



**22 Interesting  
and Surprising  
Health Benefits  
from Knitting  
and Crochet**

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**Accredited  
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**CRAFT  
YOURSELF  
CALM**

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# **22 Interesting and Surprising Health Benefits from Knitting and Crochet**

Did you know that knitting and crochet can lead to better health?

Harvard Medical School, the Mayo Clinic and the charity Knit for Peace are some of the organisations that have conducted surveys which show that people benefit from indulging in some relaxing yarn craft!

Apart from the health benefits, there is the opportunity to create something both practical and beautiful. It's a winning combination.

There is evidence that knitting and crochet can provide a boost to physical and mental health, so let's look at some of the advantages.

# 1

## Reduces anxiety

The calming effect of knitting, repeating the actions needed to create each stitch, can have a meditative effect.

One survey reported that many knitters felt happier after knitting.



### **Question:**

What would it mean to you to be able to relieve feelings of anxiety?

## 2

### Lowers **blood pressure** and heart rate

The calming effect of knitting, repeating the actions needed to create each stitch, can have a meditative effect.

One survey reported that many knitters felt happier after knitting.



#### **Question:**

What impact would it have if you had a technique to help lower your blood pressure without additional medication?

# 3

## Helps to manage **chronic pain**

Knitting and crochet can help people dealing with chronic pain by offering a distraction; the change of focus can give some welcome relief from discomfort.



### **Question:**

How would you feel knowing that you could have some relief from pain without taking more medication?

## 4 Builds a sense of **community** and **co-operation**

Knitting projects were encouraged in groups that were traditionally hostile to each other in India and Rwanda with the aim of providing clothing for needy children. As a result, a sense of community and cooperation developed to the benefit of all concerned.

Imagine how a craft group could bring people together in your area, whether in person or online.



### **Question:**

How important is it to you to have a sense of being part of a community?

## 5 Helps enhance **confidence** and boost self-esteem

There's no doubt that a sense of accomplishment comes with the creation of something you have made with your own hands — whether it is something for yourself, or a gift for a friend or family member. Self-worth is an important aspect of life, and should not be overlooked.



### **Question:**

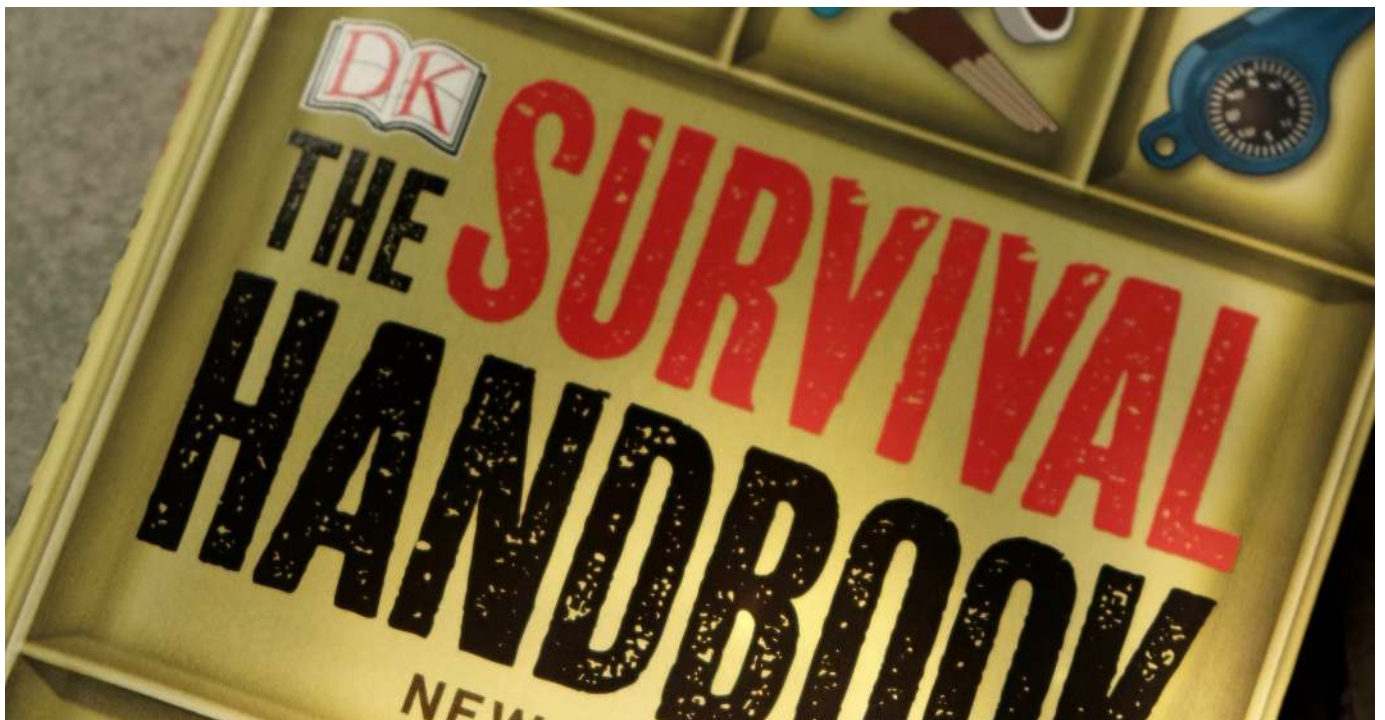
What would it mean to you to have a sense of achievement and a boost to your confidence?



