



Lockdown living



When lockdown first began in March last year, I made the decision to temporarily move in with my partner and his teenage daughter, and we were also joined by my partner's sister.

After many years of living alone I suddenly found myself living and sharing a home with three other people. I remember wondering if I could manage my mental health in such circumstances. How would living with a family feel? How would they find living with me?

With no one else interested in cooking I very quickly assumed the role of cook with the help of my partner. I had never really cooked every day before and certainly never for four people and yet there I was planning meals and cooking on a daily basis. I really enjoyed feeling useful and it was my way of caring and contributing to the family. Mealtimes became a focal point of each day and brought us all together as we sat around the dining table and chatted.

It may seem strange with coronavirus spreading up and down the country, but I found I flourished at first because I felt safe in the home and had a role to fulfil every day as the family cook. There was very much a sense of 'we're all in this together' and I liked that. I missed seeing my family and worried for my elderly parents and uncle but the feeling of safety I was experiencing by being with my partner every day was absorbing.

On reflection I think the feeling of safety I find so appealing is due to my episodes of psychosis being so scary. In the ten years or so prior to the pandemic, I'd been on quite a journey with my mental health and worrying about me and my family not being safe was an overwhelming feeling I'd experienced too often. I'm in a much better place with my mental health these days and being in a loving relationship has definitely helped with that.

Lockdown has shown me that I'm much better at cooking than I thought I was, and the more I did it the easier it got. I have also managed being part of a family far better than I'd anticipated and have realised I can be more sociable than I thought. I do find daily



interactions tiring though and now enjoy winding down at the end of the day by relaxing in bed with a scented candle burning.



The author of this article wishes to remain anonymous

