

Life in Lockdown

Blog Post 2 – 4th May 2020

I think that if someone had told me six months ago that we would be away from College for six weeks (and counting) I would have probably have reached for a straitjacket (ask your parents and carers!). The world, our country and our College are all now a very different place. We work differently, shop differently and even communicate differently because of these changes and change, for some, isn't always a good thing.

A lot of us dislike change; our routine is a security blanket and taking away that blanket can often cause uncertainty, unhappiness and stress. I have to admit, I hate change, any change, even the smallest of things not done the 'normal' way can leave me tutting, head shaking and muttering beneath my breath. Therefore, knowing I hate change has caused me to confront it head-on. I have had to develop, to embrace the change, enjoy the change in routine, find fulfilment in different ways. Is it working? In a word: No! However, like every challenge that life throws you, you have to find the positives. As the saying goes, 'If Life gives you Lemons, make Lemonade' or as Dolly Parton (ask your Parents and Carers) once said, 'You can't have a rainbow without the rain.'

With that in mind, like many, I have tried to meet the challenge. How? Well, there have been positives: I have met and helped new people through the GoodSamApp, I have gone back to running, I have tidied, organised and recycled, I have learned to appreciate the company of others. Another aspect has been to keep in touch with all the wonderful students at our College. It has been humbling to read your work, inspiring to talk to some of you, fulfilling to help others. And that's the thing isn't it? The really important thing in all of this: it's not about just coping and surviving, it's about growing and developing.

Our College is an incredible, vibrant, talented, multicultural community. We work hard, play hard, sing, dance, act, write, read, construct, experiment, debate, challenge, explain, analyse. Think about all the things that you are encouraged to do each week. Although our style of teaching and learning has changed, our College is still there whether we are at home or not and our College continues to develop. We all have a part to play. What's your part? That's not for me to say, but you DO have a part and more importantly, YOU get to choose it.

I came into teaching to help, support and educate young people and believe me, that has changed considerably in the 20 years I have been a teacher. Every day I try to play my part in a job I love. But the world is ever-changing. You're learning without a physical teacher in front of you for the first time...and you're coping! However, we all need to be a College community, we all need to support each other and each of us can help another. My sister sent me the poem below from one of her friends. As you read it, are you someone who would appreciate the support to keep going?

Can you support someone else? Maybe in your household or your family? Maybe in one of your classes? Maybe your words can help our College? Take this opportunity to play YOUR part.

I offer you this poem as a show of support, for all of you reading this: students, parents, carers. You may hate change, you may be struggling, but know that as part of OUR Community we are all here to help you to Keep Going:

“Keep going. Keep going. Keep going.”

The world is so big,
and we're all so small.
Sometimes it feels like
we can't do anything at all.
But the world can be better
(in spite of its flaws).
The world can be better,
and you'll be the cause.
Even though the waves
are bigger than our boats...
the wind keeps us sailing;
its love gives us hope.
Some days it's dark,
but we'll keep on rowing,
because people like you whisper,
“Keep going, keep going, keep going”

Mr Matyla