

## LIFE DURING A PANDEMIC

In a time of crisis, the peoples of the world must rush to get to know each other. - Jose Marti



#### Introduction

Thank you to everyone that has contributed to being involved in our collective mini creative project to share your thoughts, experiences and opinions about life during the Coronavirus pandemic.

We sent out a poster to everyone from our involvement community including;

- Yorkshire Quality and Safety Group Patient Panel
- Lay Leaders
- Citizen Participation Group
- Lay Improvement Fellows

and were delighted by the responses. Some were short and sweet...

...I love the poster for this mini engagement project - not only does it give people something to focus on and provide a wealth of information about how people cope with these unique times but also gives fantastic potential for an exhibition or suchlike when this is all

I think this is a great thing to do, there are a lot of opportunities once we can come to terms with the seriousness and gravity of what we are all facing. Please count me in, Best wishes and keep safe,

Yes I think it could be fun and I will have an entry for my diary that is unusually clear. Count me in. Thanks and great idea!

Count me in.
I will
Participate!

What a great idea. I would like to be involved

and some provided further information...



It is a such pleasure to hear from you. I too, wish you and your family and friends the very best of health. What a world and times we are living in, unprecedented. My husband is anxious the grandchildren keep diaries to remind them. Even, royalty is affected. My wings have been clipped as I cannot walk into town and I am not allowed to take public transport either. I have been doing some gardening. On a different note, I do like the poster, very cheerful. However, I must admit I am no good at the virtual world, you will have to advise me. Until then, keep safe and well, Savi

We are keeping well and I am in isolation, so no going out at all. Peter is only going out when he has to for food. I will get involved in the project, I have started knitting again and we have decided to upgrade out garden whilst we have time. So if I can find out how to send photos this will be my contribution. Thank you for your text, it would be great for a chat when I feel I have something to chat about. I am sure I am going to learn a lot about life from this period of isolation; mainly I guess how much I miss the social interaction and extension of knowledge that I receive from being involved with you and the Improvement Academy.

I think that Positive Minds is going to be one of the casualties of this crisis as I have been unable to obtain funds from anywhere, and I feel that money is going to be so short now it won't happen in the future. I am sure I will find another way of getting my messages out there eventually. Keep well and safe. **Marilyn** 



Happy to be involved too. I've self isolated for about a week now and am managing OK, having navigated the practicalities of setting shopping deliveries through friends and online. Certainly the social isolation would be harder without the use of online communication tools like Skype etc. So far I've managed to have successful virtual meet-ups with a couple of groups of friends that normally get together regularly in the real world. It's not ideal but it's better than nothing.

Oh, and I don't know how widely this has been publicised, but Kings College have produced a Covid-19 symptom tracking app to aid research into the disease:

https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/new-symptomtracking-app-aims-to-slow-spread-ofcoronavirus

Seems like it could be worth a look. Here's the link for anyone interested in joining up: https://covid.joinzoe.com/

I do always like these sort of things that allow you to take back a degree of control with your health.

Anyway, hope you and yours and the other lay members stay safe and healthy

.All the best, Richard

Much appreciated your caring communication. During this instructed stay at home I am bearing with a grin. I wish the virus will disappear so that normal life can continue. Stay well and remember me in your prayers as I will remember you in my prayers.I will be clapping at 8pm to appreciate your good work.

Yes I would like to get involved i would say that me and my family are helping each other during this pandemic is taking the government advice to stay indoors, travel if it needed, washing hands regularly for 20 seconds, eating vegetables and fruits alot more, drinking warm water instead of cold and keeping 2 m distance

between each other.

### Mashud

AJ

Had a leak through the roof repaired last week. Decided I would repaint the Dining Room myself, too exhausted everyday to take photos but I do step back to admire my handiwork. Walking the dog families visiting [at least standing on the driveway]. Granddaughters doing the shopping both home from University. Make a shepherds pie for them and in return they made a chocolate cake and cornflake tart.

Next task Spring cleaning; so far 2 bags for charity shop, only problem is if I don't get rid of them soon, I will decide to keep everything. Following this, I am going to continue with my family tree, my fathers family goes back to possibly 1200's. Just had a contact about a possible relative from Find My Past about a family connection in North Yorks 1250. This will keep me busy for some time.

No volume of work of course in the NHS Trust for at least 3 months.

Hope you are all well.

Pat

Im normally a social girl
I love to meet my mates
But lately with the virus here
We can't go out the gates.

