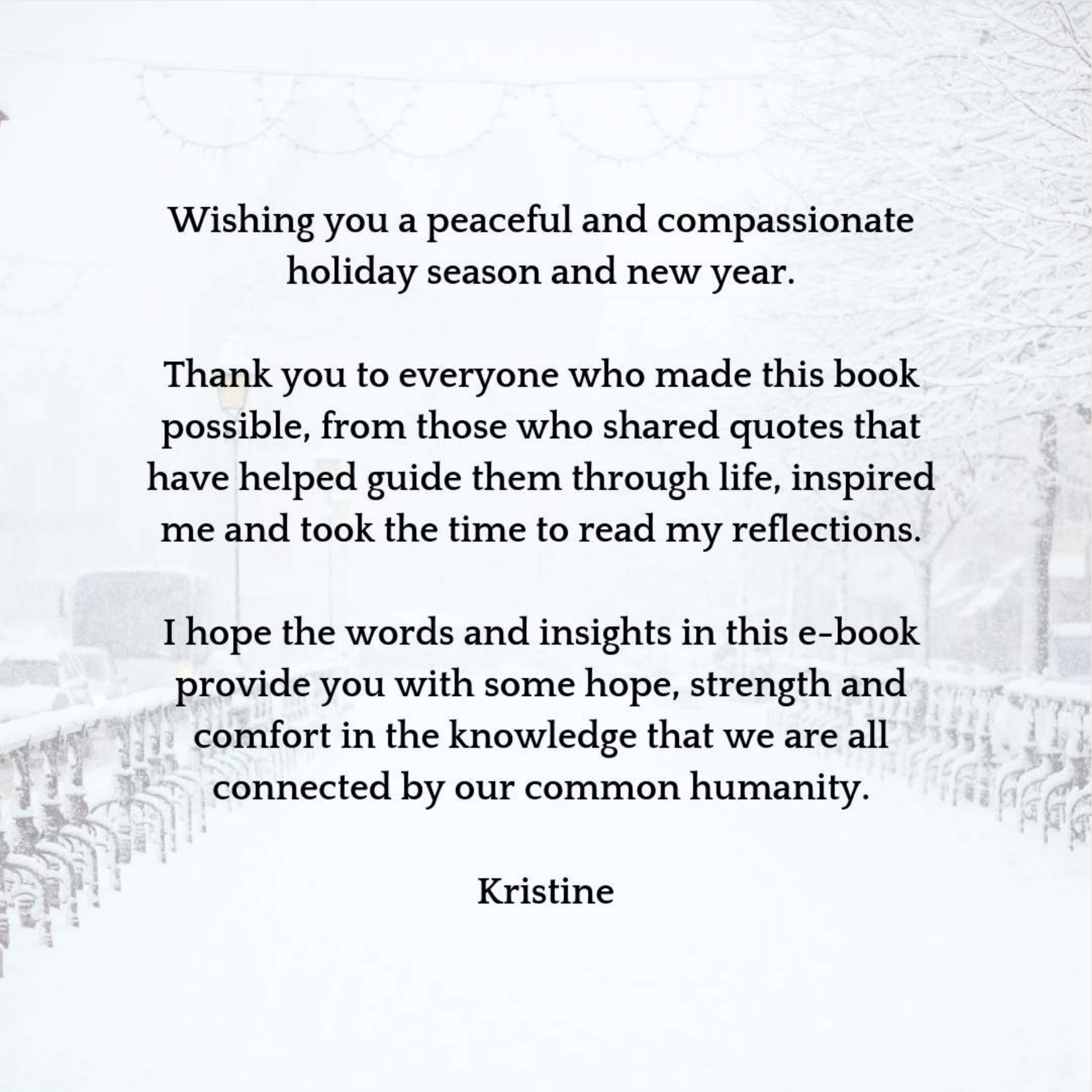
07896150292

Facebook:

[@letstalkonlinepsychologyservice](https://www.facebook.com/letstalkonlinepsychologyservice)

Twitter:

[@letstalk_online](https://twitter.com/letstalk_online)



**Wishing you a peaceful and compassionate
holiday season and new year.**

**Thank you to everyone who made this book
possible, from those who shared quotes that
have helped guide them through life, inspired
me and took the time to read my reflections.**

**I hope the words and insights in this e-book
provide you with some hope, strength and
comfort in the knowledge that we are all
connected by our common humanity.**

Kristine