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**Trevor Burke**

# Begonias

In the background of the coronavirus pandemic, which puts little other than life and death into perspective, it is not easy to see beyond the current crisis. Dentists in the UK, and many worldwide, are facing financial and clinical difficulties which could never have been foreseen. In that regard, dentists in much of the rest of the world seem to be managing to run their dental surgeries without the untested demands that we see in the UK.

In recent issues, *Dental Update* has brought readers many articles on COVID-19 and its implications for the dental team and their patients. However, there will be a time when dentists and their patients will again worry about how long the restorations placed in their teeth will last, rather than worrying about the implications of COVID-19 on their treatment. *Dental Update* will therefore plan largely to return to its *raison d'être* of bringing high quality, well-illustrated articles of relevance to general dentistry and publishing fewer articles solely related to COVID-19, albeit with the rider that, should we receive an important COVID-related paper, it will be published, and we will continue to publish Professor Samaranyake's most useful COVID-19 Commentary for as long as he considers it relevant.

Is it too soon to discuss whether anything good has come from the pandemic? Perhaps, but there are some initiatives which are worthy of mention, namely:

- British Airways' new disembarkation by row number is one, as it removes the scrum



which occurred when the seat belt sign was turned off.

■ Many former commuters will be more relaxed while working from home, rather than standing on a crowded train for hours. In this regard, European data suggest that three-quarters of jobs in the highest paid quartile can be done remotely, compared with only 3% in the lowest quartile. Indeed, is working from home a privilege confined to the well paid?<sup>1</sup> It is something that dentists will never be able to do!

■ Bob Dylan released, on his YouTube channel on 27 March 2020, his 17 minute epic 'Murder Most Foul' (which addresses the assassination of President John F Kennedy in 1963) as a gift to his fans. A variety of commentators have seen the release and content of the song directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic. *Rolling Stone* deputy editor<sup>2</sup> praised the release, stating that the song 'is really about the ways that music can comfort us in times of national trauma'.

In clinical matters, the following are among the initiatives worthy of mention:

■ Remote diagnosis, as discussed in recent issues of *Dental Update*, has reduced travelling for patients.

■ Minimally invasive dentistry is a certain winner, as clinicians increasingly search for ways of treating their patients without the need for an Aerosol Generating Procedure.

■ Prevention is more important now



than ever.

I like growing flowers. At the beginning of May each year, I plant begonia tubers. This year was not an exception, and the blooms have been as good as ever! Perhaps, recent events should prompt us to remember the simple pleasures that COVID-19 cannot remove and draw comfort from them, such as presented here. For the begonias (illustrated here and overleaf), it would be the end of everything if they ceased blooming. John Lennon is widely attributed to be the author of the comment 'Everything will be okay in the end. If it's not okay, it's not the end'. In that regard, the new normal is not normal, and, as Cynthia Gorney<sup>3</sup> put it – 'In perilous times, our deepest human impulse is to draw close to each other – the very thing we've been told not to do'. As I write, lockdown

restrictions are increasing in the UK and, more stringently, in Birmingham. These are necessary evils when we might want to draw close to each other. The future has always been uncertain, but is more uncertain now. Nevertheless, there remains hope that we will begin to adapt to the new normal – for as long as it takes.

### References

1. O'Connor S. Welcome to the digital gig economy. *I News*, 17 September 2020.
2. Vosick-Levinson S. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Murder\\_Most\\_Foul\\_\(song\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Murder_Most_Foul_(song)) *Rolling Stone*, 27 March 2020.
3. Gorney C. We are not made for this new normal. *National Geographic* July 2020; **238**: 21–23.

### Farewell to Angela Stroud

Angela Stroud, Executive Editor of *Dental Update*, has been central to the production of every issue for over 20 years (which amounts to well over 200 issues), plus every issue of *Orthodontic Update*! It is she who has checked the grammar, spelling and style of each accepted article (known in the business as subbing), as well as receiving submitted articles, sending them to me and co-ordinating the peer review of those who I have decided should be put into that process. This is an enormous amount of work, which has resulted in the attractive journal that subscribers receive. Her attention to detail is superb: this was evident in a recent

issue when she spotted that there were two references in the bibliography of an article, but no reference to them in the text!

It is therefore with sadness that I report that she plans to retire after this issue. I, and all members of the Editorial Board, and the team at Guildford, wish her a long and happy retirement. At last, she will have time to enjoy exploring nature and perhaps identifying new bird species which she has not previously encountered. Angela, your hard work over the years is much appreciated by me, and also, I am sure, by the readers of *Dental Update*.

**FJ Trevor Burke**  
Editorial Director

