



Reflections on Lockdown by Christine Hacking

Who would have thought that we would manage one week, one month never mind four months of lockdown. We have had had many 'highs' and thankfully not too many 'lows'. Highs - video calling our daughters - a new experience for us, to chat face to face on the phone with our daughters and our grandchildren, endless texts from them and photos of what they have been up to, afternoon tea delivered by a local cafe, unexpected visitors who would sit in the garden - what a joy that was - someone from the 'outside' world coming into our small hibernation! Organising a 'stay at home' afternoon tea for VE day in our gardens for our neighbours - that was very special with every house being decorated and every house taking part! Clapping on a Thursday evening for the NHS - banging my wooden spoon on a pan - having the chance to come together with our new neighbours. A neighbour coming round at the start of the lockdown with a bunch of daffodils tied together with a note saying that if we needed anything just phone her mobile number which was attached. This neighbour has been getting our newspaper every Saturday. Friends who regularly text/phone me. Getting to know our new neighbours sharing a glass of wine with them - social distancing of course! Sharing our baking with them too - scones, cakes, flapjacks etc. Our neighbour Joan would pop along to the Bridge Centre every Tuesday for a coffee and cake for us. And most of all to James Martin - this programme came along when we needed cheering up - the start of the lockdown and for four weeks afterwards we recorded this programme to watch it in the evenings, our highlight of the day - what a star he was!! What has kept me sane during the lockdown has been listening to Classic FM during the day - the one normality in the confusion that we faced!

Thankfully we haven't had many lows. The main one being not being able to help our middle daughter Catherine - she was one of the last ones to have an operation to have a lump removed after being diagnosed with breast cancer just before lockdown. She has since started with a subsequent course of radiotherapy. Not seeing our families, not being able to hug our grandchildren. Not being able to jump into the car and go here, there and everywhere, meals out, coffee and cake out, meeting up with friends. One of the main worries was food - would we be able to get supermarket deliveries then when we did receiving the weird and wonderful substitutes. I am sure you have had similar lows.

What has this lockdown taught me - that I am blessed with my husband, family and friends, the new area where I have moved into, my special neighbours. I have come to value what I have, not what I don't have! The last few years have been difficult years, we have been through some horrendous times with Chris being diagnosed with Myeloma and his treatment. We have a wooden plaque next to our television ...'Life doesn't have to be perfect to be wonderful' - we hold on to this - our lives especially during the last few weeks of lockdown have been difficult for each of us - in so many ways - as is our daily living with Myeloma but our 'Lives do not have to be perfect to be wonderful'!!

As lockdown starts to ease we continue to be cautious but do now go out for walks. Like many too we are looking forward to visiting a hairdresser!