

Time Together

Reengage

Winter 2020



This Christmas
will be different,
but we'll get
through it.



Bringing generations together

Welcome

My heartfelt season's greetings to you.

As this strange year comes to an end, we can say that perhaps the one thing it has given us is the time to reflect on what really gives us comfort and joy.

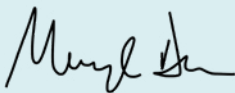
In this issue, we speak to some of our tea party guests, each of whom has found solace in simple pleasures such as embroidery, drawing and crosswords.

Of course, our volunteers have made life so much more bearable for many of you too and I'd like to thank those of you who nominated some of these inspiring people for our Marsh Awards for Volunteering. Choosing the winners was tough as your entries were all so moving.

In times like these, it can be harder to stay motivated and look after yourself. We've included simple tips to help you with this and if you would like a call companion to chat to over the phone, please do let us know on **0800 716 543**.

I look forward to seeing many of you next year when, at some point, we hope to be able to get our tea parties going again.

Now that really *will* be the most wonderful time of the year!
With very best wishes,



Meryl Davies
chief executive, Re-engage





‘This Christmas will be different, but we’ll get through it.’

Tea party guest Marcia, 79, shares her lockdown experience and her dream for when it’s over.

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I’m used to being on my own, but I’ve felt a lot more isolated than usual in the winter lockdown.

Luckily, I’m in touch with my tea party group. I absolutely love them. It’s been very sad not to be able to meet.

I have two great grand-daughters, both aged two, but I keep them at arm’s length because of the virus. I’m diabetic so high risk. When the weather’s too bad to meet in the garden, I just wave out the window.

I should think I’ll be spending this Christmas on my own. It’s sad but, for me, it’s just another day. We’ll get through it. At least I’ll be able to have a good nap after lunch!

I’ll definitely take a Covid vaccine. I’m looking forward to going away, maybe to visit my sister in Germany. I love my little house, but it’s just four walls.

I can’t wait to spread my wings a bit further.

”

5 tips for staying fit and elf-y this Christmas

Osteopath Kate Belle-Fortune shares simple ways to help stave off those winter aches and pains.



1. Start the day well

Do some gentle stretching before you get out of bed. Gently hugging your knees to your chest is good for warming up your muscles and ligaments.

3. Stay as active as you can

Try not to sit for hours without moving as this will cause your joints to stiffen and your muscles to weaken. If you can't go outside, walk around the house every so often.

5. Get enough vitamin D

Many of us become depleted in this 'sunshine' vitamin during winter but too little can cause muscle and joint pain and low energy. Ask your GP about supplements.

2. Have a morning routine

Even 5-10 minutes of daily exercise will help strengthen your muscles and keep you more mobile. This could include sitting in a chair and gently mobilising your shoulders and neck.

4. Check your furniture

Sofas and chairs that are too soft will cause back pain. And, before you turn on the TV or computer, make sure you're sitting directly in front of it and not at an awkward angle.

And the winners are...

Thank you to those of you who sent in your moving nominations for our annual **Marsh Awards for Volunteering**. What an inspiring read!

The awards are held in partnership with the Marsh Christian Trust to recognise those who work to improve the world, 'selflessly contributing

their time and energy to causes they believe in'. This year, the overall winner receives £350, while all shortlisted and runner up winners receive £100 each.



Volunteer of the Year 2020: Bev Owen, Northwich

Bev has launched three new Re-engage tea party groups in Northwich, Cheshire. She's in regular contact with her group with phone calls and treats and is incredibly supportive.

You said: "Bev is so caring. She keeps in touch and makes a huge effort to show she cares. She's one in a million."

★ Shortlisted: Stephanie Hutchings, Enfield

Steph has been very active throughout the lockdown, keeping in contact with her guests.

You said: "Stephanie's the most thoughtful and kind person I know. I'd be proud to have her as my daughter."



★ **Shortlisted: Tanya Norris, Mansfield**

Since the lockdown Tanya has kept in regular contact with her group, always letting them know she is thinking of them.



You said: “Tanya and her husband Martin are a good, friendly, caring couple. Tanya is a very good listener to all our group.”

★ **Shortlisted: Liz Nippress, Swindon**

Liz was a volunteer driver before taking over her group. She’s very caring and collects and shares their poems.



