

Reflecting on 2020

As the COVID-19 situation progresses and the Government guidance continues to change, individuals may be feeling anxious, tired and fed up. Mental Health support during times like these are paramount, which is why Care first have worked tirelessly to ensure our services remain available 24/7 throughout the pandemic to provide emotional and practical support and ensure we have every aspect of your overall wellbeing covered.

Now we are at the end of the year it could be considered a good time to reflect on this year. For many of us we may feel like just forgetting this year altogether due to the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. Many have experienced loss, isolation, loneliness, stress and anxiety caused by uncertainty - which could never have been anticipated.

However, during difficult times we may learn new things about ourselves. Everyone will have had a different experience of this past year and this article looks at some of the questions you could ask yourself when reflecting on 2020. Whether you are an optimistic person or a pessimistic person - try to consider the some of the good and bad points from this year.

Questions to ask yourself when considering the good points in 2020

- What is the best thing that happened to me this year?
- What did I enjoy the most in 2020?
- What was my favourite moment in the past year?
- What was the best compliment that I received?
- What is the thing I am the proudest about during in 2020?

When answering these questions you may find that your answers are a lot different to what you may have said in 2019. For example, it may be that in 2019 your favourite moment was a holiday abroad, but this year has been very different and your favourite moment may have been spending more quality time with your family at home during lockdown. It is important to remember that we have all experienced things differently during the pandemic and what may be positive for one person, may not have been so positive for another. There are no right or wrong answers, but more an encouragement to help you reflect on a challenging year in a more positive light where possible.

Questions to ask yourself when considering the not so good points in 2020

- Did I fail at anything?
- What is the most important lesson I have learnt this year?
- What could I have done better?
- What didn't I achieve that I would have liked to?

When answering these questions try to consider your answers carefully and reflect on why you may not have achieved what you would have liked, or why something has not gone as well as you would have liked them to. Could you do anything differently if that situation happened again in the future? What did you learn from that situation? Every individual's experiences are different; it may be that you couldn't do what you had planned due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so you have instead planned it for the future. When reflecting on some of the negative aspects of this year, it is important to be kind and forgiving of ourselves and those around us. We have all come through unprecedented times and everyone has faced their own challenges along the way. Try to accept that we have all had very little control of the outcomes of this year, so instead try to reward yourself for how resilient and adaptable you have been.

Reflecting on 2020 questions to consider

- What am I thankful for this year?
- What would I do differently?
- What advice would I give to myself?
- How am I different from this time last year?

When reflecting on the past year try to give yourself a fair assessment. Look at the positives and negatives. Try not to be too hard on yourself, we are always learning and sometimes making mistakes is one of the ways in which we may do this. You may have surprised yourself with how resilient you have been throughout the last year. Even if you have struggled this year, you may find next time you are in a difficult situation that you are more resilient than you were before.

Thinking about the future

- How have my long term plans now changed due the COVID-19 pandemic?
- How has this year effected what I do in the future?
- What have I learnt from this year that will change the way I do things in the future?

Future plans, aspirations and goals don't have to be written off because of COVID-19. Whilst some aspects may need to be put on hold until restrictions are lifted fully, it is important to remind ourselves that we have all found new ways of working, socialising and living. Consider your long-term plans and how they can be adapted so that they are still achievable. Having aspirations and goals to work towards can have a positive impact on our mental wellbeing.

How can Care first help?

If you feel you may need some emotional or practical support, you can contact Care first on the Freephone number. Care first is a leading provider of confidential, professional counselling, information and advice services. Whilst our BACP accredited Counsellors are available 24/7 to provide support with emotional issues, our expertly trained Information Specialists are available 8am-8pm Monday-Friday to provide advice on any practical issues that may be causing you a stress or worry and help you feel more in control of a situation.

All employees are eligible to use Care first, our services include; telephone counselling, information services and online support. Call Care first on the Freephone number provided by your organisation and you can speak to a professional in confidence.

If you would like to view the Webinar on '**Reflecting on 2020**' this is being delivered live on **Thursday 24th December at 12pm**, please use the below link to register for this session –

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2415100791352585232>

If you are unable to join the webinar live, a recording of the session can be accessed using the same link above after the webinar has taken place.