



This Is What Happens in Lockdown.

I finally finished that tea cosy I said I would make for mum ! ~ Joanne Woolgar

I recently sent this photo to my brother, who has now asked for a tea cosy of his own. His daughter asked if it was knitting or crochet ... "its knitting!"

Another friend who saw it is now sending me a creative project of her own ... and it sparked another conversation with another friend who is currently off work from being a construction worker and is using the time to invest in his online business of building custom-made guitar pedal boards in wood. (He loves wood working and guitars). It also sparked another conversation with my mum about creativity and food. My mum had said to me years ago : "I can't make anything. I'm not creative." But in this conversation she said: "I wanted something to eat, just something simple and there wasn't loads of stuff in the fridge ... so I took a few lettuce leaves , grated some cheddar cheese on them and added a handful of blueberries. And actually, it was really tasty ! I never would have thought to do that before the lockdown."

I said to my mum: "Do you think the lockdown is causing us to draw on reserves of creativity that we didn't realise we had before?". Mum said: "yes, actually."

I said: "See ! You *are* creative ! I *said* you were!"

These conversations and creative sharings may not seem all that unusual to some - but I mention them because they *are* unusual in my own personal experience. I am communicating more with my family and friends and sharing my creativity and thoughts more, which is a change for me, brought about, in large part by the restrictions brought on by the pandemic. I like these changes in me and I trust them. They feel healthy and it feels like something has been liberated in me that was not so free before the pandemic. Ironically, this increased sense of freedom has been triggered by being in a restricted environment but this change in me is something that I can take with me, after the pandemic and something that I can be in charge of and maintain as a new norm for myself ... which feels personally empowering and do-able!

During these times we understandably look to the media to seek out information about how the pandemic situation is being managed and what advice there is for us...but we are not *all* President of the World Health Organisation or the Prime Minister or head of a large organisation and we are not all epidemiologists ..we haven't all read hundreds of books on that subject or the subject of change in our society. We are not all experts ...but we *are* all ourselves and we're here ! And this is something we can give trust to and practise giving trust to. In my view, every single one of us possesses our own innate abilities, ideas, thoughts, feelings, our own bodies, imagination, intuition, empathy, creativity....

Maybe make your own list for you ? What makes a you? Each of us is uniquely us and I think, if we start to look, we can see that we are hugely resourced ... and we can trust that.

We often take the news seriously and we can take ourselves seriously too.

For me personally, I feel it's good for me not to forget that I am actually already President of my own personal World Health Organisation, looking after the World Health of my own individual body which, in its own way, is as awesome as an entire world when you look at it closely. My inner President (which is my feeling, intuition, sense of inner 'knowing') has told me that sharing and communicating with my friends and family feels healthy, so I am taking that feeling seriously and taking the advice of my inner President to continue doing that sharing, even after the pandemic because it represents a change to a new healthier norm for me.

The most important thing for me to realise is that I can trust myself and trust feelings that are coming up for me now, that perhaps I may not have listened to before the pandemic in the same way that my mum is now meeting a creativity inside herself that she didn't realise was there before.

And the most amazing thing of all - I have the capacity to welcome change in myself. The actual President of the World Health Organisation can't really change me, nor can anyone else. But I can change me.

So next time you're watching the news, and maybe there might be a feeling of being out of control or out of the loop ... remember you are the most empowered person in the world and in your world ..because only you have the power and the freedom to change yourself or not change yourself. It's entirely your choice, which is a good thing to know.

I recently saw an article by reporter, Lucy Binding, for Sky News quoting a survey commissioned by the Royal Society of Arts alongside the Food Foundation, as part of its work to draw up an action plan for more sustainable food and farming, land use and the rural economy. The survey suggests: "Only 9 percent of Britons want life to return to 'normal' after the coronavirus is over."

To me, it feels like a lot of people would like to see change.

We don't necessarily have to see change as being a big thing that involves trying to change a lot of other people and a big struggle. What we do have, in abundance, is the capacity to welcome change in our own selves, if it feels right and if it feels healthy for us. This is a kind of change that's free, do-able, it can happen right now and you're in charge of it. You don't even have to be an expert!

That's my feeling.

Right... now I am going to knit another tea cosy.

Joanne is a film maker and artist