You see, we are the 'oldies' now
We need to stay inside
If they haven't seen us for a while
They'll think we've upped and died.

They'll never know the things we did
Before we got this old
There wasn't any Facebook
So not everything was told.

We may seem sweet old ladies
Who would never be uncouth
But we grew up in the 50s If you only knew the truth!

There was sex and drugs and rock 'n roll
The pill and miniskirts
We smoked, we drank, we partied
And were quite outrageous flirts.

Then we settled down, got married And turned into someone's mum, Somebody's wife, then nana, Who on earth did we become?

We didn't mind the change of pace Because our lives were full But to bury us before we're dead Is like red rag to a bull! So here you find me stuck inside For 4 weeks, maybe more I finally found myself again Then I had to close the door!

It didn't really bother me I'd while away the hour I'd bake for all the family But I've got no bloody flour!

Now Netflix is just wonderful I like a gutsy thriller I'm swooning over Idris Or some random sexy killer.

At least l've got a stash of booze
For when I'm being idle
There's wine and whiskey, even gin
If I'm feeling suicidal!

So let's all drink to lockdown
To recovery and health
And hope this bloody virus
Doesn't decimate our wealth.

We'll all get through the crisis
And be back to join our mates
Just hoping I'm not far too wide
To get back through the gate.
Author Unknown.



### Savi

I have sent you some pictures, not sure whether you well be able to use them. I am not a painter not nor a poet. I have given up knitting and crotchet some years ago as my hand went into spasms. I have knotted hundreds of jumpers for the children. However, I am still walking, if only around the block a couple of times.



#### I have been gardening:

planting out raspberry canes (autumn bliss) splitting perennials planting geraniums etc weeding general tidy of the garden



Washing a very old chandelier (dodgy) descaling and polishing the kettle, and toaster polishing brass door knobs sandpapering walls and doors

All the jobs which forgotten about. And,oh! a gin and tonic in the evenings
Let me know if you are able to use any of this rambling,
Keep well and stay, very best wishes,







This is me walking in Scotland a couple of days before lockdown. What a long time ago that seems. My husband drew the monster. It was a very eerie walk, just the 2 of us for miles. I hope you can use it.

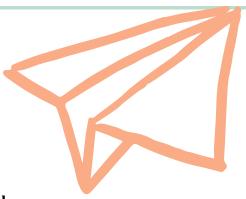


Thank you for your email. Your home sounds idyllic. Things are beginning to grow in the garden, I usually forget where I have put them. It is exciting. I have washed all the curtains, even cleaned out the garden shed. Yes, I hope the weather stays like for the weekend,



I hope you are remaining well. Well, this is the last of the photos! Please let me know you have received this, Until we meet again, keep well,

## Wendy



Ramblings re life during the pandemic lockdown:

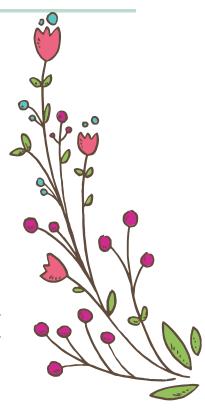
The lockdown began just days before we were due to fly to Australia, to see our son for the first time in 3 years. He was so excited about our visit and so were we. We were also going to meet his new partner for the first time, and she was very much looking forward to the visit too. Lockdown and the events leading up to it, obviously changed things and the trip was cancelled. Instead of enjoying a happy reunion in Australia, we found ourselves, like everyone else, having to comply with lockdown conditions and social isolation.

Our overall feelings were of sadness and disappointment at not being able to meet up with our son. The 1st week flew by as we were quite busy dismantling our trip, – phoning here there and everywhere, it seemed, cancelling various bookings and arrangements, we had made for our time in Australia.

The lockdown, per se, had little effect on us during the 1st week. There were so many things to be sorted out as a result of our trip being cancelled at such short notice, some of which had to fit in with a different time zone, that the corona virus situation did not really impact our lives at first. Soon afterwards, however, we realised how lucky we were, not to have set off on our intended journey. Had we done so, we would have been put into isolation for a couple of weeks on arrival in Melbourne. The need for the drastic actions of lockdown and isolation whilst essential, was clearly a matter of great national importance and concern.



