

What is on my mind today?

As ever there are lots of things that are always on my mind, but I have not had the time, space or motivation over the past few weeks to write about them.

Summer is always a busy time with 3 kids, the end of term activities, a growing garden quite rightly calling for my attention and unusually for me, a few health

challenges - that's if you discount the menopause of course, which is just an on-going companion that has now moved in with me.

I ruptured my achilles tendon back in March and sadly it has not healed as expected, so I limp around a bit, sometimes fall over, feel a bit sorry for myself, have a rant at the dodgy and somewhat arrogant approach taken by the NHS consultants who were tasked with treating the rupture (and subsequently failed) and now I've booked to see a private consultant and get a private MRI scan to work out what on earth is going on and how it can be healed. Sometimes you just have to choose your battles, wrongly or rightly and being able to walk and do exercise is a fundamental part of my mental and emotional health, so I've decided to suck it up and do what needs to be done, albeit at a price.

And then there has been the on-going tooth saga - a root canal filling that went a bit wrong, i.e. despite her very best efforts my dentist was unable to access the roots, followed by a bout of neuralgia, so I was referred to a specialist who did manage to carry out the root canal filling but the neuralgia has continued and I can only hope will subside once the tooth that has undergone the root canal filling is crowned - in a few weeks time, so fingers crossed on that front and in the meanwhile it's painkillers and nerve blockers galore.

So, all in all I have found it a bit tricky to create the space in my head to have a good old think and try and write some stuff that's off use to others and provides a bit of self therapy for me too.

And it is only now, as I sit in a beautiful, tiny Greek village on our summer hols, away from all distractions and my ever expanding to do list, that I have found the motivation and creativity to write again. So, it just goes to show, that the busier we get, the more stressed we get, the more distracted we get, the less creative, self-aware, observant, patient and content we become.

Isn't it ironic that the world we have created, the pace at which we are forced to live, works in direct opposition to the fundamental needs we have. You cannot nurture your mind, body or soul, by running round at a million miles an hour, speed dating your friends and family and being judged by how much you have accomplished, no you nurture yourself by going off grid, even if just for a tiny amount of time, sitting or walking in silence and just thinking, or observing, or gazing at your navel if you fancy it.

So, there is no real theme to this very long overdue newsletter, it's just a collection of short posts that I have written over time that feel important to me now and perhaps if they feel important to me, then maybe they might just be of help to you too.

As ever shared with love and a genuine intent to help others navigate their way through this mad thing called life.

Let's get some perspective.

Inspiration from the author Mark Manson

Mark Manson's book 'Everything is F*cked - a book about hope', talks about hopelessness as:

"the uncomfortable truth, a silent realisation that in the face of infinity, everything we could possibly care about quickly approaches zero."

He has a point, we all die right?

But does that mean we have no hope, no future? No, I do not believe so and neither does he. It is precisely because of this fact, that we should all seize the day, today, because:

1. Our
time
here
is
short,
no
one
is
getting
out
alive
2. Very
few
of
us
are
handed
our
dreams
on
a
plate
3. All
of
us
will
experience
loss
at

- some
point
4. We
will
all
feel
fear
and
be
judged

But, we are not hopeless because we do have choices:

1. We
can
think
about
mortality
with
a
different
perspective
-
by
fully
acknowledging
that
we
do
have
an
end
date,
we
are
more
able
to
live
in
the
present,
as
fully
and
authentically
as
possible.
2. We
can
feel

our
intuition
rather
than
just
thinking
with
our
heads,
to
enable
our
dreams
to
take
shape
and
go
after
them,
rather
than
allowing
others
to
steal
our
minds
and
crush
our
spirit
because
no
one
should
be
allowed
to
tell
you
who
you
are,
or
what
to
think
about
yourself
-
that's

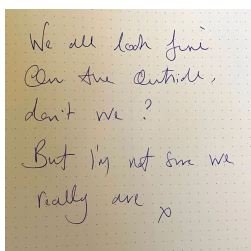
your
job
alone,
so
please
choose
your
words
carefully
and
be
cognisant
of
the
constraints
we
often
put
on
ourselves,
because
it
takes
more
courage
not
to.

3. We
can
embrace
the
sadness
of
loss
and
grief
as
part
of
us,
because
it
is
feeling
it
that
keep
us
alive
and
is
a

constant
reminder
of
the
joy
and
love
that
has
flowed
through
our
lives
and
indeed
shows
us
how
loveable
we
really
are
and
that
in
itself
means
we
always
have
hope.