## 6 Makes people feel better able to **cope**

Knitting and crochet allow people to keep their minds occupied, and as a result feel more able to cope with illness, pain and stressful situations.

This in turn helps people feel more in control and independent.



### **Question:**

How would you feel knowing you are better able to cope with stressful situations?

## 7 Provides the opportunity for **creativity**

Whether following a pattern, or making a design of your own, you can take pleasure in making something new, using your choice of colour, yarn and design.



### **Question:**

What would it mean to you to be able to give rein to your creativity?

# 8

Helps to combat age-related cognitive decline & slow the onset of **dementia**

A study at the Mayo Clinic found that people who included knitting in their activities were less likely to have mild cognitive impairment compared to those who did not.

It is also known that people with dementia can still knit and crochet; although memory for recent events might be less sharp, the skills learned for knitting and crochet are still present.



## **Question:**

How would you feel knowing that you can keep your mind active while improving your craft skills?

## 9 Reduces **depression**

The repetitive actions involved in knitting and crochet can generate alpha-waves in the brain, similar to being in a meditative state. This helps to manage anxiety and depression, relieving feelings of hopelessness and creating a sense of satisfaction and improved self-esteem.



### **Question:**

What would it mean to you to be able to reduce the feeling of depression and create a sense of satisfaction in your life?

# 10 Knitting and crochet are for **everyone**

Young and not-so-young, male and female, people facing challenges such as visual impairment, deafness, dementia and mobility issues, all can take pleasure from knitting and crochet, and the satisfaction that these crafts can bring.



## **Question:**

How would you feel being able to participate in a craft that can help you build friendships and share experiences with others?

# 11

## Maintains mobility in the **fingers, joints** and **muscles** of the **hand**

Knitting and crochet involve making small actions with precision to create stitches; as you gain proficiency, the movements will become faster. These repetitive actions are a form of exercise that will maintain muscle tone in the hands, keep fingers flexible and help mobility of arthritic hands.



### **Question:**

How important is it to you to keep your fingers supple and boost your manual dexterity?

## 12 Builds bridges between generations

Teaching knitting is a good way to pass on traditional skills, and to instil respect for an older generation. The basic techniques of knitting or crochet can be learned in a couple of hours; skills that improve with practice, so it can be fun for children, parents and grandparents to maintain contact and enjoy each other's company.



### **Question:**

What would it mean to you to maintain meaningful connections between the generations in your family?

# 13 Improves overall health

In one survey it was found that:

92% of people in poor health said knitting improved their health

82% said knitting relaxed them

65% said knitting for others made them feel useful

92% said knitting improved their mood



## **Question:**

How would you feel knowing that an enjoyable pastime is also good for your health?



## 14 Reduces feeling of **loneliness** and isolation

While knitting can be done individually at home, there is also the opportunity to participate in knitting groups, whether through social media or other online resources, or by attending knitting club. This could take the form of neighbours knitting together, or a more formal organised group that meets and shares progress and ideas on a regular basis.

Combatting loneliness is of particular importance as it has been shown that loneliness can slow recovery from illness, and potentially trigger depression and early onset dementia.



### **Question:**

What would it mean to you to share knowledge and skills with others, and be less lonely and isolated as a result?

# 15 Helps with **mathematics** skills and **mental agility**

Knitting and crochet offer the opportunity to boost skills in mathematics as there are various types of mental arithmetic to be carried out to ensure that what you are making ends up the right size! It is essential to work with the right number of stitches so that what you are making fits; that means checking measurements, calculating the correct number of rows and stitches as well as the number of pattern repeats. This will become second nature the more you practise.



## **Question:**

What would it mean to you to keep your mind active and improve your mental agility?

# 16 Sharpens memory

Knitting and crochet require keeping track of how far you have progressed in a project, how many further rows need to be worked and when to change to another colour or stitch in the pattern. This means that many parts of the brain are engaged for calculation and memory.



## **Question:**

What would it mean to you to be able to improve your memory?