On a personal level, we were not concerned about the lockdown itself, as we are very happy spending time at home together. There is always plenty to occupy us, so I could look forward to time at home. I was even beginning to relish the thought of having extra time to enjoy gardening, as it can be very relaxing. That being said, it is an extremely anxious time for everyone and naïvely, I didn't immediately realise that it could go on for some considerable time. I had overlooked the fact that we would not be happy for our daughter to have to do our shopping for us, and whilst appreciative of our younger neighbours' kind offers of help, we like to be independent, and do not like the thought of having to put people out at all.





Our independence was being eroded and I was not happy to have to accept that, even if 'only for the time being'. Politicians tell us that we are in a vulnerable age group, and that we have underlying health conditions that could cause serious problems if we were to contract Coved-19. This information is quite disturbing and made me feel quite anxious and vulnerable. We all know full well, that difficult decisions have to be made about the best use of medical resources and that consequently, difficult priorities have to be faced up to.

However, it does no one any good at all to be constantly reminded of these facts, as we are powerless to do anything to change them. I am quite annoyed and disturbed by the constant reminders, and occasionally quite demoralised. I need to know, or at least think, that I have a reasonable chance of living long enough to see our son again and spend a few more years with our daughter, son in law and grandson.

As time has gone by I, like everybody else, have experienced quite a range of emotions and thoughts - probably some justified and some not!



I am completely in awe, and full of admiration, for the many, many people, who are working tirelessly to ensure that those in need are given all the care that it is possible to give someone, even when they themselves are at great risk of becoming infected. We are extremely fortunate that there are such people around us.



I am grateful to all those individuals who are keeping essential services going for us, and all those people, of all ages, who are in a position to help others in the many ways we have heard about.



I am so sorry that so many families are having such a dreadful time and suffering the loss of family members, despite the selfless efforts of the people who are nursing the sick.



I am particularly saddened that so many have lost their lives having contracted the virus at their place of work, whilst nursing other victims.

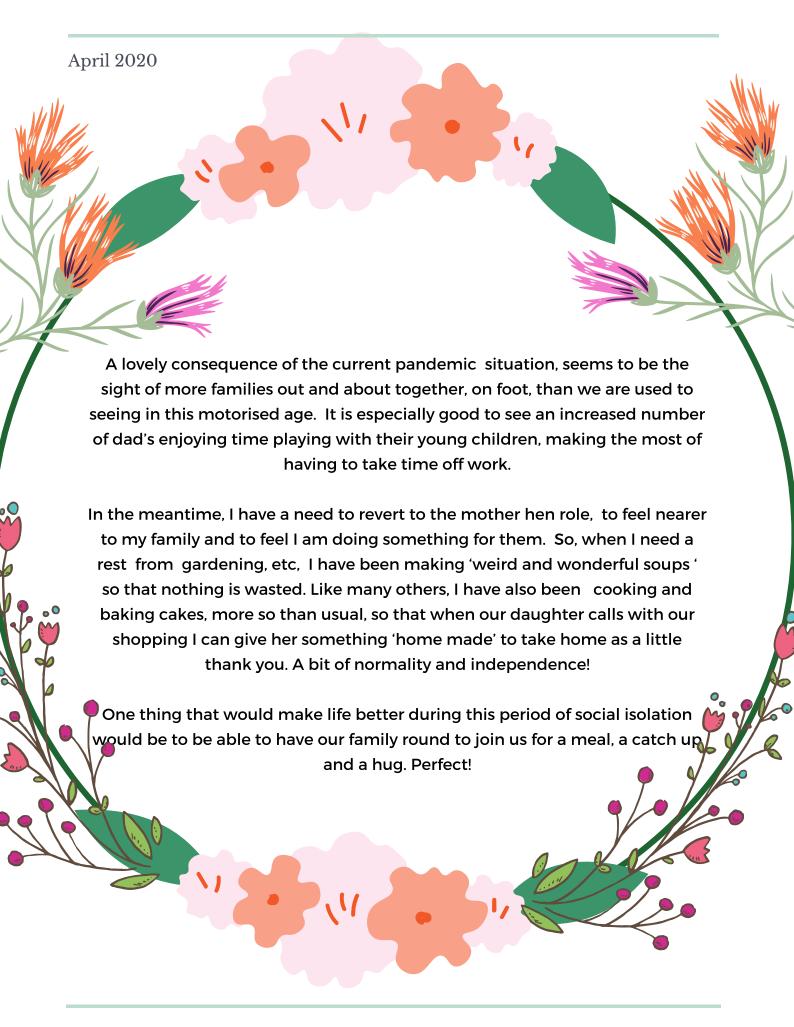


I am unhappy and uncomfortable that because of my age, I am deemed unsuitable to be out there helping in some way, when clearly there are various things I could be doing.



