

LOCKDOWN

My Life in 2020

Background

I had a stroke on July 30th 2017 in the island of Montserrat, a British overseas territory. I came to the UK on 14th October to access treatment, therapy and support. My then 17-year-old son came to the UK in January 2018, my great support, going to my numerous appointments.....General practitioner, hospital, consultant, therapy, support groups, dental and optician etc....

BEFORE LOCKDOWN

NOW, two years and 11 months since the LIFE ALTERING EVENT , I have become independent, going to most, if not all of my appointments ,support groups, taking the train, the bus, visiting family and friends on my own. 😊😊

- On Mondays, I go to a ladies group at church, at 12.00 for one hour. I then take the 1:15 train then the bus to a college for the Stroke Choir from 2:30 to 4:30pm.
- On Tuesdays, I attend a Conversation Group from 10:30am to 12:30pm.
- Occasionally, on Wednesdays, I also attend another conversation group from 10:30am- 12:30pm.
- On Thursdays, I attend a stroke support group biweekly, from 12:30 to 4:00pm. I have been attending this group for 2 1/2 years.
 - Sit Down Exercise session—12:30 to 1:15pm
 - Two course lunch at 1:15pm, followed by
 - Arts and crafts from 2:00 to 4:00pm E.g. card making, colouring, knitting, glass painting, bracelets making with beads, puzzles, board games etc
 - Trips, for example to Garden centre and the park.
 - Christmas lunch at a hotel.

In addition, I often visit family and friends, do a bit of shopping sometimes, doing word search in my puzzle book. I always find time to read from my kindle and do some Constant Therapy which is an app for people who have aphasia.

LOCKDOWN

And then came COVID-19 - all my support groups were closed because we are vulnerable, susceptible, medical issues. I had an important appointment on Friday 20th of March at the Hospital, and then I had to pick up my glasses from Spec-savers on Monday 23rd. I did not get a letter from the Government, but I decided to stay inside for as I considered myself vulnerable. It was ten weeks before I came out for a walk outside of my home environment.

As a result of COVID-19 virus, persons now communicate a lot more using other methods, such as Messenger, WhatsApp video and calls, Skype, Emails, FaceTime, Facebook calls and even phone calls. It becomes even more important to keep in touch with family, friends, co-worker and even church family, since we cannot physically meet for a cup of tea or coffee and other social activities.

There is a **New** normal way of doing things virtually....Zoom Meetings are now very popular.

- Zoom meetings on Tuesdays an Aphasia Conversation Group at 10.30-12noon
- Zoom meetings on Wednesdays with a different Aphasia Conversation Group at 11.00-12.30pm. This group is very new, started during the lockdown .
The two conversations groups are very interesting with a range of topics such as Food, Law and Order, Lockdown, Sports, Theatre and films, Mountain and Buildings around the world, Past and Present . These topics generate and produce a lot of considerable discussion. A quiz always precedes the discourse .
- Occasionally, Zoom meeting with the Ladies group from church on Mondays 12 to 1:30pm.
- Skype calls/session on Mondays at 2:00 to 3:30pm for 6 weeks from June 15 2020. This is the summer group sessions, organised by the CommuniCATE Aphasia Clinic, City University, facilitated by Jayne, Celia along with Speech and therapy students.
- Recently, I have joined Zoom meetings with an aphasia group with a university in the USA. These zoom communication support sessions have been facilitated by that is the Department of Speech and Language Pathology and the Masters students. There is an array of subjects weekly and sessions from Sunday to Thursday, at Eastern Standard Time. These include: family and friends, greatest athletes of all time, music trivia, a day at the beach, gardening, grocery shopping and national parks.



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Some of the most exciting time were our game nights using zoom.
FAMILY GAMES using Zoom...with my mom in Montserrat in the Caribbean, my sister and nephew in Texas, my brother, my son and I in the United Kingdom. There were lots of laughter, lively, entertainment and fun . Among the games we played were Bingo and Scavenger hunt..... Find an item in the roombeginning with the letter.....FAMILY and CORONA

Examples of the bingo cards

Covid with the Family			
Played Online Game	Read a book/magazine	Watched Online Church	Been on a Zoom call more than once
Watched Your Favorite Show	Ate Ice Cream	Exercised Multiple times a week	Worked on a puzzle
Cooked or Ate Soup	Talked to Friend/Family on the Phone	Listen to the News Multiple Times	Ate Fruits This Morning
Been to the Grocery Store	Shared a Meme/Joke	Used Hand Sanitizer	Worn a Mask/Face Covering

Covid with the Family			
Talked to Friend/Family on the Phone	Shared a Meme/Joke	Ate Fruits This Morning	Been to the Grocery Store
Read a book/magazine	Used Hand Sanitizer	Listen to the News Multiple Times	Played Online Game
Watched Your Favorite Show	Worn a Mask/Face Covering	Cooked or Ate Soup	Worked on a puzzle
Exercised Multiple times a week	Ate Ice Cream	Been on a Zoom call more than once	Watched Online Church

Covid with the Family			
Been on a Zoom call more than once	Exercised Multiple times a week	Watched Online Church	Worn a Mask/Face Covering
Talked to Friend/Family on the Phone	Worked on a puzzle	Cooked or Ate Soup	Ate Ice Cream
Listen to the News Multiple Times	Read a book/magazine	Ate Fruits This Morning	Used Hand Sanitizer
Played Online Game	Shared a Meme/Joke	Been to the Grocery Store	Watched Your Favorite Show

- WORD SEARCH PUZZLES — these stimulate the mind.
Word games on the Ipad and tablet example Word search, Wordscapes, Word Connect and other games.
- Reading
- Constant therapy every day as I have more time
- Do online at times shopping for groceries

POSITIVES FROM LOCKDOWN

There are many benefits and positives that came out from the Lockdown and persons staying at home.

- ❖ My sister who lives in Texas, has been doing a lot of cooking and baking with her 12-year-old son especially on the weekends. They have also been trying out new recipes. Example of the goodies include Apple Pie crisp, Tacos, sour dough bread, cookies, Chicken Pot Pie, Apple tart, Lemon Blueberry scones, Quiche etc

Some of my sister's and nephew's delights....



- ❖ My son is working from home because of the lockdown, as the result, I see him a lot more, sometimes we eat lunch together. We now have more time to socialise, clown around, and watching movies.



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- ❖ Families have spent quality time, cooking and eat meals together, have barbecue, movies night, play board games and lots of time to communicate with each other.



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- ❖ I have a friend who has been able to exercise by walking, twice a day, in addition to having a siesta during the day. This would not be possible before because of his extremely busy schedule.



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- ❖ I have friends and family who have been doing some planting and gardening, some for the first while others have increased their output, during this time.



- ❖ Persons have observed, feeding, and listening the birds. Others can now time enjoy the beautiful, flowers and its smell. Also it was much quieter, due to less traffic.



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- ❖ Persons have also learnt a new skill during the lockdown, for example, learning to sew, crochet and knit. While others use their ability, dexterity and creativity and spare time to produce different items like blankets, hats, socks and scarves.



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I have benefited personally from staying at home, and also from hearing family and friends share their stories. I have become a bit more tech savvy and learnt how to use Skype and Zoom.

Persons have been able to take time from our busy schedules and busyness, and spend quality time with family. As a result, we can all treasure, appreciate and value the time spent with loved ones.

I hope some positive lessons were learnt during the lockdown will continue long after we have turned back to some normalcy.



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