

Hello!

I don't know who you are but I hope you're well and in the mood for reading a letter from a complete stranger! Here's a bit of information for you about me....I live in Charlton. I'm 71 years old. I was a teacher for nearly 40 years and the best thing in my life right now is being a granny to a two and a half year old granddaughter and two brand new grandsons born this summer. Like so many other families, we really want to be all together soon but in the meantime can I tell you about two things that make me happy when I'm feeling down in the dumps? They don't cost any money. I don't need to be with anyone else. I'm not even very good at them. But they always make me feel better.

The first is singing along to songs – on the radio, in the car, on my iphone when I'm out walking. I belt them out loudly if I'm on my own. Don't care if I'm out of tune. Amazed at how many words I can remember from songs I grew up listening to and delighted if I can sing along to anything on Magic FM. I belong to a big national singing group called Rock Choir and even though our rehearsals are now on Zoom and I'm singing along on my own in front of my computer I still love it. All music works for me....advertising jingles, Christmas Carols, and now.....lullabies. Just singing them out loud makes me sing inside too. And quietly singing a baby to sleep with its head snuggled into my shoulder has to be some sort of heaven.

The second is dancing. I grew up in the 1960s in the north of England when discos were the newest, most exciting place to be on a Saturday night and throwing yourself around in the middle of other people doing the same thing was simply fab-u-lous. I still love doing it whenever possible – even if it's just in my own front room. In my head, I dance every step with the dancers on Strictly and love all the sparkle and glitter that flashes around them. When we're not in lockdown I go line-dancing and to a contemporary dance class for the over 60s at the Laban Dance Centre in Deptford – which basically means forgetting you're officially elderly and making your body move in extraordinary ways to amazingly different music!

So - if you see a person in her seventies shopping or walking in the park who is singing, smiling and possibly boogying along a bit , she isn't losing her marbles. It'll be me. And I'm absolutely fine. No matter how young or old you are right now I feel sure that singing and dancing - even if it's in your head – will make any day a bit better. What do you think?

With love.

Diana

X

