



Reimagining life after quarantine by Emma Symons

It's now been just over two months since we all went into lockdown and for those who have been working from home or furloughed, it's probably been a time of frustration, boredom and wishing it was over.

I'm pretty sure we are all wondering; 'What happens next?'

Although this pandemic is a bad thing, it is also enabling us to reflect on the path that we are on and where it leads. A recent survey in China showed that, post pandemic, people have become more interested in financial responsibility, stronger relationships, spirituality and self development. If you're waiting for things to get back to normal, maybe it's worth taking time to explore how things might improve if they don't go back to normal.

Here are some ways to reimagine life after lockdown:



Productivity and Career

Were you a workaholic before this? Was work stress overwhelming you? Maybe this is a time to consider being less productive. Perhaps you need to look at being less efficient or less ambitious. Consider how you can unapologetically slow down and catch your breath. While many businesses are having to rethink the way they work, perhaps you can look at the way you work too and make some changes to what used to be normal for you.

Family and Friends

While we have been socially distancing, more of us have been turning to things like Facetime, Zoom and Skype to keep in touch with family and friends that we are unable to visit. Perhaps this is a trend that we should continue. As I live quite a distance from my family, I have certainly been thinking that the weekly Facetime sessions we have been enjoying should continue as a way to not just keep in touch but to also see my family without actually visiting them.



Self-Care

One big thing that has come out of this pandemic is that people are exercising more. Families are cycling and walking together and taking time to get out in the fresh air which is a great way to reduce stress and boost your immune system. It would be easy to fall back in to the hustle and bustle of normal life and to forget to do these things. Make self-care a priority once this all ends. Make time to still cycle or walk with your family and to spend at least an hour every week out in nature and recharging your batteries.

Staycationing!

We keep mentioning the importance of booking time off to rest and recuperate, and whilst the benefits may be obvious, the thought of booking a holiday to stay at home seems a little alien. Yet whilst we may not be able to physically visit the places we'd like to at the moment, there are ways in which you can bring the holiday to your own home and embrace everything a staycation has to offer: no packing, your own bed, no food poisoning from dodgy local cuisines and think of the money you'll save too... Ok, it's clearly not the same, but embrace the possibilities and you never know, you may fall in love with camping! This website has some great ideas to get you started...so get booking that time off!

www.travelbugsworld.com/73-in-home-staycation-ideas-during-lockdown



Quarantini time! by Bobbie Yoong

Lemon Shandy Refresher

This icy cold cocktail will no doubt cool you down on hot day. Serves up to 10 depending on the glass used and ice amount or keep the mix on hand for when you feel like a refreshing drink.

INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup sugar

1/4 cup water

1 cup lemon juice, freshly squeezed

1-3/4 cup dry gin

2 to 3 bottles of beer (ie. Sol – maybe not Corona!)

Lemon wedges, for serving

Mint sprigs, for garnish

1. Add the sugar and water to a small saucepan. Bring to a low boil and stir until the sugar has dissolved. Let cool completely before using in this recipe. Can be made in advance and refrigerated.

2. Pour lemon juice into a carafe or pitcher. Add in simple syrup and gin. Stir to combine.

3. Fill glasses with ice, fill just under 3/4 of the way full and top off with beer. 1 bottle should cover about 4 servings.

4. Add a squeeze of lemon and a sprig of fresh mint and serve immediately. Give this recipe a slushie twist by popping all of the ingredients into a blender together with a lemon and lime calippo ice lolly and blitz! (Thanks Liz McGerty for this 'cool' suggestion!)

"Just breathe. You are strong enough to handle your challenges, wise enough to find solutions to your problems, and capable enough to do whatever needs to be done." Lori Deschene

If you find yourself at a loose end – box set finished, painting projects complete – check out Ted Talks: www.ted.com/talks Over 3,000 talks covering an incredible array of topics to stimulate curiosity and the old grey matter. No longer than 20 minutes in length, they are perfect to dip in and out of as you fancy.

Hormone balancing tips from Elaine

We can all experience hormonal changes as we get older which may manifest themselves through insomnia, anxiety, brain fog, mood changes, increased appetite and hair loss to name a few. There are a few things we can do to help along the way...

Hot flushes Avoid spicy foods, salty and sweet foods, caffeine and alcohol. Grapeseed extract is known to reduce hot flushes, depression and promotes a good sleep. Romaine lettuce is also known to help with relaxation and sleep due to containing phytonutrients.

Lack of concentration, mood swings Eat more oily fish, bananas, avocados, citrus fruit and vegetables. If you don't like fish, it's good to take a supplement such as Omega 3 and 6 oils with flaxseed. B vitamins are depleted during hormonal changes so a good vitamin B complex is beneficial. Foods to include for vitamin B should be lean red meat, sunflower seeds, eggs and brown rice. A good quality dark chocolate with minimum 70% cocoa (higher cocoa content, less sugar) is great for concentration as it contains compounds that increases blood flow to the brain. Keep to a maximum of two squares per day.

Hair loss Selenium which is found in brazil nuts are great for the scalp as well as the skin. Again, you can always take a supplement which you can buy from Holland & Barrett or Amazon. Just check the reviews before you purchase!

Bone density In some cases, changes in hormones can reduce bone density which can cause osteoporosis. Ensure your diet contains dairy – there has been evidence to show women who eat more dairy can have a reduced risk of early menopause. Skimmed/semi-skimmed milk, low fat cheese and yogurt all contain vitamin D and calcium which is amazing for bones. Calcium tablets can also help; I read a while back that if you take calcium tablets with fresh orange juice, the absorption of calcium is greater. Increase your exercise, especially light weight training as this will build up bone density.



Quick recipe for chocolate mousse

I blend one avocado, four dates, one cup of milk – I use goat's but you can use any, a tiny pinch of sea salt and two tablespoons of cocoa powder (a higher percentage of cocoa is the best such as 70%). Blend all the ingredients together and there is your mousse, easy! You are getting the benefit of good oils and fats from the avocado, calcium from the milk and dates which contain lots of B vitamins, fibre and minerals. Dates are high in natural sugars so you can minimise the amount you have in this recipe. People who work out a lot are also known to include a couple of dates in their diets for a source of natural energy.

