47 year old Dad helps millions on TikTok as a result of lockdown

Wednesday 22 June, 2022

The Coronavirus pandemic suddenly presented the reality of a new life that I had never envisaged within my lifetime or my children's lifetime. The early days were a real struggle to understand and cope with what was materialising. Forced to live a new dictated life under an unknown timeline left me feeling confused, a little sad and above all else helpless.

To overcome these feelings, the first thing I tried to do was to volunteer and try to help…my way of not feeling so helpless. I signed up as an NHS helper, however, I didn't feel like I was helping enough or reaching enough people.

As the weeks went on, I could see the impact the isolation and fear were having not only on myself but also on my children, family, friends and work colleagues. I could see mental health was becoming a prominently discussed symptom of the pandemic…one that had always previously been a little taboo. I started to reflect on my own feelings and search deep for happier memories to help keep me focused and strong. This journey took me to look at old photos, listen to music and watch movies that I had not experienced for years. The movies with their life stories and underlying life messages really seemed to help. This was the catalyst for me starting to gather quotes and sharing them with my family and friends…. @xgilham was born.

Ultimately the motivation and driving force behind launching @xgilham was to help people create perspective in life and provide a sense of being "not alone" in the thoughts, emotions and situations we all experience.

We must all remember that life is full of ups and downs and that through connection and sharing with others who have gone through or are going through similar thoughts and emotions, we can get through the downs and elevate the highs.

"An important aspect of my relatable quotes and emotions is also humour. Daily life challenges can be scary, and that sense of fear can make negative emotions a big obstacle in life. A bit of humour in life makes those moments less scary and less consuming. If I can make someone's life just that little bit better, even for a moment, then that for me makes my work worthwhile."

18 Months on I have managed to build a wonderful community of 6.5 million followers and a safe place for people to feel less alone in their thoughts and emotions which motivates me to keep creating and building.

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