You said: “Liz has been a very good friend over the years. She goes beyond what’s expected of her in her role.”

★ **Shortlisted: Catherine Craig, Newquay**

Cath launched a new group this year and is supporting the members through the lockdown.



You said: “Cath is such a kind and caring lady. She always has a smile on her face.”

The following volunteers have been awarded as Runners Up for their dedication to volunteering for Re-engage:

- ★ Eleanor Duncan, Edgbaston
- ★ Katy Tunnard, Lincoln
- ★ Susan Turner, Coventry
- ★ Liz Daniel, Malvern
- ★ Vic McDade, Carlisle
- ★ Ken Salter, Chester
- ★ Anne Palmer, Sheffield
- ★ Carolyn Morgan, North Tyneside
- ★ Marjorie Clark, Tay, Perth
- ★ Shonagh Ferguson, Carnoustie, Scotland
- ★ John Gall, Aberdeen
- ★ Lesley Mackie, Fair City, Perth
- ★ Roohi Durrani, Epsom
- ★ Audrey Tupper, Jersey
- ★ Nicola Miles, Bromley & Orpington



My lockdown life: 'Being creative is helping me cope'

Tea party guest Clive, 89, shows off his Christmas creations.



I'm finding the lockdown tedious, to say the least, but I'm trying to keep busy.

When I was a young lad, I was dyslexic before the condition had been identified, so I had a few problems. The only subject I was good at was drawing.

When I drew something people would say, 'Oh, that's lovely,' which encouraged me. I think it's one of the reasons I became quite proficient.

After travelling the world as a merchant seaman from the age of 18 to 26, I worked as a designer in London in commercial art studios and advertising agencies. I now live in Scotland.

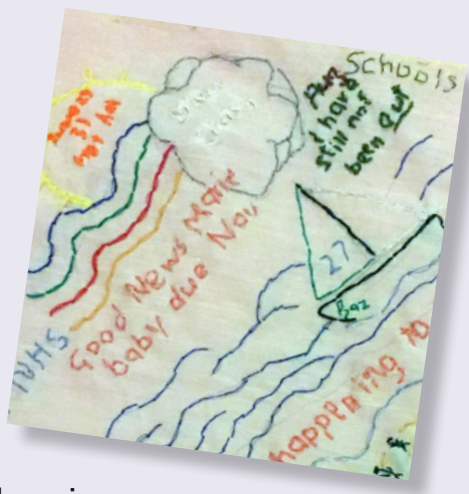
My daughter is in London so this Christmas will be very hard. I'm missing the tea parties very much.

I'm really looking forward to socialising again but, until then, I'll just continue focusing on being creative.



My lockdown life: 'I'm embroidering my year'

Tea party guest, Freda, 75, talks about her sewing project.



I have Parkinson's and lymphedema and wanted to do something to keep my hands going as the Parkinson's can make them stiff.

I worked as a dressmaker at Harrods after I left school at 15 so have experience of sewing.

I decided to make an embroidery of my year, like a diary. I've added the names of my carers and the hospital staff who looked after me when I went in, plus birthdays, my friend's baby due date and news about the virus.

I need to have my feet up in the afternoon and that's when I work on it. I just get completely immersed.

I haven't thought much about Christmas. I lost my husband 13 years ago so it's a difficult time. My son and I still set a place for him at the table.

I've decided we're going to have a good one this year. I really want to make the most of life.



My lockdown life: 'Kelly's calls saved my sanity'

Call companions Joan and Kelly talk about their weekly chats.

Joan says:

I hate being stuck indoors and found it hard when my clubs and activities stopped in March.

At least over the summer I could sit in my summer house and knit. I knitted a little teddy bear – my Corona bear, I call him. But the thought of a lockdown in winter was too much.

When I was offered a call companion I jumped at the chance. Kelly's calls have saved my sanity, they really have. I love putting the world to rights with her. I literally sit and wait for the phone to ring.

Kelly says:

My job as an A&E nurse is busy and my family live in Scotland so I've hardly seen them all year. Calling Joan helps me as much as it helps her, particularly as I also live alone. We have very warm conversations. I'll definitely continue calling her long after life gets back to normal.



Would you like a call companion? Phone us on 0800 716 543 to sign up.





Re-engage

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(1146149) and in Scotland (SC039377)