




My Lockdown Covid-19 Challenge

CH CH CHANGES (🎵)

Hi everyone here we are nearly in spring with many great things to look forward to with positivity.

The vaccination programme is showing its effectiveness and some of us have already had our first doses, this in itself is a big step for those of us who have been shielding or just observing the latest lockdown fully. I had my first dose at the BIC, it was like a massive adventure after so long indoors, beginning with actually getting dressed up to go out now that was new after so long in just comfy clothes. Then what felt like a long journey over to Bournemouth, I was amazed by the amount of cars about even though we are in lockdown, it felt a bit like being on a rollercoaster of feelings, great to be out but so much stimulation to the eyes and brain. When I saw the sea it was like seeing it for the first time, so beautiful despite the wind and rain. I was so impressed with the organisation for the vaccine site it was very slick and well organised, I was in and out within 15 minutes, phew so glad to have this hurdle over. On the way back my husband treated us to fish and chips (what a real treat that was), we took them to Branksome Chine (this is on our way home so no unnecessary journey involved) and ate them looking out to sea and seeing the cruise ships all lit up, they were like ghost ships; before heading homeward (homeward bound 🎵) the trip had felt like a holiday. I must admit it was so nice to be home wrapped up in the calm hug of my own environment. I felt like I had been out for ever even though it was just over 1.5 hours and also found it very tiring. If you are about to have your first vaccine and are concerned or anxious about the organisation and whether it will be safe I can only reassure you by my experience and that of my husbands who had his in Poole yesterday in that it is well organised, safe and running like a well-oiled engine. We can only thank all those wonderful staff and volunteers who are making this happen.

We also, I believe will be moving forward with some feelings of hesitation and anxiety, I certainly know I am. Like last time I am looking forward to more freedom with a little caution. I am so glad that this time it is being phased and going more slowly. Am I ready for the final step if it happens in June? I'm not sure as after a recent step out to do some essential shopping (there is only so much my husband can do shopping on his own) and I wanted to see what it was like whilst it is still quiet (I don't know why I thought it would be quiet and not busy, ha ha), how amazing that so many cars and people are about despite lockdown, I know some are out for genuine reasons but it feel like nothing was different than before. So busy like bees attending a beehive ! (Buzz, buzz buzzy bee 🎵)!

I also found the amount of 'stuff' surrounding me in the shop overwhelming and claustrophobic; do we really need all this in our lives? I didn't know where to look first.

Everyone was moving so quickly, I think I have got used to a slower pace of life in my own little bubble and will take time adjust again the wider worlds busy pace. I thought things would have slowed down but people seem keen to pick up speed. I do hope we don't lose one of the many positive things of this pandemic in that we slowed down, began to notice things around us more and appreciate and be thankful for what we have.

I honestly cannot wait to be able to see my family again even though I know it will still be awhile before we can hug and kiss it will be so nice to see them face to face. Talking about family I am so proud of my grandchildren and how they have managed in these testing times. And in fact of all the



young people who have come through this. We need to be mindful of the fact that they are the first to have a restriction lifted this time and how daunting that will be for many of them, going from the reasonable quietness and perceived safety of home to potentially meeting and coming into contact with 100's of other students and adults. I shall be there for my grandchildren (online of course) to listen about any concerns they have and help them through this along with their parents (who I am sure also have worries and doubts) as always we can do this if we all pull together and on a positive note become stronger from the journey we are taking.

Phew that was quite reflective and in depth and I hope thought provoking wasn't it?



So what have I been up to in the last few weeks to keep myself occupied and moving forward:-

I have thoroughly enjoyed the daily Strictly Come Dancing exercise sessions on Morning Live, what's not to like, a nice bit of music and dance before 11 in the mornings and the one minute exercise routines can be fitted in at any time. It's good to change things up a bit and keep moving to improve our bodies and lessen the pain! This along with the weekly Dorset HealthCare Pain Management Service movement classes on Facebook at 10:30 every Thursday and my Thai Chi really help me to focus on movement as a drug free pain relief.

In my last piece I mentioned my bedtime routine changing to help me fall asleep more quickly by doing Qi Gong and I am pleased to say that for me it really helps, if I don't do it the usual hours of tossing and turning returns. My next challenge is to find a way to stay asleep longer. Any tips would be gratefully received.



Don't forget we can all communicate and support each other via the community page on the Dorset Pain Management website if you have been through the service. There is also the Dorset PainPals Facebook page – a community based support group, which has a number of people who have also been through the Pain

Management Service facilitating it. There is always something new to learn and positive to share! It's also a closed supportive group so you can also share if you are not having a good day and reach out for support (this is the case for both groups mentioned here) I did this recently as even with my arsenal of skills learnt and my positive attitude, I have bad days and find it much easier to reach out to others for support these days. Remember 'It's OK not to be OK' And don't forget we have the Dorset PainPals Helpline should you need a listening ear from dedicated Experts by Experience who understand what you are going through, the service is available Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 11:00 to 17:00 and Wednesday 14:00 to 17:00. If you call and we are not available we may well be on another call so please do try again and call back during the opening hours.

As spring is finally arriving I am so excited to say that I have sown the first vegetable and flower seeds in the greenhouse so am out there every day checking for the first signs of new growth. Also as we have had a few nice warm sunny days recently I have managed to get out in the garden to tidy up a bit and ensure I've left enough bits and pieces around as the birds are busy nest building. My husband made me a few bird boxes and I'm excited that the Robins are busy building their nest in one already. I have loved sitting by the shed watching them go in and out. My blackbirds are also back Yay! There is colour in the garden and that is always a bonus and makes me feel better. And we have had our first pick of rhubarb which I stewed and was well and truly yummy.



I have also had the great honour over the last few months to work on an exciting project with some of the Pain Management Team and Experts by Experience on a new innovative orientation video which has been a very rewarding and worthwhile experience. I am so proud to have been included and also so proud of the team whom I worked with, they are all amazing and I thank them all from the bottom of my heart for giving me this opportunity.

I also want to say here just how much I appreciate all the work of the Pain Management Service and also to put out there that this team from top to bottom are so caring and dedicated to improving the lives of those people who go through the service. So much goes on behind the scenes that we don't see or hear about, where people go up and beyond what is expected of them to ensure that this service is constantly reviewed, improved and is seen as innovative in its field. We are so lucky to have this service in Dorset and I am sure that you will all agree and join me in saying how we truly thankful and appreciative of all they do. They are all our very own true hero's, helping us to 'Soar above the pain'!



Let's show the whole team that all their hard work is working and keep up the good work and positivity from all the skills they have given us. 😊

