



My Lockdown Covid-19 Challenge 4



Emerging (Like a caterpillar from a cocoon)

(addendum life has its ups and downs and its ok so I'm retreating slightly read on to the end)

So... like I said in my previous post going out at the moment is not my favourite thing (just like when the dog bites or bee stings or when I'm feeling sad 🎵) however it's time to take back some control and I thought it's like emerging from a cocoon where I have been secure and safe and now taking to the wing like a butterfly (which happens to be an important symbol to me). Following a very stressful few weeks of hospital visits and tests for my husband, which meant being forced to go out, and the worry of visiting hospitals and doctors where you think it's risky and you won't feel safe - I have to say that for the most part any contact with others in these places was mainly excellent and well managed. Yes there was one or two members of the public who should have observed the distancing and coverings rules who didn't seem to care, but we felt safe and ensured full measures were taken on returning home like changing and washing clothes and bodies 😊.

Also during the last few weeks I had a text for my dental appointment, it did make me a bit anxious but again this was another push to go out and experience the new normal. I have to say although a different experience I did feel very safe, so if you have appointments coming up I hope this reassures you that measures are in place and it's ok.

Having had those experiences on Bank Holiday Monday we decided to use our National Trust Membership for the first time this year and went early to Knoll Beach with the thought that if it was busy and unsafe we would leave. However we were amazed at how sensible people were, including social distancing, mask wearing and hand washing when appropriate. The staff on site were brilliant, we had a lunch of fish and chips sat on the beach people watching and enjoying the views. Amazing to see the cruise ships in the bay. We then had a walk along the dunes and back along the beach, we then even got brave enough to have a look in the shop, again very well organised and managed. I cannot tell you how good it felt to do something so normal for the day. It is definitely worth going somewhere you feel safe and beginning to emerge from the cocoon we have been in so long this year we are starting to find our wings and joining society again in a safe and responsible way.

Also got to see the condor going out, certainly a good end to a really good day.



We also had our very first meal out since lockdown sat inside, along the quay in Poole, we again went for somewhere where we hoped we would feel safe and we were not disappointed, only 3 tables occupied out of 8, staff masked and visibly wiping down surfaces regularly and my biggest anxiety of the toilets was alleviated by having to gel hands before even opening the door and then using blue roll to open doors and touch the flush and then gel again after washing hands and leaving. May seem overkill to some but this really made me feel safe and able to use the facilities.



I have been busy maintaining the veg in the garden as well as the flowers and have continued to have an abundance of tomatoes and runner beans. As things come up to harvest I have also been busy making Jam, sauces, pickled beetroot and mulled pears so will be able to enjoy this bounty well into the autumn. My husband loves a bit of pear jam in gravy when we have pork rather than apple sauce where my favourite is rhubarb and ginger jam. Because I grew mainly cherry tomatoes this year I will not be making what we call Aunties Chutney but we still have loads left from last year (it keeps for ever it seems), so I make sauces to freeze ready for pasta dishes later on in the year.



I must admit the recent winds and rain seem to be bringing the current crops to an end so I am now planting spring cabbage (if only the cabbage white butterflies would leave them alone), spring onions and more. Also potatoes in bags ready for Christmas harvesting fingers crossed.

Whilst sat in the garden a few days ago when the sun was shining I was amazed when a sparrow hawk just skimmed across the top of my head. I am glad there were no sparrows about at that moment, I love nature but want it all to live!



I had a few weeks where I was unable to keep up with my usual exercise routines so am now building up again slowly, starting with 10,000 steps a day and then a bit of Tai Chi or Qigong. I have put a link to a good exercise I found for neck tension on the Dorset PainPals Facebook page so head over and have a look if you are interested. I believe that even if you have to adjust your exercise and movement to your daily limitations it's essential to do something...



I am amazed at how much I can achieve even when under stress and when my body wants me to listen and slow down. Always try to be positive and smile. (You can do it if you really want, you can do it if you try 🎵).

Proud grandparent alert here! We took our grandson to Aberystwyth University, this was both amazing in that we are so proud of him and scary in that we had not seen so many people out and about in ages however I must say that despite everything we have seen on the news about other university towns, the behaviour of all in the town was very good and we felt safe and reassured that we could leave him here. It is a beautiful place and he has a fantastic view from his room. We did take a virus spray and wipes with us to ensure that our hotel room was safe and I don't think I have ever used so much hand sanitizer in my life but at least we were all safe and sound. Seafront views below.



Little did we know that just one week after leaving our grandson there that the university would go into lockdown along with many other areas of Wales! A worrying time however he is doing well with a group of **very** sensible 'bubble' mates and online lectures.

Another proud grandparent alert! Grandchildren are the greatest gift on earth and also they make us smile at every opportunity. Our second oldest granddaughter did brilliantly in her GCSE's we are so very proud and is hopefully going on to an apprenticeship in childcare once all this Covid 19 stuff allows. It's so hard for youngsters at the moment I really feel for them. Our other grandchildren at schools are doing well but who knew they would have to deal with such challenging times. I find it incredibly difficult to understand what they must really think about not being able to see us and cuddle us properly, I know that the youngest keeps saying its 'its ok Nanny we can have proper cuddles (meaning not virtual) when the world is better!' Right now today as I am adding this I am going..... Grrrrrrrrrrrr! I can't wait for this to be over!



Covid 19 seems to be strengthening its grip again. The rule of 6 applies so I cannot see my grandchildren as that would take us over 6 (grrrrrrrrrr again, **but thank heavens for social media, there's always a positive even in these hard times 😊 at least I can see them that way**) so I find myself retreating slightly back into my cocoon, but I know that that is ok and I have the means to cope and the where with all to pop out again when I feel it's safe to do so.

So as I added at the top of this post life can have it ups and downs and I certainly have had my fair share of the downs this past few months and this has finally shown its ugly head by impacting on my own health and as always in my own head I thought I was on top of things and that I was managing the stress of various issues and ensuring my own wellbeing was being looked after, but the body has a way of letting you know if you're not and when it's time to heed its warning signs and right now I admit to being not ok. **The positive here is that before going through the Pain Management Programme I would never have admitted that to myself or anyone on this earth!** I'm struggling with constant headaches and migraines, stiff neck and shoulders with spasms, and when I decided to seek help from the doctors and requested a specific person got someone else I felt overwhelmed and didn't discuss everything I wanted to and ended up back on medication that has given me side effects I am not prepared to live with so find myself frustrated with myself on top of everything else. But do you know what 'It's OK not to be OK' and I shall now take back control, speak to the person I need to and move forward. I have self-referred to physio, am on a waiting list and discussed with someone I trust to give me the correct guidance and advice.

We all have these blips in our journey in life but we can all gain the strength to regroup and get back on our improved path with the help and techniques we learn along the way and especially those we have learned from the Pain Management Programme and those special people who are also in chronic pain who are here to help us in the form of the volunteers (Experts by Experience). Don't forget we have the help line open Monday to Friday 11 -5 01202 858361 if you feel you would like to talk to someone who understands what it is like to be in chronic pain.

Oh and to finish on a positive note I have gathered the last tomatoes from the greenhouse and am going to make some tomato and basil soup. How comforting is that on a wet and windy day! Time to start planning for next year's crops! I do still have some carrots and potatoes to look forward to in the coming months though!

As we move forward in these strange times I wish you all well. Remember there is always a positive and always try to make someone smile every day!

