

Maja's Story

Therein lies the pleasure of learning - in an ideal world it never stops.

Maja describes herself as someone at a stage in her life where learning is *refreshing*, in every sense of the word. She's always been keen to learn new things and make connections.

As a child she followed her older sister to Steiner



school in Switzerland, with its philosophy of creative and experiential education. She was very happy, but as a teenager became aware that her learning experience, and possibly even her world view, made her stand out from her peers, something most teens find challenging. She also became aware that because her learning had been relatively unstructured there were gaps in knowledge she needed to fill. She did this by asking people she knew were strong in the areas she felt she was behind in, and by reading. Reading has been a huge pleasure all Maja's life.

Motivation

Maja's early experiences gave her confidence as a self motivated, independent learner. She has joined classes regularly though her life, no longer to fill gaps but to study the things she enjoys, finding like-minded

people along the way, often willing to help her progress further. A keen linguist, she has studied French and Spanish with ACL. She enjoys working things out for herself, too. When she had computer problems her son suggested she Google what to do, before he told her the answer. 'I'm very pleased that,' she says. 'I feel actually empowered!'

Zoom

During lockdown, Maja joined Creative Writing

classes. She worried about using Zoom—not so much because of the technical side, as being unable to pick up on what people really thought without the usual cues, or a chance to read the atmosphere in a room. As it turned out, there were benefits, too. Losing the short cuts of 'what do you do?' meant losing preconceptions, and looking at the person themselves rather relying on background information. When Maja met her classmates in person, after lockdown, she says - 'actually they're not that different from how I imagined them to be!'

One thing she has discovered about herself is that, she's a bit afraid of total silence.

Find your 'intrepid'

Although Maja's always been a keen learner, she admits the first couple of classes can be daunting. They mean venturing into the unknown, where you may encounter different opinions and new

challenges. She reminds herself that everyone else is feeling the same way. Like any great exploration, slight nervousness is part of the preparation. You need to keep pushing through it in order to see and experience the wide and wonderful world of learning

Maja's classmates have become her friends. 'Actually, they're not that different from how I imagined them to be!'



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