So, the point to this post is to say that in the scope of life, mortality, the bigger picture, much of what we worry about in the here and now and allow to constrain us, is really not quite as important as we think it is and we often have more choices than we can see.

Step back, create some space, allow the light in, consider your mortality and allow your dreams to breath and start to live your life, in your way, today.



The real story is always behind what you actually see

We think that we all look fine on the outside don't we?

But the builder had to come alone because his mate did

not turn up for work that day, because his nerves were so bad he could not bare to face another soul.

The lady in the hairdressers was having a rare treat to take her mind off her husbands descent into depression and her feeling of hopelessness as she was forced to watch, unable to stop it.

The gentleman stood in the queue at the supermarket, was buying food he knew he would not eat, but could not face the fact that his wife had died and was therefore still buying enough for their evening meal together.

The lady at the post office was beyond relieved when she received a smile and asked if she was ok, as she had taken several verbal assaults about the constant queue and missing parcels during the day.

The vet looked like she had not slept for a month, as a year later and she is valiantly struggling on, running a large surgery on her own, as there is a national shortage of vets, but her love for her job keeps her going.

And these are merely a few examples of the struggles I see people carrying each and everyday.

The fact is most people are not actually ok.

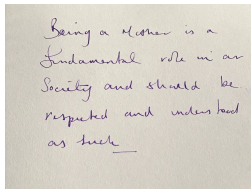
There are so many traumas and challenges being carried by so many people, much of them in isolation - ironically not shared because of the fear of judgement or repercussions that will only serve to increase their burden, when it would, in fact, give others the permission to say 'me too'.

Life will always be challenging, we will all have periods of overwhelm, sadness and loss.

And the trick is not to ignore them or hide them from others, but to use the priceless gifts we all have of connection, kindness and courage, to share your true self and to stand with another, as we all try our very best to navigate our way through this mad thing called life.

So, no matter how sh*t your day, please remember to keep smiling at your fellow human beings and allow them to smile back at you too, because you might just find that you have much more in common than you think and that smile might just be the connection that changes the day for all.

The danger a society faces when it de-



values the role of being a mother and home maker

So, my thoughts turn to what being a mother means in today's society and how my journey to becoming a mother was a bit bumpy.

After our first child, I carried on building a business and pretty much left his care to the nanny. I was a bit sh*t at motherhood it has to be said - my son would generally ask for the nanny before me.

After our second child, I laid in the hospital bed checking my emails and went back to work 2 weeks later, in the midst of the financial crash, resentful and full of angst - I still cry huge tears of sadness when I look back on that time.

After our third child, I crumbled with guilt, made the nanny redundant, began the process of dismantling a business, felt a complete failure by societies standards, as it turned out that I could not do it all, started taking anti-depressants and began the process of learning how to be a mum.

And it was hard because I had no idea how to be a mum, I had no 'mum' friends as I'd been far too important being a career women and looking down my nose at women who had time to go to baby and toddler groups, I no longer had a role in the world that (I thought) demanded respect and I lost my financial independence as well as 60% of our income, so the move to the 4 bedroom, 4 bathroom house and Waitrose shops were put on hold.

And then a few weeks later I was at a dinner with my husband when someone asked what I did for a job, I said that I didn't work, I was a SAHM, they then asked "so, what do you do with your time?" I didn't have an answer then and I still don't now.

But that question wounded me deeply and pretty much sums up much of societies view on SAHM/Ds, sadly.

After the initial transition, I found it easy to live with the loss of income and financial freedom, in fact it gave birth to a love of simple and sustainable living. I also learned that my natural self-motivation and curiosity meant I found it easy to create a new structure and new interests that worked around my children.

But to this day, I have never found it possible to accept the lack of respect, the lack of value and the lack of understanding that so many women and men are faced with on a daily basis, all because they chose to focus their time on their

families and homes.

As Sandrine Bonnaire poignantly said:

"Our family makes us who we are, defines us totally. When you go to a therapist or have analysis, whatever reason you go in for, they will always bring you back to your family. We're strong or weak according to what family we have. You might have left them long ago, might not even talk to them, but something lingers; we have no choice."

So, perhaps we should remind ourselves that there are equally important roles in life that are not defined as 'work' and it's time that as a society we valued being a carer, a home maker, a parent just a little bit more and extended a little more respect, kindness and understanding to all of those people who have chosen that path - whether through choice or circumstance.

As ever the website and my blog is full of my varied ramblings, some of which I hope might just make your day a little bit better, so do feel free to take a peek.

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With love
Nik



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