

## **Week 2 – Lockdown**

“Teenagers are the adults of our future. It will be up to them to shape society for the future. We are their role models, and the more compassion we can bring them to helping them through these years, the more we will help create a compassionate world for humanity.” Saunders (2016)

Despite the fact the author wrote this 4 years ago, in the days before the world was engulfed by a pandemic and we were asked to retreat to our homes from life as we knew it - this couldn't be a more powerful message right now. Crisis moments can also present opportunity: a revived appreciation of the outdoors and life's other simple pleasures, less polarization, and a more sophisticated and flexible use of technology. We do not know what is to come in the months ahead but we do know that society and our lifestyles will change.

Already I am powerfully aware from my own little enclave - of the ascendance of human goodness, of people's compassion and generosity of spirit and action. Not just within our own homes but within our streets, our communities, with our previously unnamed neighbours. Now we wave, we socially distance chat, we ask if people need anything, we get leaflets through our door of good neighbour schemes, we are mindful that number 27 is on her own and I've not seen her for a while, we bake, we share – we are regrouping.

Online - we are seeing inspirational musicians, singers, actors, sporting endeavours - showcasing and sharing their amazing (and sometimes less so!) talents and for free!! Master yoga instructors teach free classes. Maybe our young people are experiencing a different screen life from their normal disappearance into a video game. We are breaking open a medium that is potentially oozing with human generosity and empathy.

Your young people are a part of this. They too can offer and ask not only 'what do I need?' but 'what do other people need?', 'what can I do to help?' – and they CAN make a difference. And doesn't that feel good? Even down to the rainbow flag stuck in the front window, a wave, or a smile (both in the house and out of it), taking shopping to number 27 – caring. This is becoming the 'new normal' that we speak of, that it has taken something so catastrophic for some of us to now be more mindful and aware. Not only alone together, but together alone. Your young people will be able to turn round in the months and years to come when they are having a 'do you remember when' moment and say – I was able to help.

I know that your lives are still adjusting and being tweaked and stretched on an hourly/daily basis and the demands of this are so huge and so varied for every individual. Yet we tick another week off and we continue to grow and we are adjusting and we now more than ever believe, to quote Terry Waite (hostaged for 1763 days) – we are not 'stuck at home, we are safe at home'. That if we are privileged enough to have a home to stay safe in, then we have the greatest armour to get through this at our disposal.

If you, in collaboration with your child, would like them to have a confidential, safe space to talk with myself, please look out for the accompanying attachment which will let you know how to access this.

Please also check out Mabel with her very own Instagram account - [mabels.tails](https://www.instagram.com/mabels.tails)

Please all stay safe and keep laughing,

Anna McQuade

School and Relate Counsellor