

Blogs 2019

21st January 2019

We seem to be running into another new year at full speed. I even seem to feel like I missed New Year and have ended up parked in the last parking space when the sales have finished.

This year I did not even think about any resolutions yet alone make any to break days later. I have been wondering why that has been this year and have arrived at a place that seems to be the same as last year: waiting for house selling/buying to get underway to move. With the house market crash down in the South of England rippling out everything to do with the housing market was like wading through treacle. A year later we are still waiting to finalise dates and my house has not even gone on the market yet, just in case I sell it faster than my sister and we end up with nowhere to live.

So we are in a paradoxical place. A place where time seems to race by at top speed but equally drag by so slowly it feels like chains restrain you in last year. I have had the bereaved describe a similar feeling which has made me consider my concept of time and that of society round me. The Formula 1 race of social media and technology along side the mindfulness mediation path of slow walking through the forest. May be take a little time to step aside from the one you usually live in and ask the question - 'do I really want to live like this any longer?' Not everyone feels comfortable with mindfulness, the same as the discomfort some people are now feeling about social media and the technology that goes along with it.

Perhaps life needs some balance? Neither one holds sway over the other. Both can exist but need time dedicated to them. Don't take your smartphone into the places you want to relax or meditate in. Give time to one at a time, not both or one over the other. We won't have a world without progress any longer so giving that side time then putting it aside for a while to renew your body and mind in nature so you feel refreshed enough to face the demands of the world today.

Is that a dream or can I take that as 'a resolution'? Bring balance into my life. An example might be that today, 21st January 2019, I need to make a note or two in my blog, offer something to think about or consider the feelings and for that I need technology. Tomorrow I will give time to clients in sessions where I offer a calming, safe space to talk without technology demanding replies from either of us.

Perhaps it is a resolution. Balance in life. Maybe that could be said to be acceptance on a level that is personal to each of us.

3rd March 2019

It has felt quite like spring recently but today is dark, wet and cold with storm Freya is heading our way. Possibly time to batten down the hatches as the adage goes.

It has taken my sister nearly 15 months to sell her house in Surrey owing to the market downturn in early 2018. I have not even put mine on the market yet as it was the emergency, short term fallback for them but my small house couldn't cope with three cats and us three adults longer than a few weeks. Finally, we have secured the house we have wanted for a long time but the roller coaster of a ride is not something I can recommend in any way, shape or form.

After taking forever to get a chain in place, a chain of nine, it was very slow with a few false starts along the way until the real 'fun' started a couple of weeks ago, just as we were getting to the point of agreeing dates for exchanging contracts.

First one couple pulled out, two above us, Friday two weeks back and then on the Monday following they found they couldn't rent where they wished to and the outstanding document from solicitors had arrived so they jumped back in and it was on again.

Thursday last week our vendor, who had decided to go on holiday after being advised exchange could well take place towards to end of February, had a massive panic and withdrew so my sister either had to rent her house out and rent up here for a year or exchange with her buyer to complete the lower half of the chain and rent up in Norfolk in the short term. The entailed me driving round to look at a place, getting her to pay the deposit so she did not lose the only place locally that would accept her companion cats.

Come Friday morning our vendor wanted back in again but my sister stipulated the conditions, exchange on Friday 1st March by close of business to complete on 15th March or no deal. She'd had enough of being so messed about and the stress. The exchange of contracts happened on Friday 1st March at 4.15pm, just 45 minutes from the deadline. Talk about going to the wire!

It is a judgemental thing to say but I won't really believe it until we get the keys and walk in through the front door and it is ours. Now I can start getting mine on the market to sell. Not my idea of fun. For now I will still be working from Wymondham seeing clients and supervisees. I will put an announcement up on my home page when I am ready to move and update the website with my new details, but until then business continues as usual.

20th May 2019

It is surprising how pain can narrow down your world and increase a sense of both frustration and vulnerability at the same time. It creates a focus that begins to wear down defences and make the world feel less safe than previously. This seems to apply to both physical and emotional or mental pain.

One is invisible and denied by society, even now with it being discussed by those in the media spotlight and the royals. I am talking about mental health issues.

The other, physical health, may be visible or it might be hidden as well but all create sensations within the body and mind of the person concerned that changes their world view, creates an unstable foundations and makes the world feel threatening and alienating rather than supportive and inclusive.

How to address this? Answers sometimes feel impossible to achieve. When depression hits it may be all you can do to get out of bed. It is not possible for you to reach out and try to find a way out of the darkness alone. It needs someone to see and get in the darkness with you and admit it is scary and unknown but they will be with you. Sometimes that person is hard to find.

For physical pain there is also the frustration and powerlessness present when waiting for the systems to recognise 'it is bad enough to now do something about' and then more waiting for operations or medications all reliant on an over worked and failing system, just as in mental health care.

I didn't want this to become political but as a man once told me, 'stop using your gender to make a political point' when in discussion about some political stance. I realised that that wasn't possible, just by being male or female was political. Now it seems that when I am suffering from severe arthritic pain in my hip and I question the NHS I am told I am being political. So if I comment on the poor state of mental health care for the clients I see and am told I am talking politics then so be it.

If those who come to see me, as well as colleagues, friends and family need and fail to access statutory services all say the same thing then not only is it a political comment but it is societal as well. We are all part of this society here, all facing the same frustrations if we use the existing systems. Prevention is the new mantra but sometimes you cannot prevent mental health or physical health issues no matter how hard you try. It needs a system that recognises need and reaches out to treat that need when necessary and supports at other times.

Maybe I am too much of a dreamer but as Langstone Hughes said 'Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die, life is a broken winged bird that cannot fly.'

24th June 2019

At last, I have moved house and practice. I am now based in a small village called Tharston only 8 miles from Wymondham. It is peaceful and quiet and I am enjoying it, when I finish unpacking my boxes that is! I was very please I got the removals firm to pack up my things but I am still trying to find things. At the moment I cannot find the clock for my therapy room, my pension details or my supply of monthly contact lenses but, I dare say, I will eventually discover them.

The house faces open fields to the front with a view out over the Tas valley and the back has a view over farmland, with young cattle in the field immediately behind us who are very curious. We can see over towards Long Stratton in the near distance of a couple of miles.

We have a big garden and I am looking forward to getting out and finding more of what we already have and plant around it. It has a good contingent of bees of all types who come along for all the flowers, most at the moment for the spread of thyme we have near our back door. It is very wonderful to see when there has been such bad news about the bees dying. We seem to be keeping them going around here.

I now have a date for my hip replacement operation in early September so I will only be taking on short term clients as I will be out of action for about six or eight weeks after that. I will be glad to get it done to get more mobile and pain free. It is making me so aware of how fast this year is racing by. We had the shortest day this week, now the days will shorten, the nights lengthen as will the shadows. I will appreciate being able to watch the seasons change over such a big area.