



## My Lockdown Covid-19 Challenge

### WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DAY MAKES 24 LITTLE HOURS (🎵)

Well since my last post things are beginning to move quite quickly now and hopefully safely to our new normal.

What a difference a day can make (🎵) I finally had a haircut and cannot express in words the sheer joy of feeling like me again! I have to admit I was feeling very down and couldn't put my finger on why I was struggling to pull myself up with my usual techniques. And then the government announced we could have more freedom and haircuts again. I was feeling very down and frumpy with my hair straggly and so so long: I felt as though I had aged 10 years and didn't recognise the person looking back in the mirror, who knew that something so simple could pull you down so low. So.... I booked my appointment and looked forward to the day I would finally get my haircut. I was a little nervous about having someone so close but knew that my beautiful hairdresser was taking all the necessary precautions (and I wore my mask). She made me feel so relaxed with actual conversation (it's amazing to realise how simple small talk has been missed) and then the moment of the first few cuts, it truly felt as though the world had been lifted off my shoulders, I could feel my mood lifting. When I looked in the mirror when completed I recognised the person looking back at me and ran (well you know what I mean, not quite) into the front room and yelled to my husband "I'm back, I'm me again". I had the biggest grin on my face, I felt so good and even typing this now I feel lifted just remembering that moment. Never again will I feel slightly guilty about spending the time and money on a haircut. The lift it gives is definitely a moment of self-compassion and that is important to us all!

And there are even more positives to look forward to in the near future and especially on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May when we can finally with caution hug our families again.

I can't wait to have a hug with my daughters and grandchildren.

My youngest told me to have plenty of time available because she needs a very long one! We will of course be sensible, but oh my, am I looking forward to that moment. I am also looking forward to seeing my other family members again in person and not on a little screen. We are all scattered across the country so it will take a little time for it to happen but is so exciting to look forward to, and it will definitely improve the spirits even more. The only way is up (🎵)!



I have to admit that whilst I was feeling down I let my step count dip a little but since that haircut I am now back to averaging 11500 steps a day and that in itself has taken away that feeling of sluggishness and malaise. I was still doing all my other stuff but just those simple steps make the world of difference to me. Movement no matter how small it is most definitely the best medicine!

On the garden front things are moving on albeit slowly due to this changeable weather. The spring flowers have certainly been very much appreciated by us and the wildlife, I've been out taking photos of the bees enjoying the pollen again...





In the greenhouse, again things are a little slow, it's interesting isn't it how the weather affects everything including us, I always feel so much better when I can feel a bit of warmth from the sun on my skin. I have managed to bring on the first of the runner beans and put them out in their final growing tub and they are starting to climb. I also put some seed into the other tub and as they are outside they are only just starting to push through. I have tomatoes of various varieties about to go into their final pots, cucumbers which again are a bit behind, peppers, beetroot, carrots, pak choi, basil, coriander, parsley, spring onions, butternut squash, courgettes, lettuce of various sorts and cabbages all ready to go out as soon as the weather allows, oh and I forgot the ruby chard. The first potato bags have had their final top ups so looking forward to the first feed off of them in just a few weeks. I have celery overwintered and beginning to grow away as the weather improves and one I kept in a deep pot in the greenhouse which is ready to eat. The greenhouse strawberries are beginning to plump up and I can't wait to taste that wonderful first crop. I've also various flower seeds coming through. All in all I just love the challenge of bringing all of this natural organic food along and then later enjoying the benefits of any successes and learning from any errors. It's so therapeutic and calming!

In the kitchen, thanks to Riverford Veg deliveries I have finally made Seville orange marmalade and have to say it's yummy and worth all the faffing it takes. I have also made wild garlic butter and wild garlic salt. I have been experimenting using their recipes to increase our intake of veg and relieve the boredom as I don't know about you I get fed up with having the same old things week in week out. So far we have had carrot fritters (oven cooked to save calories), a dish of white butterbeans and leeks which was yummy and roasted cauliflower which was surprisingly good, not bad for avid meat eaters 😊. And the first salads from the greenhouse with herbs have brought an early taste of summer.



The wild life in the garden has not failed to make me love nature even more. For those who read my first posts you will be as pleased as me I hope to hear that Bertie and Bess (blackbirds) are back and have bred, I am awaiting keenly the moment they bring their babies to show me again. This year for the first time we have had goldfinches in the garden which is so lovely as their song is as beautiful as they are. I have a pair of nesting robins and sparrows galore. This week we have been visited by what I believe to be a sparrow hawk and I spent about 20 minutes watching him.



I feel so privileged to continue working with the Dorset Pain Management Service as an Expert by Experience (EbE) they are an amazing professional team who go way beyond what you would expect to support clients, colleagues and EbEs alike. It feels so good to give back so if you are considering joining in the good work - don't hesitate it is so rewarding!

All in all apart from the odd little set back which we all have at times I continue with my positive thoughts and actions, and am grateful for all the support from family and friends that enable me to continue on my journey.

Keep smiling, remember to offer yourself some self-compassion and enjoy the lifting of restrictions safely. 😊