

A health and wellbeing journey

Singing and dancing through lockdown

I have been a member of [danceSing](#), for around four years and had previously enjoyed attending choir sessions weekly and dance sessions when I could make it, although a long commute to work was not conducive to doing as much as I wanted.

[DanceSing](#) is a unique concept which brings together a fusion of the arts and fitness, centred around the positive mental and physical wellbeing of members. It is the choir that keeps you fit!



Then came Covid. Lockdown was so hard for so many people and I frequently wept listening to the heart-breaking stories emerging on the news.

I was definitely one of the lucky ones. I live in beautiful countryside, I was able to work at home and had access to the incredible community spirit in our village and amazing support from the University.

The enemy for me was the close proximity to the fridge and the lovely weather in those early weeks made me feel like I was on holiday, so food and drink became my friends.

I realised early on that my mood was dipping, I was finding it hard to concentrate and that my health and wellbeing were affected by the stress of what was going on in the world, the worry for loved ones and by simply not taking care of my nutrition and fitness.

[DanceSing](#) provided free online singing and dancing classes for the whole of May but then it became evident that lockdown was going to last longer than at first thought and it would not be sustainable.

I happily signed up for their new online programme and it has been my saviour. I am now able to join the live singing classes once or twice a week, a live dance fitness class on a Friday and a recorded live pilates class on catchup.

In addition to this, I had access to all the online recorded sessions, dancing, singing, pilates, stretching to suit all ages and fitness levels.

In December [danceSing](#) did a live dancing session with the whole team on zoom as part of our staff development day which certainly got the team motivated and active and with positive feedback.



I have tried to maintain routines throughout this period of working at home by going for a walk before work starts and doing a [danceSing](#) class of my choosing during my lunch hour.

I am now healthier and fitter than I've ever been in my life and though not to say perfect in my habits, I have definitely found more of a balance.

Working from home, with the flexibility this has allowed me, and not commuting on a daily basis (previously 16 hours of my week spent travelling) have made me more productive which has improved my mental and physical health.

I am also incredibly grateful for the welcome initiative of Rest and Relaxation days, along with all the online support given by the University, which have undoubtedly contributed to a better quality of life in these difficult times, especially over this winter.

Mandy Reeman-Clark

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