I am angry that not enough seems to have been done to provide enough PPE for those that are in need of it, and that some opportunities to acquire what is needed, seem to have been overlooked by our politicians.

I wish I had more confidence in the abilities of [some of] our politicians to make the right decisions on our behalf. Like everyone else, I have to accept the situation and get on with things and try to be positive about things generally. Like everyone else, I want life to be back to normal a.s.a.p. I also have much to be grateful for and should not and will not, lose sight of that.



# Marilyn



Tuesday 24th.

One of the worst effects of the virus for me has been not being able to visit my terminally ill cousin and best friend in hospital. She cannot even have her husband and daughter visiting. She is getting very depressed and giving up hope. I feel so sad, and at the same time angry that the virus has prevented so many people from having that support in times of desperate need. However, the lovely weather has encouraged my husband Peter and I to give our garden an overhaul. We are lucky that we have a large garden, so we don't feel hemmed in. Normally we are so busy that we haven't the time to even think about an overhaul. I suspect it will take all of the 3 months we are unable to go out, but that feels like a positive when I think about all those people stuck in flats, some of them even without a balcony.

#### Wednesday 25th

One bed ready to replant but unable to go the nursery- oh dear! will have to split plants from elsewhere to fill the gaps.

#### Thursday 26th

Our daughter who lives in Australia (and is worried about us being confined to our home) put out a plea on our village Facebook page for people to contact us in case we needed shopping etc. Our young friends in the village had already contacted us, but it was lovely to get a response from others that we didn't really know. All the neighbourhood was out clapping and banging pans for the NHS, it was an amazing sight. It felt quite uplifting in these times of crisis, I hope that the NHS and Carers know how much we admire all of them for taking the risks each day.



#### Friday 27th

A call from our son to make sure we are ok, even though he lives in Nottingham there is not a lot he can do apart from ring us regularly. Out in the garden again whilst the sun shines.

#### Saturday 28th

Received flowers from my son for Mother's Day, a lovely surprise. My daughter knows how I love reading so she sent me a voucher for Online Waterstones. I will take great delight in choosing books to help me through. Washing and cleaning day today so not out in the garden. Our son's birthday, we had a long conversation with him about how he is coping working from home.

#### Sunday 29th

A lovely sunny day again now, didn't expect it as it was snowing this morning. It is quite cold as we have a northeast wind blowing. Maybe I will try to do some gardening. Received our first Morrisons online order. Didn't get everything I needed as I was unable to add to the order. As it was the 1st time I had used it since I broke my foot about 5 years ago maybe I am not a priority. I am now unable to get anymore dates, perhaps I will ring and tell them I am a vulnerable person and see if that makes any difference!!!

#### Wednesday 1st April.

My first Zoom meeting today, after some initial problems got underway and it worked well. I started to think after this experience how society could change quite a bit in the future, our reluctance to use online services like E-consult could be a thing of the past. Certainly, if we didn't have the internet now our day to day lives would be a lot poorer.

#### Thursday 2nd April

We were all out again with our pans and clapping, but this time recognising that there are many more people who we need to support and cheers as they are working really hard and putting themselves at risk to keep all necessary services functioning.

Saturday 4th.

One of our neighbours offered to go for our Saturday paper and left us some cupcakes to eat whilst we were reading. Everybody is so kind and supportive.

#### Sunday 5th

Found out today that our local garden centre has gone online and has a click and collect service. That is great as we can now get on with our plans for the garden which will keep us occupied for weeks.

#### Monday 6th

My heart goes out to all the people who are trapped in flats some even without balconies, this seems to have become more focussed when I heard that we could have even tighter restrictions if people didn't obey the isolation rules. How will these people cope if they cannot go out into the parks and for a walk just because a very small number of people are disobeying the rule. I fear for the mental wellbeing of our nation when lockdown is over.

I know the government is giving out billions to keep companies solvent, but they seem to have forgotten the Charities that are providing services at grass roots level that will be a big loss to society if they are ignored. Charities like Relate who provide counselling for couples, families and children, their services are going to be essential when lockdown is over help people pick up the pieces of their relationships that have suffered.









