

Revitalise

We're the people who create revitalising holidays
for disabled people and carers.

CARE FOR
CARERS

Revitalise500

1st Place – Sam Hinton

Prize: Seven-night respite break

Funny, Yummy, Disabled Single Mummy (A lockdown lament)



Sometimes disability is hard enough, when you're tired throughout the day
And working and studying as a single mum leaves little time to play
Especially when you're on a crutch, and mummified by heat patches
So, I thought I'd join a dating site, and check out some new love matches.

And sometimes disability is hard enough, when you're trying to meet a bloke
Even in this day and age sometimes some men treat you like you're a joke
I mean, "disability isn't sexy is it?", at least that's what some guys would say
Though I'd beg to differ, in my fancy knickers, I feel relatively ok.

But sometimes disability is hard enough, so when the pools are shut
If you can't partake in distance sprinting, the government just say "tough luck"
What can you do to keep in shape, and keep your pain at bay?
When the things you rely on like hydrotherapy are all closed anyway?



And sometimes disability is hard enough, without having to worry about weight gain

For me to have a tidy body is great, since I'm usually miserable with my pain

And of course, it shouldn't matter if we're different - beautiful in our own design

But online dating is so frustrating, it bores me, and I resign.

Because sometimes disability is hard enough but when you have to go the extra mile

To make 'Seductive by the grab rail', a particular brand of style

"Hypermobility chic" is something you have to learn work with

And I pay through the nose for self-tan and concealer, 'cause I bruise like a Granny Smith.

So sometimes disability is hard enough but when your arse gets fatter

Whilst I understand that the size of me shouldn't even really matter

These little things they *do* matter to me, my need to look and feel like myself is real

I shouldn't have to grow a second arse just because of ableist lockdown ideals.

So, because my disability is hard enough and I don't want to be single forever

And for me just getting back in shape is a considerable endeavour

Dream man is out there waiting but I don't feel that sexy when I'm in pain

For goodness sake reopen hydrotherapy so I can get back on the pull again!

2nd Place – Lesley Goble

Prize: £250 towards a Revitalise respite break

Lockdown Highs & Lows

Boris won't let us out!

Whoever thought that this would be useful? Especially at 3am when Peter wanted to go home or deliver a parcel. When lockdown began, the change in daily routine was enormous. Regular meetings with friends for coffee or lunch, weekly visits from our carer, opportunities for family to visit. Gone in a flash. The outside world was sinister.

Peter is 87, has mobility problems and mixed dementia. He looked forward to his outings, family visits, watching sport, especially football, on television. All this vanished overnight. Nighttime episodes were always tricky but I told him that Boris wouldn't allow us to go out. It was frustrating but he accepted that and came back to bed.

In common with many, I made a list:

- Turn out cupboards
- Sort out clothes
- Tidy shed
- DIY

It started well. Masks were made, not that we went out, clothes bagged up for closed charity shops, rubbish collected for the tip, also closed. Friends and family delivered shopping until I secured regular orders and we had numerous takeaways delivered. I bought everything online, from compost to make up and had the joy of seeing a friendly face with our deliveries.



Thank goodness for Zoom (Pilates and Joe Wicks) and WhatsApp. The list remained but, hey! no matter. There was plenty of time.

Gradually we were brave enough to go for a drive around Beachy Head, seeing all the familiar places closed. We sometimes parked near Belle Tout lighthouse with sandwiches. One day Peter, inspired by wonderful Captain Tom, decided that he could walk up the hill to the lighthouse. He did it twice. The second time with two sticks and gritted teeth. Walkers encouraged him with "well done!". He made it and was triumphant, though shaking with the effort. Then we had the downhill slope to contend with and I was worried that he might fall so slipped a finger into the belt hooks at the back of his trousers until he begged me to stop. "Please let go! It's pulling my trousers right up!"

It was weird to drive around where everywhere was closed but, in time, some of them opened, if only for takeaways. We started visiting Birling Gap regularly for a coffee, sitting in the car and watching the sea.

I cleared the rubbish and clothes and we began to see family and friends again, at a social distance, in the garden, the glorious summer was heaven sent.

I checked my list and realised that I had done very little! Always thinking there was plenty of time which was now running out. Watching the news now, we are better prepared this time. We have learned to love and laugh at a slower pace. All the same, it's probably time to make a list:

- Enjoy the slow life
- Have regular telephone conversations with friends and family
- Write proper letters
- Keep loving one another

3rd Place – Alex Pearl

Prize: £150 towards a Revitalise respite break

The Coin in the Shed

Ever since we had it painted pale grey by our charming Bulgarian odd-job man, this small summerhouse has looked rather fetching perched at the end of the garden among the hydrangeas. Not perhaps as grand as Mr Cameron's famous shepherd's hut, but perfectly pleasing to the eye, nonetheless.

Had it not been for lockdown, I don't suppose I'd have had the time or inclination to tidy it. But since my wife has a spinal tumour and is shielding, much time is now spent pottering in the garden.

In truth, the shed's pleasing exterior covered a multitude of sins when one stepped inside. The shelving had become decidedly wobbly and their contents well past their sell-by date. So it was that my uphill task of clearing began in earnest.

It took me a whole day to go through everything. And it was towards the end of this chore that I spotted it.

The innocuous piece of filthy metal lay at the bottom of a flowerpot brimming with daffodil bulbs that were in the stage of disintegrating. It was round, chunky and caked in years of grime, garden chemicals and anything else nature had thrown at it over time. It very nearly got tossed into the bin bag along with the rusty screws and detritus from yesteryear, but on close inspection, I could detect the odd English character showing through in relief and small sections of some kind of imagery. Intrigued, I placed it in an old jam jar of brown vinegar and left it in this miniature acid bath for a couple of days.



On returning to the shed two days later, I fished out my find. In my hand was a gleaming gold medallion. On one side was a queue of men being served by a skeleton behind a counter, and on the other, a sinking ship. The words were German, and the most prominent was the word LUSITANIA.

Within minutes I had found the same coin for a second time. Only this time it was staring at me from my computer screen. It was apparently a copy of a German coin originally struck to display the irresponsibility of the allies in allowing a passenger liner, the Lusitania, to carry armaments during war. The Lusitania was subsequently sunk by German U-boats. British intelligence, however, saw an opportunity to use the coin as a powerful propaganda tool by reproducing and distributing it in vast numbers. The German artist had conveniently got the date of the sinking wrong - 1915 instead of 1916.

So, the British claimed that the sinking had been premeditated and that the Germans had struck the coin to celebrate the atrocity of the sinking in which men, women and children lost their lives. It proved to be a potent and quite brilliant piece of propaganda as there had been American passengers on board. And America at that time remained neutral.

How this fascinating piece of history got into the flowerpot in the first place remains something of a mystery.

Congratulations to our three winners!