

Week 7 – Lockdown

**‘We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give’
‘Success consists of going from failure to failure, without loss of enthusiasm’**

Winston Churchill

As we approach the end of week 7 in self-isolation and await the ‘what next’ stage of this journey on Sunday I continue to impress the importance of our physical and mental health, which depends upon us meeting our emotional needs in healthy ways. For many of us we have been restricted from many of the activities (sporting/theatrical/school/work/travelling/seeing friends & family etc) which may have been at the very essence of our identity. You may well have noticed a slump in yourselves or family members over this time, maybe even more so recently.

Historically we may have thrived on getting recognised for our achievements/adventures/exploits but in their disappearance, we have **had** to find new ways of meeting these needs and stretch ourselves to overcome new challenges. It has been in appreciating that the change thrust upon us, whilst a constant dance of loss, is also one of opportunity. It is in embracing this growth and learning, which can contribute to meeting the need for real meaning and purpose, which in turn contributes to our resilience when faced with adverse situations. For some of our young people their toolkit is still evolving – so please hang in there with them 😊.

I am committed to helping people through difficult times, more so now than ever before. I have spoken a lot about learning and growth as facilitators in getting us through this suspended time and so this week I invited some friends, family and colleagues to share a few sentences with me of some of their experiences and potential growth so far, nearly two months into lockdown. Common themes seemed to emerge which may resonate with you too.

Family

‘I’m blessed for starters that I like them!’

‘Feeling so proud of my family and hearing how their resilience has grown and what they can now achieve!’

‘We have learned how to laugh together again, and silly niggles are just that...not a precursor to World War Three!’

‘Having all the kids back at home after they had flown the nest, has made us stronger than before. I am really enjoying spending time with them as adults and not moody teenagers or whiney kids!’

‘Regular catch ups on face time/zoom – texting less’

Nature

‘Watching and listening to the birds...were they always this loud?’

‘Just being still in my garden’

‘Feeling lucky to live in such a beautiful part of the world and not take that for granted’

‘The carpet of bluebells is simply magical - were they always so vivid?’

Time

‘Not spreading ourselves too thinly’

‘Taking time to slow down enough to take notice’

‘Just taking stock’



'I feel like I have stepped off the rat-race and that has given me time to concentrate on things I was always going to get round to do...but never had time.'

'My father would say...'when there's work to be done, we must cut out the fun'. As a golf pro and not physically being able to work, I have allowed myself the time to be creative, which I never would.'

Community

'Helping others and community spirit feels amazing at the moment'

'We have loved sharing shopping and looking out for others'

'I've felt so rewarded by volunteering to help others in need'

Creativity

'Finding new ways of working'

'Making time to be creative'

'Gardening' 'baking' 'reading' 'pottery'

Gluttony

'Not overspending – identifying what we need, rather than we think what we may want.'

'Not buy unnecessary rubbish'

'Be more considerate about food and meal planning, wasting far less and spending less...BAKING'

Physicality

'Exercise and meditation and yoga can now be a priority in my day.... rather than an afterthought.'

'Walking miles with the dog - I feel fitter and healthier than ever'

Mindfulness

'More quietness in my head'

'The time allows me to plant me more in the present and make me more mindful'

'I have learned that I can cope with and juggle with challenging times and be stronger for others and talk more openly with people'

'Having a stronger sense of perspective on what is important and what actually doesn't matter'

'Making time to stand and sit and watch and stare or stand and repeat!'

'Learn how to be happy with being grounded for a while'

'Make the most of everyday and every opportunity, don't wait for tomorrow'

Thoughts from Young People

'My youngest daughter said that in a way she has been glad about lockdown, as it has given her time to put the brakes on and get away from the constant pressure of being a teenager and actually enjoy family time'

'My biggest take away has been having stretches of time away from media and screens. Whether it's going for a walk without counting my steps or sitting with a book or knitting without checking my notifications every five minutes. I've started to look up and notice things.

'I've learnt the importance of friends I took for granted. And what I realise now is that hugs are a precious commodity'.

People will experience different day to day struggles in their lives and I am keenly aware of that, for many, some of the above is not achievable. Going forward though, perhaps some of it may be attainable? So, after some rather lengthy ramblings I wish you all a Happy VE day and continued peace and wellness. In these times where we have been challenged to fully be in the moment, we are indeed seeing the possibilities for happiness and love, which as is testified here, is often to be found in merely simplifying our chaotic, indulgent lives and just breathing and noticing and caring. Underlying it all is that we are staying at home literally to save lives. This is what we must impress upon our young people (no matter how frustrated they are), that whilst our own

individual growth and awareness is relevant, we are also part of a wider collective response. What they are having to do right now, **IS** important and it really **IS** making a difference.

Stay safe,

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For an apt please contact time2talk@sghs.org.uk and check out @mabels.tails for a ☺ on Instagram

And just for a giggle...

'Lady Nancy Astor – Winston, if you were my husband, I'd poison your tea.

Winston Churchill – Nancy, if you were my wife, I'd drink it'