

Ways to Navigate Life Now



With every dark cloud, there is a silver lining. But in times of crisis you really need to look for it. Lately, I have found that when I pay attention to the small things I have missed in the past, I am in a state of rediscovery. Before I was always running to meetings or on conference calls and as a result, overlooked so much. Come to find out, these little gifts have been there all the time.

Gifts of Nature

When is the last time you really looked inside an iris? See the beards? Isn't the color amazing?



Now with more time at home, and needing just the basics (good health, food and family), beauty seems to be emerging in nature everywhere. Not to be cliché, but I am experiencing "stop and smell the roses" moments ALL the time. Is anyone else finding this to be true? Naturally it helps to have roses blooming right now!



Yesterday I stopped to face the sun and listen to the birds. Such a simple act but with tremendous benefits. Breathing more is a necessity lately but filling my lungs with the sweet spring air is so restorative.

I've never noticed how beautiful the delicate flowers are on my scented geranium plant. And those curly filaments on the stigma! Take time to notice the changes Spring brings. The earth is coming back to life after winter and doesn't it feel like we are on that same path? Bloom wherever you are!



Necessity is the mother of invention

This is also a time to get creative! With regular all-purpose and bread flour on shortages, I am using the almond and coconut flours that have been in my freezer. Dusting off old recipes and rediscovering them all over again is inspiring. In 2018, I posted this recipe for Paleo Lemon Blueberry bread and I hadn't made it in a long time. Plus it's healthy! Click [here](#) to read the post.



Even milk has been challenging to find in some places. But consider the alternatives and ones you can make, nut or grain milk. I don't think there is a pressing need for almonds and it is SO easy to make your own. Click [here](#) for my previous post and the simple recipe.



Pistachio
Cashew
Milk

LIFE AT
Bella Terra

Click [here](#) for the link for oat milk.



Keep Moving

I really miss exercising at the gym. For some reason, while I'm there I push myself harder and work up a good sweat. Taking brisk afternoon walks isn't quite the same, but there is joy in seeing so many people out walking and children biking. Right across the street from our home is the historic [Murphy Bridle Path](#). It is the only linear public park in Arizona and such an important recreational resource for our City.



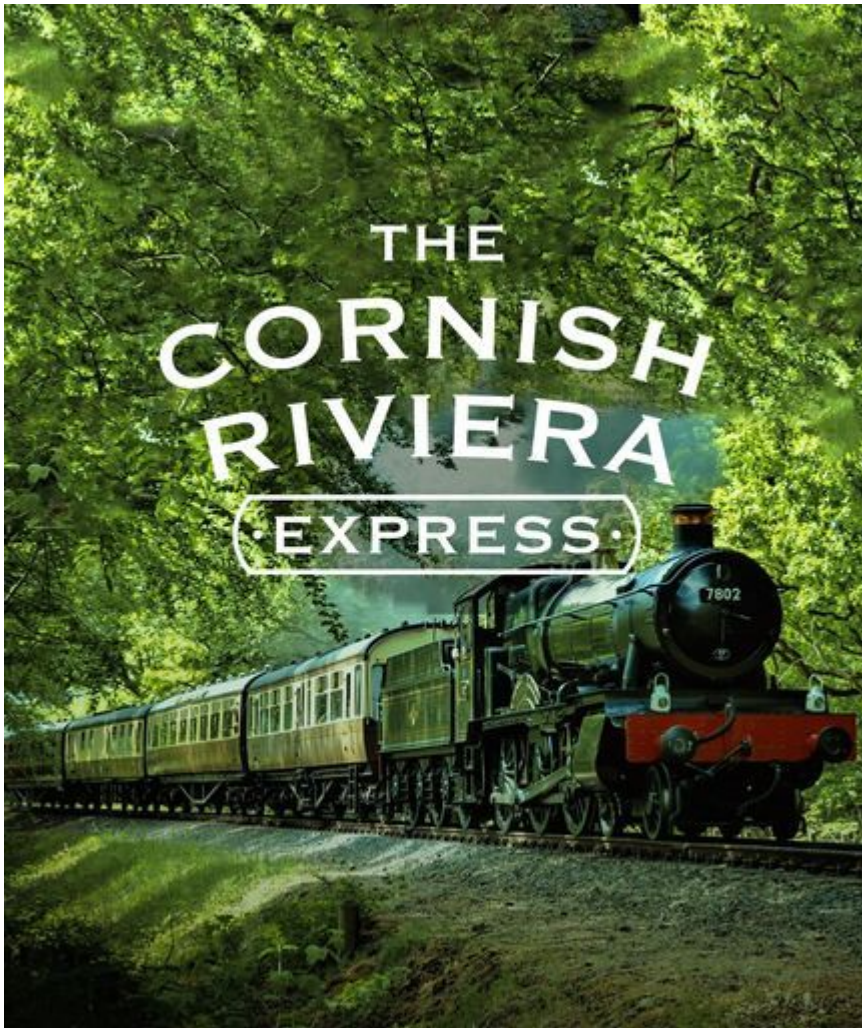
Another positive to walking is checking out all the houses in the area. Who doesn't like house snooping?!



