

Who cares

'Welcome to my World' must be the sentiment of carers everywhere as the rest of the country is plunged into a deep pit of seclusion. Carers have long suffered restricted lives due to the need to care for another person, leaving them socially isolated and often lonely. With members of the government, service providers, the general public and families now experiencing exclusion and segregation, I hope that everyone will remember this time and plan and design appropriate services and support for unpaid family carers in the future.

This desolate existence is likely to last a few months and I have been looking at ways to cope with the anxiety which comes with being socially isolated. I came up with the idea for the Isolation Strategy mentioned in the last Who Cares article.

As we're allowed out once a day for exercise and our free daily dose of vitamin D, it's essential we take advantage of that, whether we walk, jog, push a wheelchair or ride a bike. The tasks I have set myself include jobs I don't enjoy such as, cleaning the windows or cooker, but I only do one nasty chore a day. Rewarding myself with a text or a phone call after tedious jobs is a way to motivate myself. I phone a different person each day because that way I get a variety of perspectives on the situation. If I haven't been in touch with a friend for a while, I compose a long email and get a newsy reply which always lifts my mood. I've downloaded a relaxation audio which helps to keep me grounded.

If it's nice weather I sit in my tiny back yard to get some sun; I know I won't be confined to this way of life indefinitely. Rightly so, we're applauding medical and care staff and those who work behind the scenes and I think we should also pay homage to the hidden multitude of informal carers out there who are providing care for their loved ones.

Unpaid carers can access help and support from Carers Outreach on 01248 370797 or help@carersoutreach.org.uk or www.carersoutreach.org.uk.