#### Friday 10th

Had brilliant news at last, my cousin has been discharged from hospital. She is still terminally ill, but she has her husband and her garden to help her to enjoy life again. We still are unable to see her, but hopefully her quality of life will be better in her last days.

The supermarket saga, I still haven't been able to get a delivery date from Morrisons, they don't seem to be prioritising older people unless they are one of the 1.5. million at the most risk. All the supermarkets are the same. Luckily I filled my freezer before lockdown so all I have to source is fresh veg. and dairy. Our neighbours have been so kind as they will shop for us if necessary.

Some of our friends are in the 'at risk' lockdown and they are finding it difficult to be in total isolation. I am trying to ring them regularly, but it isn't the same as having visitors. I wish that they were more computer literate and then we could use Skype or Zoom. A lot of older people are very wary of their safety with these 'new-fangled ideas'. It was unfortunate that the Worth Connecting Project (which helps older people to use the internet and social media to reduce isolation) had not received the Lottery rollover bid they applied for recently to run training groups in the community. This project is part of the Positive Minds consortium in Bradford which promotes good mental health for older people. It is now more important than ever that we promote this as essential in our modern society.

#### Saturday 11th

I realise looking back I was on my soap box yesterday; I have decided that I will use my time to rewrite the bid and focus on how society could change coming out of lockdown. It seems to me that it will be even more important to GPs and the Local Authority for us to be computer literate. E-Consult, and online applications for most things are now going online. I have been out in the garden most of the day as our local garden centre has delivered our order. We can now start the redesign of our garden. It is so peaceful in the garden; the birds are singing, and the bees are buzzing in the shrubs that they seem to love. A couple of early flowering shrubs that the bees are attracted to have the most beautiful perfume, I was thinking that it would be lovely to bottle it and send it out to those people who are stuck in apartments unable to see how beautiful the world is in the spring. I feel so lucky to have a large garden where lots of wildlife roam, unfortunately there are also slugs as well!!

#### Sunday 12th

On Skype with our daughter and grandsons in Australia this morning. They are all on lockdown and my youngest grandson of 14 is really bored as he is very sporty so doesn't like being cooped up. The deaths out there seem to have been limited by the stringent methods of policing, they can be fined £500 is they are caught outside without permission. My daughter is a midwife, so she is still working in Sydney, but our middle grandson, who is on exchange at Barcelona Uni, has had the virus but fortunately not seriously. I wonder how the virus is going to change globalisation, will we be all so eager to travel? Housework and washing today as I have not had time before due to being too busy!! I don't know where the time is going, I thought I was going to be bored but so far this hasn't happened. I am also trying lots of new recipes, Peter hasn't complained, but I know there are those that I will cross off the list for the future.

#### Monday 13th

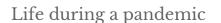
Going to have a catch-up day today with my knitting and sewing. I am sure I will be occupied all day with that. It is very cold here today so staying in is the best option.

#### Wednesday 15th

I felt like I was back at work today with taking part in Zoom meetings and telephone calls. It got me thinking again about how life might change if our esteemed bosses decide that they want us to work from home most of the time. One of the reasons I am involved with volunteering is because I want to get out of the house to have meaningful interaction face to face. As I was a counsellor in previous life I know how important the feelings in the room are in encouraging positive dialog about very difficult and complex topics. If we don't have this opportunity the world will be a poor place.

#### Thursday 16th

We went on and unexpected outing today which lasted a lot longer than we intended. As we have not been able to get online to have an order delivered, and we wanted some things that are out of the ordinary, we decided we would go to the supermarket.



After getting to the car park of 5 different ones, and the queues were so long we decided to go home; we then espied Lidl in Bingley, NO QUEUE, we rushed in and were really surprised when we found most of what we wanted without feeling at risk. After 1 and a half hours I came home satisfied that I could continue to fill some of my time experimenting in the kitchen with new recipes. I never thought that this would ever be the highlight of my day.

#### Friday 17th

The last day, and what have I learnt. I have learnt that my garden is so important to my mental health, just looking out the window in the morning at the Magnolia and Cherry trees makes the start of the day worthwhile.

It has been highlighted how important our local communities are to all of us. Perhaps this is something I was very aware of when I was a child just after the war when we were very involved in the village and the local church. As I have got older this seems to have become less important. It has now come to the fore again in times of crisis. My neighbours have been so kind in offering help if needed, coming around and leaving us little gifts of cake and chocolate on the doorstep. We have had conversations at 2 metres when we have been in the front garden working; maybe in the past it would just be good morning.



