Dear friends

Welcome to July's note from the wilds of Suffolk.

It's certainly hard to believe that we are already in July and observed the passing of the longest day of summer and the start of days becoming steadily shorter as the slow approach towards autumn begins!

Since my June note the past few weeks have been no less challenging than the months before when the COVID-19 pandemic first affected our lives. Nonetheless, as the sun rises every day, it means we have a new day to look forward to. So, it's important to remain positive and motivated as we continue to navigate our way through the delightful few weeks of summer.

Regardless of age communication has become more important than ever as many of us may be experiencing periods of loneliness from time to time especially as the past months have drastically changed our daily lives in extraordinary ways! Some people undergoing loneliness over these past weeks may experience loss of confidence and a sense of low self-esteem which can lead to mixed thoughts which in turn can have serious consequences on one's physical, mental and social health. As the country emerges from lockdown, our thoughts are turning to the challenges and uncertainty we may be confronted with. *"Choose to be optimistic, it feels better."* (Dalai Lama)

Due to the change of working patterns, lifestyle and individuals living alone many friends and colleagues have been telling me their joys rediscovering the pleasures of culinary creativity, art and music, and for many working in their garden finding it productive and mentally and physically therapeutic. Another positivity has been the recent development of easing social distancing and lockdown enabling many of us to move forward socially, make much awaited holiday plans and booking flights albeit with limited locations and government rules to abide by.

The Leg Club Favourites Recipe Book is now in the final stages and like myself, I think both Charlotte (editor) and Leon (designer) have been amazed at the response and wonderful recipes that were kindly provided. The enthusiasm, international contributions and photos (example illustrated) of recipes received from the Leg Club network, patrons, healthcare industry members, family and friends certainly has been a truly humbling experience.

Now into July and following many weeks of our lives filled with unexpected challenges, we need to be sensitive that some friends and loved ones may have a more difficult time readjusting to some form of post-lockdown normality as many may be fearful of visiting their doctor, shops and general communal areas again due to anxiety of getting an infection. Hence, it's imperative we provide psychological support, reassurance and most importantly positivity to enable them to reintegrate back into a social society. Concluding on a positive note a very dear Italian friend and colleague recently wrote "*This morning I walked with my dog and the joy of seeing life around me filled me ... made me rich, humble, small, like an ear of corn in the field. So, we must make the rhythm of life show us the right path."*

Warmest regards.

Ellie