## 17 Induces a natural **relaxation** response

It has been said that knitting is as relaxing as yoga. Relaxation is important for a healthy lifestyle, as periods of excessive stress can lead to medical problems from headaches to insomnia, and from depression to digestive issues. Encouraging relaxation can also improve quality of sleep.



### **Question:**

What would it mean to you to be able to take time to relax?

# 18 Instils a skill for life

Teaching knitting and crochet offers others a skill for life, providing the knowledge that can be useful at any age from around 6 years old and upwards. There are people who are active knitters into their 80s and 90s. It's possible to teach knitting in schools or in the family.



## **Question:**

How would you feel knowing that you have a life skill that you could share with others?

# 19 Helps in **stopping smoking**

While your hands are busy with knitting or crochet, you are less likely to yearn for the dubious comfort of smoking; this is another health benefit as smoking is known to have deleterious effects on health and wellbeing.



## **Question:**

What would it mean to you to be able to reduce your craving for a cigarette as you give up smoking and improve your health?

## 20 Improves a sense of being **useful**

Creating something by hand that is practical and useful provides an outlet for creativity as well as giving a sense of purpose. Whether teaching others to knit and crochet, or making things as gifts, donations or to sell to raise money for charity, these skills help to contribute to the fabric of society and enhance the feeling of being useful and doing something worthwhile. It can even be done from the comfort of home!



### **Question:**

What would it mean to you to know that you can create something practical to give as a present or support charity fundraising?

## 21 Reduces snacking and helps to control **weight**

It can be very tempting to nibble at snacks when we aren't really hungry... Taking up knitting or crochet means that your hands are already busy, and while you are concentrating on what you are making, you are far less likely to indulge in snacking.

After all, who wants to get jam or chocolate on their latest creation?



### **Question:**

What would it mean to you to boost your willpower and resist snacks to help keep your weight under control?



## 22 Increases a sense of wellbeing

The choice of knitting and crochet as a hobby enhances the feeling of pleasure in life.

Creative hobbies can be a delight in themselves, and they can also enable the crafter to make unique personalised gifts for others and take pleasure in doing so.

The finding of one research project was that "Participation in enjoyable, meaningful activities was the biggest direct factor for wellbeing. This could be in creative, cultural, civic, and/or social activities."



### **Question:**

What would it mean to you to be able to boost your feeling of wellbeing?

# About Kay



I've spent a lifetime helping people learn. As a university computing lecturer for 25 years, I enjoyed teaching students, helping them overcome challenges and prepare them for their career paths. You might wonder how computing and craft go together, but a computer program is rather like a knitting/crochet pattern, or even a recipe. It all fits together like the pieces in a jigsaw puzzle!

Craft has been one of my hobbies for many years; not only does it offer the opportunity for being creative, I find it absorbing and relaxing. When I was working in a location I didn't much like, I found it relieved my stress to do Hardanger embroidery - this involves cutting into the fabric in order to make decorative patterns with the remaining threads, so maintaining focus was of prime importance!

A few years ago, I suffered from sepsis, and spent several weeks in hospital. When I was discharged, craft again came to my rescue. I was commissioned to make several items, from a Christening robe to a unicorn for a flower girl, and doing this not only helped me regain the strength in my hands, but also gave me a sense of purpose - and, of course, I enjoyed doing it too. I then qualified as an accredited Master Coach, to put me in the best position for sharing my knowledge, skills and enthusiasm with you.

# Who does Kay help?



I help women over 40 break free from the chains of stress and anxiety without spending hours at the gym or paying for expensive equipment. You can see how craft has helped me through some difficult times in my life; I'd like to show you that it can support you too.

If you are feeling **stressed** or **anxious**, don't convince yourself that you are alone; it's something that many people face... but it is **difficult to deal with on your own**.

Have been **juggling** the demands of **career** and **family**, and have had little time to yourself until recently?

Are you trying to improve your health by **reducing snacking** or **giving up smoking**?

Have you visited craft fairs, and have been impressed by the unique handcrafted designs on display, but **don't know where to start**?

## **I can help**

As a certified Master Coach and qualified needle crafter, I have the knowledge and skills to help you work through your stress and anxiety, and help guide you on your path to **creativity** and **relaxation**.

# Learn more about working with Kay



I'm offering an opportunity for a complimentary 30 minute craft coaching call until Thursday 26 August 2021. If you'd like a session, choose a slot using the link below. After that date, I will be available for 15 minute sessions.

## **Book a call**

**Email:** [kay@craftycavy.co.uk](mailto:kay@craftycavy.co.uk)

**Tel:** +44 (0) 7776025742

There will be the opportunity to discuss the options for different programmes for us to continue to work together.



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