If I don't exercise I'll be auditioning for My 600-lb. life after all this is over. Tomorrow I am going to try online work outs to see if I can kick things up a notch. We have a stationery bike and a rowing machine ~ I only hope I can motivate myself to get on them and work hard. What are you doing to move?

Be proactive on managing your stress

There are times I can feel the fingers of fear creeping into my optimism. I suppose that is natural but it's not my personality to allow it. My first line of defense is to BREATHE. There are so many meditation tools available to us, but my two favorite are Headspace and Calm. Headspace recently created a *free* support section called [Weathering the Storm](#). It includes meditations, sleep, and movement exercises to help you out, however you're feeling. This is Headspace's small way of helping you find some space and kindness for yourself and those around you.



Calm Sleep Story: Narrator Andrew Martin

Every night I listen to Sleep Stories on the [Calm app](#). I've yet to hear the end of a story because I am lulled to sleep by the wonderful soothing voice of the narrator. I do pay an annual fee, but I truly use it every night. There are other meditation exercises and resources on the app as well.



There is something soothing about an afternoon cup of tea. The chamomile is just starting to bloom in the garden. This herb also helps to calm things down. I've also read that valerian tea, green tea and if you aren't a tea drinker, cherry juice works too. To see the chamomile growing in the garden, click [here](#).

Start a new project!



Cooper helping me wash windows

It feels SO good to cross things off the To Do list. There's a sense of forward movement when you accomplish goals and finish projects. I am in the middle of washing all the windows in the

house. My husband is doing a deep clean on the outside barbecue area. Touch-up painting comes next. Not only is it good to move, but at the end of all of this, your home may look its best ever. If you missed my last post, here is a [project update](#).

Try something new

Who remembers Paint by Numbers? We did this as children (many moons ago) but have you seen some of the paintings they now offer? Not only is this a fun family project, but a chance to focus your energies in an artistic way.



Rose in a Bottle – \$14.99



You can even create your own painting from a photo or start on a holiday painting now. Check out [their website](#) to see all the possibilities.



There are other creative outlets~~all available online. Want to [tour the White House](#) or [The Louvre](#) from the comfort of your own home? Or hear a concert? All of these are now at your fingertips online by just searching the internet.

Being Strong for Others



So many people have had to make significant adjustments in their lives. Many are on the front line while we are safe at home. Some are physically compromised.

As parents, we need to be good role models and create teachable moments so our children understand how to deal with inconvenience or hardship. Be the voice that lifts, not scares. Be informative but optimistic.

When Certainty is Lost only Faith Remains



Whatever faith means to you, it is important to have it now. I find solace in watching our church's online services on Sunday. I am surrounded by the dogs and cats and I can have my coffee too. But sometimes just turning life's challenges over to a higher being gives us strength to move forward. Whether your "church" is nature, a friend, a pet or a religion, be connected. Reach out to someone you have not spoken to in a while. Write a letter. Watch a sunset and know you've made it through another day.



Please let me know how you are doing. Now more than ever, we need each other. Whatever you have planned for today, I am sending virtual hugs and wishing you happiness.

Mary

Orange "Gingersnap" roses recently purchased from Whitfill Nursery