

SHELL SHOCKED

Things to do While Self- Quarantining

By Art Stevens

We're all so bored hunkering down at home. We all have cabin fever and many of us have already gone through all the recommendations of activities to do at home to prevent us from going stir crazy. We are now in our [seventh](#) month of self-isolation and playing Monopoly for bagels is now passé.

Your "Shell Shocked" guru is now coming to the rescue. Here are new amazing activities you can do in the privacy of your detention facility to prevent permanent ennui while not berating your significant other for engaging in banal conversations with you.

1. Counting geckos. While seated in the comfort of your lanai begin to count all the geckos you see during each day. Keep a scorecard handy so that you can compare each day's scores and begin to develop expertise on the intimate life styles of your gecko neighbors.
2. Sing along with the leaf blowers. Imagine that each leaf blower you hear during the course of the day is a percussion instrument and that its sole purpose is to accompany you while you sing golden oldies. Begin with "Embraceable You" and transition to "Old Man River." Sing in tune and to the beat of the leaf blower. This one activity alone can prevent you from going nuts and hallucinate about drinking ice cream sodas through a straw.
3. Take up the kazoo. It's the easiest instrument to learn how to play. You don't need music books, lessons or in-person instruction. Buy one from Amazon and immediately begin playing

such songs as “Taps”, “Le Marseilles and “Flight of the Bumblebee.” This last piece may require a bit of practice because of its quick tempo but think of actual bumblebees playing with your geckos and that alone will put you in a kazoo mood.

4. Play the shoelace game. Take out all shoes that have laces on them and remove all the laces. Then begin to reinsert the shoe laces in shoes other than their original home base. In this way some of your shoes will have different colored shoe laces which will make you the life of the party – your spouse – when you put them on. This dancing with shoe laces activity is finding its way into American homes with greater regularity and the reviews have been ecstatic.
5. Spend a day writing backwards. It would go something like this. Once upon a time I went walking in the woods and came across a princess. I immediately kissed her and she turned into a frog. “Frog a into turned she and her kissed immediately I. princess a across came and woods the in walking went I time a upon Once. “ Now isn’t this grand fun? Once you master this art you can then begin speaking backwards as well. Imagine the look on your spouse’s face when you say to her “Eggs some me make.”
6. Do ten laundries a day. This could make time pass ridiculously but time will indeed pass. Take a bundle of clothes that need washing. In fact, if you don’t have enough soiled clothing then take some clean ones out of your dresser drawers. Fill up your washer with this bundle and go through the normal washing cycles. Once the washer signals that your clothes are squeaky clean then rewash them. And again. And again. The object of the exercise is to help time pass as well as to scientifically determine how many washes it will take to reduce your clothes to invisibility.

7. And should you wish to reduce your mind to a blubbering mass of incoherence then this final new activity will do the trick. It's practicing screaming. What better way to reduce stress, tension, boredom and pent-up rage than good old-fashioned screaming. The object is to start small with tiny, volume-controlled gurgles of a scream. Initially, each warm up scream should be limited to no more than two seconds. Then gradually turn up the volume, length and urgency of each scream. Better to accompany your screams with Frank Sinatra albums so that your neighbors won't call the paddy wagon on you. But a long, measured scream of about five seconds will relieve you of the insanity that self-quarantining can generate. It's in the category of letting out all your steam and reducing yourself to vegetable-like existence. What better way to endure a socially inflicted sentence of never-ending self-quarantining?

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