**BLOG[ISH] Week 9 of Lockdown**

So, here we are into week 9 of lockdown – how crazy does that sound?! Did we think we would be in it for so long? I’m not sure I did, that’s for sure.

When we all left the office on 18th March, it all seemed so unreal, despite the fact we’d been talking about it for a couple of weeks. But there we were, gathering up things we thought we would need for working at home, emptying desks and the café of all perishable goods [did I leave anything that’s going to have a green jacket by the time we get back?] I think even a couple of PC’s, complete with the shabby old desks that they sit on, have new temporary homes. So much to think about, and all to be done in a short space of time – an evacuation really.

We are all really missing face to face work with young people and we all really miss each other, the banter in the office, being able to just talk across the desks, share ideas – and nonsense of course. You miss things you never thought you would, but you also adapt to things in a way that you never thought you would, just trying to find a way to get through. This morning I’ve been called an IT oracle, or Master…………..those of you who know me will have a laugh at that as I am useless with IT and over the years I have enlisted the help of the many amazing young people we’ve had the pleasure of having around at Canongate – you know who you are! Trial and error and having limited skills sometimes gets you there in the end “dog with a bone” attitude and just bashing on and not giving up [swearing at the object never really works, but it releases a wee bit of tension] can often get results.

We’re all finding new and wonderful ways of communicating with the children, young people and families that are part of the CY family – it will never replace being with them but it’ll do in the meantime.

As for our team, we are doing the same – trying to gee each other along and make us smile on the days when things are maybe just not feeling right – these are strange times and we need to acknowledge that, and we do. There is going to be some major hugging going on when we can get back together.

I’ve been thinking about writing something for a wee while – again, those of you who know me can guess that I might have some more to say, but this seems like a good starting point.

Take care, stay safe and most of all stay [in the main] sane!

**UPDATE**

So that was week 9…………who’d have thought that I’d still be here on my laptop at my kitchen table and it’s week………..let me count, that can’t be right…………no, it is, it’s now week 25 – nearly half a year!!!

Things have changed a bit but not that much for us. Schools are back, but we still have no date for getting back into our building and right now, we’re not allowed in schools – which is pretty much what I do during a normal working week, in and out of schools, meeting with young people and back to my base at the office. We are allowed to meet outdoors with young people which has its own issues including our lovely, unpredictable, massively changeable weather [mostly from not too bad to miserable and then to completely surprising glimpses of the sun when it was not forecasted], finding somewhere reasonably private where you can socially distance and hopefully get a wee seat that isn’t damp. We are persevering though, arranging to meet young people at school gates and going for a walk – because young people love a walk don’t they, hehe! Our hardy youth work team are trying to meet with small groups of young people whilst maintaining social distance and trying to encourage the over-12’s to keep that distance too. We are familiar with Risk Assessments, hand sanitizer, face coverings where appropriate and carrying first aid kits in case of accidents. We are in the process of planning groupwork which will have to be outdoors and was previously at times akin to a military operation, organising all the resources we needed to do this, but we are adaptable, as we have all needed to be during these times, and continue to be, adopting practises that we could never have imagined this time last year.

**UPDATE - WEEK 26 [Yes, half a year!]**

Well, I didn’t quite get around to finishing that last update and the goalposts have changed again………we are now back to only two households being allowed to meet, indoors or outdoors, but with exceptions for under 12’s. But there are different rules for Youth Work so our team are still able to meet with small groups, but this remains outdoors for now. There has been a positive change in that I’m now allowed in one of the schools that I work in, but with conditions attached, obviously – at least I know I can use a toilet rather than having to plan carefully! Other schools are following different procedures for the time being.

Trying to get our heads round the ever-changing guidance and government restrictions is not easy – especially when there are parts that don’t seem to add up – but we’re doing our best.

Keep on keeping on everyone………..we’ll get there!