

Ideas for lifting your mood this weekend

Oct 23, 2020 By Melissa Kirsch

Welcome. Friday again, the perfect time to consult our archives of those diversions that lighten the mood, that help us feel a little more hopeful, more balanced or excited or just OK. A couple days ago, I asked about those things that are [making your days a little better](#). If you've been feeling short on delight lately, here's hoping the responses we received from other At Home readers might help a bit.

Joan Shangold of Manhattan is looking for mushrooms. She wrote: "While I have seen edible hen of the woods in Central Park and large reishis on Ninth Avenue, I get just as much pleasure from spotting the smaller mushrooms that I cannot identify."

"I've found people-watching out my window while working from home to be surprisingly uplifting," wrote Brandelyn Hodgdon, 26, of Brunswick, Me., adding, "It's the small reminders of human life outside our little cocoon that keep my spirits high."

Greg Sadoian, 65, of Santa Monica, wrote: "The [Kangaroo Sanctuary on Instagram](#) melts my bitter heart every day. An amazing couple who rescue and raise orphan kangaroos in Australia's Outback."

The things that are lifting our spirits are those that take us outside of ourselves — music, nature, family, simple pleasures:

- "The whole of the pandemic, I've been walking in my neighborhood, and discovering delightful things: a front container garden made entirely out of drums (yes, an actual drum kit); a small front yard with a field of multicolored zinnias and only zinnias; the house around the corner that has been fashioning hearts out of whatever outdoor materials they find — pine cones, grape leaf, stones — and leaving them out front for everyone to enjoy." —Tracy MacMaster, 51, Toronto
- "My mood lifter is [the Harry Truman biography](#) by David McCullough. Truman was a wonderful man, always looking for the good in people and usually honest in stating his opinions. It is very uplifting when I feel down." —Cyrus V. Godfrey, Beverly Hills
- "I checked Lee J. Ames' "Draw 50 Famous Cartoons" out from the library. Trying to draw a Jughead here and a Felix the Cat there has provided a relaxing

mental escape. The results have been pretty hilarious (I'm no artist), and it's fun to look back at my progress." —Staci Sturrock, 53, West Palm Beach, Fla.

- “The thing bringing me the most joy lately is The Drew Barrymore Show. She has been my favorite since the tender young age of 12 and I love her more than ever now. She is doing a fantastic job as host because she is as real as it gets; there are no false pretenses with her. She revels in the sometimes-awkwardness of her new gig as much as her enthusiasm for matters she is so passionate about.” —Keri Gibbs, 37, Massapequa, N.Y.
- “I find the biggest help has been sea swimming. Getting out under a big, open sky in the cold water shocks my mind out of the situation we are in. I am reminded that there are still so many moments to enjoy and that life is here to be lived.”—Abigail Smith, 43, Dublin

Many of us are missing community these days, whether that's our parents or children we haven't seen in months, our colleagues whose faces we encounter only on screens, friends, classmates, neighbors or strangers with enthusiastic dogs we might once have stopped to pet, lingering for a chat.

In the meantime, I'm grateful for you, the community of At Home, who offer so many ideas for staying busy, staying the course. Keep writing: athome@nytimes.com. Include your full name, age and location. Keep telling us what's inspiring you, what brings you joy, and we'll keep sharing your contributions. We're all of us up and down, day to day, and hearing from others who are figuring things out too can provide immense comfort. We're [At Home](#). We'll read every letter sent.