



What's the Story?

APRIL 2020

And the wall came tumbling down

Before the virus came, we had two storms – Ciara and Dennis – they were fierce enough between them to knock our 100 year old garden wall down.

Our deeds didn't show whose wall it was so our neighbours and we got the insurers in. Interesting how one insurer will replace it (ours) and the neighbours wouldn't - they were told it was an "old wall" and it was inevitable it would fall down - eventually!

Our insurance company [Halifax] was outstanding – as was their representative Matthew. Soon we had two builders and two landscapers in clearing and building.

The day the builders finished was the first day of the Government's lockdown. We toasted their work and thanked them for the care they had put into building our new wall.

We are looking ahead to replanting in the future but in the meantime we are using the wall as a measure for running our planned weekly marathon.

Our wall may have fallen down but with the professional response of everyone involved, it's given us a new confidence to look to the future.

Are you helping your clients build for their future?

How many friends do you have?

We started reading before the lockdown, a book called "Friendship" by Lydia Denworth. Rather an apt read for today's living arrangement and we recommend it.

We are all seeing the importance of our social bonds. But as you may know friendships do more than make us happy. They strengthen our hearts, immune systems and sleep patterns. Those with the strongest social bonds live the longest.

Most of us are fortunate to have family and friends who we can socialise with even when we are far apart – but not everyone is so fortunate.

Is there anyone out there you could connect with?

TV commercials – old or new?

It has felt very strange to watch British TV commercials for almost a month which were out of sync with what was going on in the country – they seemed to be running in a parallel universe. Thankfully, the government output was in tune.

Last Sunday this changed when Tesco launched their new "self-distancing" guide lines in a 60 seconds TV commercial. It was clear, helpful, empathetic.

Anybody who is worrying about self-distancing – and most people are - would have been reassured.

We also read that Tesco are giving all their staff a 10% bonus for their hard work and commitment. We know that many grocery retailers are seeing increased sales but we applaud the speed with which Tesco have shared their good fortune.

As the Tesco ad says "**Every little helps**".

PS We wonder how accurately history will depict these extraordinary times – if the soaps are anything to go by, it will have been cleansed away.

Online advertisers shouldn't take advantage

With more time on our hands we find we are reading a larger amount of our new e-mail and LinkedIn messages. The offers of help are abundant and many appear genuine.

However, we received one from the publication, Management Today which appeared to offer some good content until we clicked through.

They gave the first few lines of their story then the type faded to say: "we were no longer able to use their service. We needed to re-new!"

We've never been a subscriber and felt annoyed by their sneaky way of approaching us. In this crisis when we're all in it together, we certainly don't need advertisers playing these kinds of games.

They will lose customers not gain them.

Does anybody want some FREE on-line training?

Here is a genuine offer.

We are very happy to help any of our readers in any communication problems they have.

We have a 40 minute Storytelling session we can run on Zoom.
We can do a similar session on Conference Speaking.
And we continue to run our one-to-one training under our usual terms.

Contact us on info@speakersco.co.uk

It's harder to be worried when you're laughing

There are plenty of jokes on-line and a laugh is a very positive way to kick-start your day.

Here's one we came across today.

"An old gentleman lived alone. He wanted to plant his annual tomato garden, but it was very difficult work as the ground was hard. His only son, Vincent, who used to help him, was in prison.

The old man wrote a letter to his son describing his predicament:

"Dear Vincent, I am feeling very sad because it looks like I won't be able to plant my tomato garden this year. I know if you were here my troubles would be over. I know you would be happy to dig the plot like the old days.
Love, Papa."

A few days later he received a letter from his son.

"Dear Papa, don't dig up that garden. That's where the bodies are buried". Love, Vinnie."

At 4am the next morning, FBI agents and local police arrived and dug up the whole area without finding any bodies. They apologised and left.

That same day the old man received another letter from his son.

"Dear Papa, go ahead and plant the tomatoes now. That's the best I could do in the circumstances". Your loving son, Vinnie."

Stay safe and well – until next month

Barry Graham & Sally Clare

