

‘The magic of on-line learning’

2020 has been and gone and I was thrilled, like most, to see the back end of it. However, not everything was bad, and if I am to be honest, several really great things happened that may have changed my life in a positive way – forever. Yes, we were all locked away from harms way and the ‘things’ we liked disappeared and for two weeks I mourned my losses.

No ballet classes.

No music classes.

No production crew to do my filming.

No socialising.

No dining out.

Then I discovered technology and the magic that medium offered and life could go on. Zoom – I thought that meant ‘go fast’!

The first bit of magic was on-line ballet classes. Now I’m not going to say I found it easy. I’m used to the ballet teacher being right there, poking and prodding and calling instructions and sometimes yelling ‘pull up’ or ‘point’. I had to download to upload, to then submit details I felt unnecessary to share. I got lost in the list of instructions and several times had to call the young girls I dance with for navigation, but I got set up and loved the twice weekly classes and personal messages of encouragement from my ballet teacher.

I also found a teacher in New York of all places who helped solve my ‘pointe’ issues.

The next ‘thing’, was a message from Anna my music teacher asking if I would be interested in learning a new type of music with a wee girl in Wales. This I thought would stretch me to breaking point. Now I’m not going to say it was easy at first, and yes, I might have missed a good half of two classes until I worked out, I had to hit the video/sound button so that I could actually see and hear Amanda. I loved it. Jazz and the blues on the HARP. Fabulous and I learnt so much and can’t wait until they start again.

At the same time Anna and I started weekly WhatsApp lessons. Music would be emailed over, down loaded and we zapped in. I am amazed at what I have learnt remotely. When I cast my mind back to the beginning of last year, and where I am now, I’m feeling pretty proud to have discovered I don’t need Anna beside me at every lesson. Diligently I worked myself from bar to bar and when I got stuck, and we picked up the next lesson there.

In regard to work, thankfully I was pretty much home based, so going off to work daily wasn’t an issue. However, I was in the midst of setting up and establishing my new on-line e-commerce business. Actually, I fired instructions and clever ecommerce boys did all the technology and where were they? Both in quarantined isolation and once again I climbed walls learning international marketing and stuff, I never dreamed I needed or wanted to know, but I did. So, when I say, ‘the magic of on-line learning’ it really is magic and my life has been changed in such a wonderful positive way.

Covid 19 has actually given me more time and made me more productive. Time spent zooming in has meant I can reach across the seas to anywhere. No more lost time in travel. No more wasted time rushing here and there. Music improved, ballet improved, my new business was launched and remotely I learned about lighting, sound, and solo-filming. Tip: check the mic is actually on before you launch into a 20-minute solo floral tutorial!

If you are thinking ‘on-line’ teaching isn’t for you, think again because as discovered this technology is a mighty powerful and wonderful medium AND IT actually gives you time and space for other ‘things’.

Kind regards, Astar

PS: we are a long way from what we once called ‘normal’ and even longer for our old ‘normals’ to be normal. I doubt ‘things’ will ever be that again and I’m pleased because I like how it is now!