

Take Notice – time to snap the flowers by Noor

As Ferris Bueller said 'Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it'. If we stop and take notice of what's going on around us, we become much more aware of our surroundings, other people and their feelings. It can put things in perspective and bring out the joy in the smallest of things such as the first snowdrop, hazy blue carpet of bluebells. Kate Humble in her book 'Thinking on my Feet' talks about the '*small joy of putting one foot in front of another*' and the connection with the seasons, observing the tiny daily shifts that tell us about the onset of the next.

We've all had different experiences during this pandemic, and finding our own ways to adapt and navigate through.

Lockdown personally has given me more time, space and energy to go out on walks around my local area.

Doing daily walks for the first week or so was easy. It was the only time during the 'working from home' day that I got out of the house. As time progressed, I started to explore innovative ways to keep myself motivated, and my mind off the current situation.

One of the things I started doing was taking **notice** of nature around me. On one of my daily walks, I took a snapshot of a row of daffodils and decided to share it as my WhatsApp status with a tagline of #FlowerOfTheDailyWalk. I got reactions and replies from my friends and colleagues, admiring how pretty it was. The next day I snapped another flower, and got a similar response. Before I knew it, it became a daily thing! I started taking more notice of different trees and flowers on my walks that otherwise would have passed me by. It then became a mission, a daily motivation, to find different flowers spouting out of the earth, whatever the weather, to share with my WhatsApp contacts, but first and foremost for personal satisfaction of discovering some natural beauties in their varying colours, shapes and sizes!

I discovered trees, plants and flowers that I didn't know the names of, which then led to me exploring websites and Apps that helped identify them for me. I downloaded the "PictureThis" app and used this to name a lot of the flowers in my #FlowerOfTheDailyWalk. Its easy to use, and gives you a lot of information on the identified plant.

So, next time you're on a walk, take notice of the pansies, the alyssums and the hollyhocks, the change in seasonal flowers, trees and nature – and maybe motivate those around you to do the same!