I have once again been reminded of how privileged I am to have a garden and room to have my own space in the house. When I think about how so many people are cramped into small flats with children, it makes me very sad that some of them don't even have a park in which to take exercise.

I have also appreciated having a partner to talk to and do things with, probably more than usual as we have seen more of each other since lockdown than we have ever done except when we have been on holiday. Phone calls to and from friends, some of whom are on their own has been welcome by all of us. Contact on text and online is fine but the sound of a friendly voice is important to us when we are isolated.

I also appreciate that I was taught by my parents and grandparents how to knit, sew and cook as this has meant that along with being an avid reader my time is well spent.

Last but not least I miss the freedom that we have come to expect over the years, but the wide-open spaces will be there for us to enjoy when lockdown ends.

I won't repeat the comments I have made earlier in the diary.

Just to say that I have enjoyed doing this as I haven't written a diary since I was a teenager.



# Hilary

**M** medicines maybe messages menu planning

Medics money

A ambulances armchair alcohol

Amazing nature anger

R relaxation rainbows radio routine

Relationships religion

C chocolate coffee credit card cousins' communications

Conference calls clapping clouds China care

CORONAVIRUS COVID19

H help hello hospitals heroes

2 Items only metres away

3 birds in the garden phone calls a day

yogurts in the pack | loo rolls left!

R repetitive

D daytime TV Daphne (my Mum) deliveries

Death debit cards













# David - Finding the funny side...





Day 14 of isolation and I feel my knitting is getting out of hand

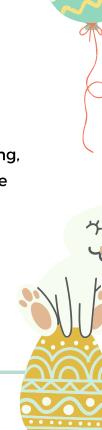
Thought I'd give crocheting a go

# Pam - embracing creativity & hope



**EASTER 2020** 

No family, no Easter baking, no Easter egg hunts in the garden but still hope and love.

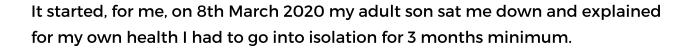






## Margaret

#### Margaret's potted diary so far of 5 weeks in lockdown



In the following week, after 3 days at home, I escaped to a meeting at Wakefield CCG to discuss the disconnect when discharged from hospital between secondary and primary care. Two days later, I sneaked into Leeds City to purchase theatre tickets for other people and I got caught! My son was tracking my movements through my phone and I was given a severe talking to and basically placed behind bars in my house – alone.

#### 14th March



This son of mine had asked me to make 3 kilometres of bunting for his wedding so I started cutting triangles and sewing them into pennants, I thought I would be finished in 2 weeks, how I misjudged that.

It felt like a sweat shop set up, continuously sewing away for 12 hours a day. Interspersed with more cutting, ironing the pennants and hoovering up the bits etc.



#### 19th March

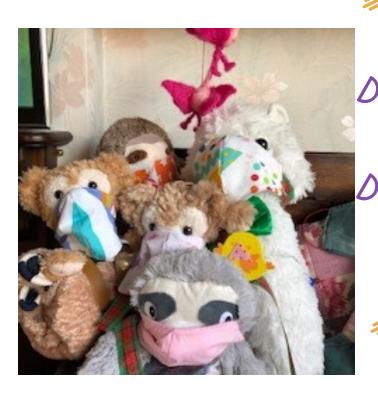
broke down the monotony by repurposing a Christmas wreath. For spring. Dotted through this isolation time I was working online to support my other NHS and volunteering committees. Cancelling AGMs and formal lunches, applying for refunds for the theatre tickets and setting up support groups by email. A new word came into my vocabulary - VOOMING, and actually getting down to use What's App, Twitter and Facebook that I had joined in 2015 but never used.

My son took requests for shopping and delivered once a week to the back door, speaking to me through a window of having to wash down all packaging and bags with dilute bleach and even to stand back from the closed window but I could not hear what he was saying. Life was becoming surreal.

#### 25th March

To break the intensity of bunting I decided to be prepared and make Fu face masks for myself, my son and his partner who are both keyworkers.

I made 25 so that they could be disposed of and everyone in the house had to try them out, even the flamingos!









31st March

A surprise, looking out into the front garden, the sunshine had brought out a self-seeded pansy in an oasis of moss.

