

The second wave of COVID-19: Will it come and how will we cope?

As we are all very well aware the first hit of COVID-19 or Coronavirus was indeed a shock to the system. Little did we know, or could we grasp the impact that this would have on our mental and physical health, the stress on our families and loved ones, our careers, our friendships, and life as we knew it.

The crash came and we settled into staying at home to save the NHS and clap for our carers. We felt unified, humbled and kindness was in abundance. However, then the novelty wore off, we got tired of being at home constantly and people went through a kind of wave-like phenomenon of being ok one day to having mini breakdowns without warning the next.

We have all communally been through some kind of journey these past few months, more than anyone ever thought possible. We coped, we managed, we did our best and sometimes we just crawled under the covers and pretended it was all a bad dream. But of course, it was very real.

To know or not to know?

I am not sure if it would have been better or worse to have known how long

this was going to continue for from the very beginning. I am not sure I could have coped then with the reality of what uncertainty the future would have held. The not knowing was annoying but it also allowed for that sliver of hope to escape, much in the same way it did from Pandora's box.

Still, we are in this 'new normal' together, for better or worse, and like a marriage without the option of divorce, we have to keep working at it. But the 'normal' now is not normal at all, much like we used to look through a clean pane of glass, now it is dusty and frankly a little dull.

When is a bar not a bar?

Perhaps, like me, you have ventured out to your favourite restaurant or bar, but it isn't quite the same. Bars especially used to be brimming full of people, you would bump into on the dance floor or try to get the barman's attention, whilst glancing down the bar to survey the scene.

Now, of course, you can't do any of that, you sit at your table and press a button for service and stay in your groups, no dawdling around on the way to the loo! There are rules, and it's like school except that instead of detention, you might actually get sick, so there is a slightly higher price to pay for breaking the rules. Even if you were a rule breaker at school, it's just too high a price to put yourself or those you love in jeopardy.

Change is the only constant

Now don't get me wrong, I believe in these extra clean methods, wearing masks in shops now, taking all these precautions, I am here for it all. But I am also missing all the normal annoying things I took for granted, I know, how silly is that? It is like the world went back at half-mast, and the once-bustling city lost her bustle.

I also don't know if anyone else found this but my first dinner out I was ready for bed by 10 pm, I had no energy for drinks, I think I was overstimulated by the sheer amount of people I was surrounded by, as clearly I had been used to my four walls for over four months so, any increase was a shock. It is a bizarre situation we find ourselves in.

And the threat of more waves coming, the shock of quarantining from Spain announced and enacted within less than a few hours is a new way of being that we just have to accept. The only constant changes. That holiday people prayed for and were excited about is suddenly looking unlikely.

Should we go? What if they close down the airports, what is our plan B; all of a

sudden everything gets just that little bit more complicated.

Now, of course, I know talk of holidays is very middle class of me, yes there are people with very real debt, no jobs, and no cash coming in. This is not taking anything away from those very much in need. I am talking, as if you were in a therapy session, just illuminating the plight that I and others are feeling.

There is always someone worse off than you and there is always someone better off than you, this is and will always be a fact of life. This does not detract from the rights people have to say I am having a tough time, because a second wave will no doubt come and really ask people to dig deep in their resilience. It is ok not to feel ok, whatever your circumstances.

Please do keep asking your friends and family how they are doing in this time of transition because even those who you think are doing ok might not be. And of course please do reach out to those in the community less fortunate than yourselves. When the only future we have is an uncertain one, more than ever we need our community around us, we need to feel like we are a team against the virus.

YOU GOT THIS!

Brace yourself for impact, because there is a long way to go in the fight against COVID-19. This is a marathon, not a sprint and we must all pace ourselves going forward. I believe we will all get through this and come out stronger at the other end, but we must not run before we can walk. Take a breath because it is going to be a long year, and if you need someone to remind you; YOU GOT THIS!

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