



## At *The Red Shoes*, after COVID Isolation....

As we come together after being isolated, I'm happy, I'm hopeful, I feel peace, I feel vulnerable, I feel as if I'm taking a nice cold bath after a 5 mile run, or like a bird being let out of a cage--scary but exciting.

I realized driving here I'm actually kind of nervous, I'm frightened of going out, but I feel freedom, too. I feel joy. I'm waiting, and open for the gift.

I'll discern what I'm meant to do with the rest of my life. I grow closer to an unknown expiration date.

I really haven't felt isolated. Our "family" bubble included 3 households (4 adults) next door to each other.

I know now that I am old. I move into a new stage of life.

I want to be fully present for those who need me and with whom I can share meaning.

I couldn't believe I could actually get out of the house.

I'm happy I don't have to wear a mask, even though yesterday, I DID ask.

I feel like a little lost sheep. I hope it will be easier soon.

I've become used to the isolation and now need to rebuild connections.

I loved not having to go anywhere, but maybe just this once.

I don't do much, but I'm delighted to clear the air.

I feel like a sailor, navigating a new sea.

I was intimidated by the idea of reacquainting with people.

I feel like it's the first day of school – a new school where I don't know how to act.

I can make new friends again and feel the sun, pleased that we can see each other

I feel funny not wearing a mask,

I'm glad to be here today, still standing.

I'm inspired. Excited for a change in myself, for breaking free from my anxieties and fears.

I am love, a new first kiss. I cherish the hugs and smiles, inhale the breath of life and exhale JOY

I couldn't reach Covid 19 but I gained 11 pounds.

I'm glad not to be paranoid any more.

I'm a high risk patient, it's still scary for me.

I'm enjoying restaurants, friends, conversations. I'm looking forward to events at the Red Shoes. glad to have moments without my mask

I am a part of a family reunion here. Hearts filled w love, we join our hearts in song.

I didn't realize how much I missed live music.

I'm ambivalent after learning about and living with ME for the past 15 months. Surprisingly, I relished being alone and with more time with my spouse.

I missed snuggling with my grandchildren.

For years, I wrote poems and little essays, and just tossed them in a closet. I realized with COVID that if I died, they'd never be read. I pulled them all out, typed them up, and started posting them on Instagram.

I even wanted to show everyone my new but elementary skills on the mandolin

I'm so glad I can stop snarking at my mirror and be sociable.

I've learned to love Zoom, which made it possible to meet up without showering first.

I'm grateful for the "lemonade" of COVID, I love this chance to kiss the virus goodbye.

I still have a bad mental health that needs some help.

I'm so glad I made myself come today, to see what I would have missed

So glad to see these people I have known before. Some showed up in new strange dreams.

Mulch from these moments will foster new seeds.

I am seeing familiar faces, one for all.

I'm enjoying restaurants, friends, conversations.

I'm a starving soul at a wonderful banquet.

I feel like a munchkin from the Wizard of Oz when Glenda sings, "Come out, come out,  
wherever you are."

I'm hopeful as the zinnia seeds I planted in April. Green leaves, but no blooms yet.  
Like a new flower, I explore new beginnings.

I feel free but fragmented, I need to reconstitute myself

It so good to hug again.

I can breathe again.

I call on the healing power of Mother Earth to make us whole and keep us safe.