#### 4th April

I am also organising a public sculpture display (now postponed) from recycled plastic bottles with a group I run. About 6 of us are have been planning and working slowly since January to gradually build up our flowers so I was cutting up bottles, painting, varnishing, drilling holes and assembling flowers.

The varnishing process has to be done outside due to the fumes. However, it was windy and the flowers blew all over the garden.

#### Total of 479 flowers made - so far!

#### 8th April

I had set a competition to egg-travagantly decorate Easter eggs and roll them in Roundhay Park. I altered the outing to a photo exchange and a virtual group visit to Edinburgh Zoo and the Louvre.

10th April, I had a carton of milk at its sell by date. I did not wish to waste the milk so I made cottage cheese by adding lemon juice. It was rather like a chemical process precipitating out the "cheese" Mmmm, pretty tasteless but by adding garlic, spring onions, paprika and seasoning, it was edible but not a process I would rush to repeat!

13th April and the bunting continues, I had the fabric and the thread but before lock down I only had 500m of bias binding tape so I had to learn how to make continuous lengths of bias binding. A mathematical origami challenge! My neighbour had given me a pair of small bedroom Laura Ashley curtains and I was able to make another 200m from the gifted material. I then washed and recycled old cotton (dust) sheets to make a further 1 kilometre of bias binding.







Life during a pandemic

2 kilometre of bunting and the wedding is postponed for a year so I still have plenty time to make another kilometre! But quite honestly, I need a break.

14th April and this is one I made earlier but thought it was appropriate to place in an upstairs window to support the NHS.



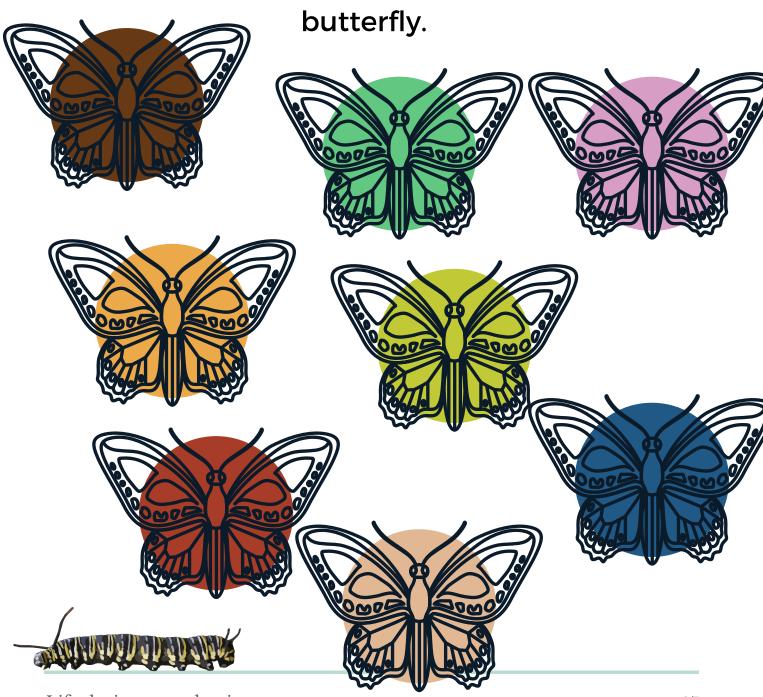
Now I have plenty of time to - a good Yorkshire saying - "Bottom out" the garden if I only knew what to do with the mountains of grass cuttings and copious weeds now that my brown bin is absolutely full and will not be collected until further notice.

Decluttering, tidying up the paperwork and cleaning out cupboards and drawers is haunting me but I would much rather have some fun and escape to Luna Park, Scarborough.

The next projects I have set my group is decorating a stick, pole/chair leg or the like as a mini Maypole for 1st May and June's challenge is to carve/sculpt a bar or soap.

On a serious note, there is even more to do to improve the patients experience of primary and secondary care as they navigate their way through cancellations and cessation of operations and treatments. "IT" that shall not be named has and will continue to transform healthcare delivery.

We are in a Global Metamorphous just as you think the caterpillar is dying it turns into a butterfly.



## LIFE DURING A PANDEMIC

In a time of crisis, the peoples of the world must rush to get to know each other. - Jose Marti

Massive thank you for all the contributions and everyone that has been involved. We hope you enjoyed this as much as we did!

Stay safe <3

Booklet created and collated by Olivia Joseph and Claire Marsh on 29thApril 2020.

