

This is hard. Social distancing, wearing a mask, not being able to give a friend a hug, looking at someone through a screen and knowing you can't get any closer. This is it. If someone had told me this time last year that I would be sitting here typing this, I probably would have laughed at them, looked at them sideways. A global pandemic? That kind of thing only happens in films. Let's just say it doesn't feel like a film anymore.

The first time I ever heard the term Covid -19 was on the radio last January. Then, lockdown started. It did and it didn't come as a shock. On the one hand, it only seemed temporary, like a bad flu bug that would leave about four people in the classroom on harsh winter days. On the other hand, though, I think we all kind of knew. I just thought we would have got more time to be in denial. Unfortunately, the coronavirus doesn't seem to care about my opinions.

When everything seemed hopeless, and I didn't know what to do, I realised, w. Whether we like it or not, we're all in this mess together. And I thought, "If everyone else can do it, why can't I?" I thought of people on the frontline, the horrors they must witness every day. Also, I thought of Covid -19 patients. Do we ever really stop to think what it must be like for them? Just because they are unfortunate enough to have contracted the virus, doesn't mean they aren't people. They were probably just like you or me, constantly watching the news, waiting with bated breath to hear today's figures. Until they became part of that number, a statistic on a screen. They, of all people, deserve the support of others.

As a nation, I was proud to see people distancing, wearing a mask, caring for others. Isn't ironic, in a way, that although we were being told to stay apart, it actually brought us closer together? Maybe the old saying is true: "You don't know what you have until it's gone". As I said, this is hard. But this is where we are, and if we all do it together, we might just be able. I despise the term 'new normal', but if we all realise that we're in it together, maybe we can make our own way back to normal. Because we are the ones with the power, and no-one can do it for us.

~ Ella Ennis, Victoire 1.

