

Transcript:

## Episode Eight: Hobbies and Self Isolation

**Hamza:** Hi everyone, I'm Hamza, I'm the Activities Inclusion Coordinator, and I look after all the nationality and faith societies

**Ola:** Hi I'm Ola, and I'm the International Students' Officers

**Hamza:** So this episode is all about what me and Ola have been getting up to in lockdown. In terms of self-isolation, just things like what hobbies we've been doing and whatever new, so I'll start with asking you Ola, how have you been finding lockdown?

**Ola:** So it's actually better than I expected, so when we first heard about lockdown, I thought I was going to be so bored and wondered how I was going to be spending all day in my flat that isn't that big and I didn't go back to my home country Poland, so I'm still here in the UK. So I didn't know what I was going to do, but it's not that bad, I'm trying to keep myself occupied with things that I didn't have time to do during the academic year – it's kind of like summer holidays, but not!

**Hamza:** How long have your walks been? I've started running and doing these 5k challenges, so I'm interested to see how long you've been walking for

**Ola:** I tried to do 5k once! 3 or 4 people tagged me so I thought I should do it, and I was out and I tried it with running but after 2k I was like oh my god I can't do this! So I just went back home and this was my longest run/walk, when I just walk I don't tend to measure how far I go with apps or anything, I just walk. I'm quite used to walking because I used to every day to Uni, and had to go quite far because I live around the DMU area. It was always like a 35/40 min walk so I guess I was already doing a 5k walk every day.

**Hamza:** God I don't know how you did that!

**Ola:** But now I'm obviously sitting more at home and doing less, being a bit more lazy.

**Hamza:** I guess for me I've been doing these 5k challenges and they've been like the hardest thing ever! Literally, I have been tagged in it 3 times, and the first time I just refused to do it, can't do that, I just didn't want to do it and was thinking about the pain I would go through! But then just decided to try it, I'm not doing anything in lockdown just the occasional home exercises, and I just wanted to get out. So I tried it, my first time was last week, and I managed to do a decent time, I would say anyway seeing as I haven't run for a whole year, and I managed 32 minutes.

**Ola:** Oh that's good!

**Hamza:** Yeah, it's decent, I mean I tried, it's fine I suppose



**Ola:** Yeah obviously when I did it, I didn't even get to 5k. But yeah don't push yourself, if you can do something, that's okay! We don't have to all be super athletes now that we are in lockdown

**Hamza:** Yeah, that's true. Yeah there's definitely no pressure to do it because others want you to do it, just do it because you want to. You want to be getting something out of it, but I guess for me the reason I do it, partly because people said do it, but also because I wanted to challenge myself

**Ola:** Also it depends what your motivation is, if you want to challenge yourself then push yourself that's fine, you will then know your body limit but if you're thinking 'oh no someone tagged me and now I need to do this, and how am I going to run' and stuff, that's not good thinking so it depends what your motivation is

**Hamza:** I guess that's a good topic to have, so a question following on from that is what would be your advice to students who don't have the motivation to try new things?

**Ola:** So I have this issue quite often and I think that I like a lot of things and doing things, but sometimes I can't motivate myself to start, once I start doing it I love it and don't want to stop, but starting it was hard for me. So some of the stuff I've been trying or going back to because I used to have those hobbies but I never had time, but at least that's what I told myself. So I was trying new things during lockdown and those things are like scrapbooking. So I remember when I was younger, like 14 or 15 years old, I loved scrapbooking and had all the supplies like tapes and stickers

**Hamza:** That's pretty cool!

**Ola:** And photos, so I had some pictures printed out because I have a Instax camera, so I thought okay I'll start doing things with this. So before I started it, I think I told everyone that 'yes I'm finally going to do it' but it was two weeks of lockdown before I finally started it. After I started decorating all the pages though it was really cool, and I spent 5 or 6 hours doing it, but yeah starting is the worst thing and when it comes to say movement, because this is what I was trying to do, moving every day a little bit, it doesn't have to be a super tiring work out if I don't feel up to it. It can be a little bit of yoga or some stretches, or a light dance workout or something.

I've tried to do it every day because when we are not in lockdown I would be moving a lot more through walking or naturally moving about, because that's what a day looks like, to go somewhere or something, but now we are just stuck inside I think it's important to just move a little bit. So I'm trying to do it every day and just doing a bit in the morning, so when I wake up before I eat breakfast I just do a 20 mins workout. Which I know isn't good for everyone! Some people need to be able to eat first, so I think just look to your body and ask what you need and what you can do, and then just do it.



Then motivating yourself to do hobbies, which was your question, that I'm still answering! I guess, as I said I started my scrapbooking which was a hobby I had a long time ago and so have an idea of what you want to do and think back to what you did a child. I think when we were kids we used to just do what we want to do because we were not pushed by anyone, just be kids. So I guess look and think what you liked when you were little that might be something, if you liked, I don't know, say colouring, then maybe you could now try drawing or painting. I don't know, or if you liked singing then you should start singing again and do some one person karaoke at home!

