

*Pressures of Lockdown making you stumble?*

## **Lean into the Wind.**



***Leaning into the Wind* 2017 IMBd** is a stunning film following the artwork of Andy Goldsworthy - an artist who works out of doors internationally with nature both within the countryside and in cities and towns.

I revisited this incredible film this Lockdown and found it spoke powerfully to me - as I hope it might do to some of you (let me know if you want to borrow the DVD if you still work with physical objects!).

Much of the film focused on Goldsworthy's use of the colour yellow in his art-work - which is explained as being the colour of resilience. Those dedicated followers of fashion amongst us will not have missed the different hues of yellow and ochre donning the High Street and I think this is no coincidence.

In one scene, Goldsworthy spends an entire day painstakingly smoothing tiny pieces of

yellow leaves not rocks by a stream. Just as he is almost there with the geometric design, glowing against the slate grey, a sharp gust of wind hits the work, blowing the pieces away in a matter of seconds.

Another narrative told is one of his relationship with a mighty tree that has been blown down in the wind and serves as a bridge over the same stream. Over the course of an entire year, Goldsworthy bonds with this tree through different layerings of leaves and natural sculptures - as if he is seeking to become one with it. One devastating day, he arrives to find that local woodcutters have brutally removed the remains of the canopy, leaving empty spaces. In his despair, Goldsworthy creates a single monochrome spot in the space where the upper branches had been, and then spends the remainder of the year creating fresh sculptures as if new shoots emerging from what had been the old.

Whilst not all of us may be into arty stuff and connecting with creation in this way, this imagery may speak to us about a season of resilience. Perhaps, before the pandemic struck, we had been happily pasting down the pieces of our lives, only to find now that many have been blown away. Perhaps in a time of change, many of the limbs we grew to know, trust and love seem to have been cut off - for some temporarily but sadly increasingly for many, permanently as loved ones pass away.

But it's in times like this that our reaction really matters. We can decide to cut out losses, to shrink away inside ourselves and not try again, or we can see the empty spaces as new opportunities to grow and bond and come alive.

Many of us will know the song from the band **Chumbawamba**, "**Tubthumping**", which screams resilience at us: *"I get knocked down, but I get up again; you're never gonna keep me down"*. It has its place and sometimes it's what all of us need to get up and try again!

But right at the end of his film, Andy Goldsworthy offers us another, perhaps spiritually deeper practice that takes resilience to a whole new level. He defies the wind that wants to knock him down.

In a nail biting climax, we see him struggling to stand whilst walking towards the edge of a dangerously steep mountain side - the wind howling against his face.

Again and again it knocks him down, until in a sublime moment, he manages to achieve a perfect posture - one that actually suspends him at a 45 degree angle supported by the wind.

**You have to see it to believe it!**

I would offer that resilience is not just about getting up again many times when we get knocked in life - be that by people, unkindness, pain, misunderstanding, anxiety, disappointment, failure, even death itself. It is about learning a posture that gives us the

confidence and belief to actually *lean into the hard times*; daring to believe they might actually lift us up when we eventually nail the technique!

For some of us, that will be about developing belief in ourselves and those around us; for others, it will also be about faith, which may also be about belief in God.

There is an ancient Celtic saying that goes like this:

*"Those that lean on the breast of Christ  
Hear the heartbeat of God."*

*Where is our own leaning place in these wild times?*

**Growing the Well community by 'Dwelling in the Word' - something to whet your appetite?**

Alan Pyke, our Spiritual Group Lead Trustee writes:

It is commonly said that the Chinese word for 'crisis' is made up of two characters, one of which means 'danger' and the other 'opportunity'. This Covid crisis has presented us with multiple dangers, both from the disease itself and from the losses resulting from the closure of schools and businesses. Many of the Well's activities have had to close down but thankfully, this crisis has provided opportunity for us to reach out to the wider community through the Food Bank and by developing the listening service. People, denied the opportunity to meet physically, have found new ways of doing so digitally and this is true of The Well too.

At a time when personal involvement in The Well has become either difficult or impossible, there is a danger that our community life that we have built together could be eroded. This sense of being a caring community is vital to the very existence of The Well. This is why we are inviting you to join us in the well-established practice of 'Dwelling in the Word' something that has been trialled by some of us and found to be helpful.....

*WATCH THIS SPACE! More information about the practice and how you can choose to join in with it will be circulated in the coming weeks*



Something else to whet your appetite.....Kay's  
been baking! These Brownies are A-MA-ZING

Darling! And the peanut butter muffins  
....counting down the days until we can serve

some of those too!

We are selling  
clothes on **ebay**,  
have a look at our  
page  
**“the well shop”**