**Hamza:** One person karaoke? That's good! To be fair, that's probably something I do at home every day, I look into the mirror and stick on some old Drake songs or something and I just start singing in front of the mirror! Not sure if that's weird or not but that's something I do.

I think the advice I would give to someone who didn't have the motivation to start new things, is that sometimes we assume that because we are in lockdown we have to try something new, and in reality you don't need to. Like it's completely fine to just sit down, and watch Netflix and just chill, you don't need to do anything new in a way. Just keep in mind that you don't need to be physically or mentally active, just relax and check in on yourself, and stay connected with yourself and stay grounded.

**Ola:** Yeah!

**Hamza:** I think for those who are trying to motivate themselves to start new things, I guess one way I did it was figure out the reason why I wanted to do something. So for example one of the hobbies I've resumed because it's been a while since I last read was to start reading again, so I'm starting to read books and order books again. And I realised the reason I was doing this was to continually learn and continue to know more, and I wanted to understand different topics and different communities, etc. So I guess for me, I have to go back to why I wanted to read and that motivated me to start, if that makes sense?

**Ola:** I'm really bad at reading books and the only thing I read are the reading lists from lectures that I have to read, and I've been guilty of thinking now that I'm in lockdown I've got all this time and can do all these things that I've wanted to do, and so I'm reading about astrology. I haven't got too much into it yet but it is something I'm interested in, so I guess it's finding what you're into, which sometimes you don't know until you try, so if you're interested maybe give it a go

**Hamza:** I might actually give that a go, I'm interested in astrology myself. Is there like any old hobbies again that you are doing that you hadn't had time for previously?

**Ola:** I'd always liked lettering and it wasn't something I'd properly been able to get into before whenever I got a chance to sit down and do some hand lettering



or calligraphy, for example in one of the events for the SU that I organised had little cards with calligraphy and stuff.

So obviously when I had the opportunity I did it, but I never had the time to practise it, but in lockdown now I've downloaded the app called Go Create Pocket, and unfortunately you have to pay for it, but it's not too expensive so I thought okay I'm going to give this a go and it's so cool! I do it so much and I'm glad that I did it because honestly, every evening I sit down and I draw something or do some doodles, or do some hand lettering

**Hamza:** Funnily enough I'm cooking now as well,

**Ola:** Yeah! That's what I wanted to start, cooking!

**Hamza:** Exactly! For me now Ramadan has started so it won't be at the forefront of my hobbies now, but I can still start cooking in the evenings, for the fast break, so I guess that's a hobby as well, I love cooking.

**Ola:** I think as well for different things that you enjoy, for example I said astrology, or hand lettering, I don't think it's a hobby for me, it's just something that I enjoy doing. I think it's important not to push or pressurise yourself and think 'oh it's my hobby so I should do it every day because it's my passion', honestly if you enjoy doing something you can have multiple hobbies and you don't have to have time for them every day.

**Hamza:** You don't need to do something new or try and find something that you did before, you can literally have some time and reflect on yourself, even watch a movie or something.

**Ola:** Yeah exactly!

**Hamza:** Just relax

**Ola:** I've even written down, when I was answering those questions, things like Netflix and then in brackets put, not a hobby, but it is something I've done a lot in lockdown. Whenever I have a spare hour or something, which is a lot, the easiest thing is just to sit down and turn on Netflix and just watch something, even if it's something I've already watched! Like I really enjoy rewatching Friends right now, I just rewatch all the episodes that I've already watched, so yeah Netflix might be your hobby as well

**Hamza:** Literally! So I guess the final thoughts, my question to you would be what would be your tip or advice to students who are self isolating?

**Ola:** What I've been telling myself as well is just listen to what your body needs and what you need, because even me I have some days where I'm super productive, and do all my hobbies that I like, and then again other days I'll just stay in bed and watch Netflix, and this is fine!

**Hamza:** Stay connected with yourself, stay grounded and try and talk to others at the same time whether that's virtually or other. Try and make use of the one hour a day exercise if you can because I think that's really important to stay moving



and stay active. It doesn't necessarily need to be 5k run or lifting weights, it can literally just be like walking around or walking up and down your room etc, it can be anything.

And I guess particularly for Muslim students with Ramadan and the whole situation with COVID-19, continue to thrive and build that relationship with God when you break that fast, and I know a lot of us like to break fast together and aren't able to do that, but the Muslim Council of Britain have videos every Thursday that you can sign up to.

Thank you Ola for joining us for this Podcast episode,

**Ola:** Thank you!

**Hamza:** It was nice to speak to you and I hope you're looking after yourself, and continuing to find new hobbies!

**Ola:** Thank you as well, it was really nice

**Hamza:** No worries, take care Ola!

