

1. **Start** your own karaoke hand washing song. By the end of this lock-down, you should be a star!
2. **Learn** a new skill through YouTube tutorial: piano, guitar, origami, knitting, juggling.
3. **Create** a time capsule. Items could include a current newspaper article, a letter to your future self, a photo of your family, three things you are grateful for.
4. **Create** a journal, Anne Frank-style, and record your isolation journey.
5. **Go through** your recipe books and try something new.
6. **Plan** a future holiday destination and research the area.
7. **Create** a cartoon book.
8. **Resurrect and perfect** your handstand and cartwheel.
9. **Take turns** at creating a daily dance or exercise routine for your family.

10. **Plan** the Easter Egg treasure hunt, complete with cryptic rhyming clues.
11. **Research** and record your family tree.
12. **Return** emails and cleanout inbox, sent and deleted emails.
13. **Clean** out your handbag. Check the kids' school bags too while you're at it. It's quite possible their lunch from two weeks ago is festering within.
14. **Make** a video interviewing a family member.
15. **Join** your daughter in a TikTok dance.
16. **Spend** time cloud watching.
17. **Create** an obstacle course outside and time yourselves completing it.
18. **Go** on a bug hunt.
19. **Have** a paper airplane challenge.

20. **Find** 20 small objects from around your house and put them on a tray. Give everyone one minute to memorize every object, then cover the tray and see who can write the most objects down.
21. **Find** various leaves from around the yard and do some leaf rubbings.
22. **Get** your hairdressing and artistic skills on and create designs with the hair clippers for the kids. (Google hair clipper designs.) Why not do your own too while you're at it? Heck, no one will see it anyway.
23. **Pitch** the tent in the backyard for a retreat or build huts either inside or out.
24. **Blind-folded** taste-testing. Siblings love adding a few disgusting duds to the mix.
25. **Go through** your contacts and reconnect with long-lost friends and family members.



## Use isolation to SELF CHECK

**Simon Cottam is a typical outdoor-loving kiwi bloke, a bit of a character and he's got a message.**

**"We are all in lockdown at the moment to avoid catching Covid-19, which is killing people. Melanoma kills 500 New Zealanders a year, yet we continue to go out in the sun and not have skin check-ups."**

The self-employed builder has suffered a double-whammy; he'd just finished six weeks off work, due to three surgeries and subsequent infections after the removal of a melanoma, returned to work, then the lockdown was announced.

Now he's urging kiwis to use the time to give themselves a self-check and book a doctor's appointment post-isolation if necessary.

"I'd had a mole for years that had started to look different and had been planning on getting it checked, I'm just lucky my doctor picked up on it."

A builder of over 37 years, the keen diver/fisherman has worked and played in the outdoors all his life. It was after a mishap with the filleting knife – which he is putting down to 'revenge of the snapper' – in December, that Simon ended up at his GP, who subsequently noticed the melanoma on his face. The 52-year-old was referred to the Whangarei Skin Clinic and seen by Dr Heike Detjen who, upon close examination, confirmed that it looked suspicious. The pathology report confirmed an early melanoma which needed full excision with 5mm safety margins. He then underwent an excision

and flap reconstruction as the large wound could not be closed with a simple suture. He also needed a smaller excision afterwards, as one of the safety margins needed to be extended.

After his two surgeries in January and February, Simon's 'face lift' as he puts it, is healing well.

"When people ask what happened to my face, I say, 'That's what happens when you say no to your wife'," laughs the jokester.

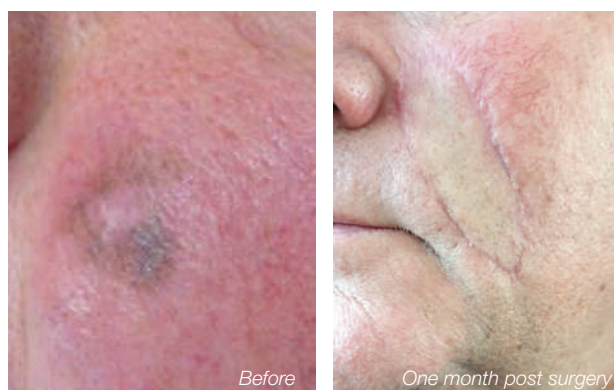
"But seriously, I'm lucky it was so visual on my cheek and still in its infancy. I want to get the message out there to get these things checked before it's too late. I have always been sun smart, wearing hats and high collars but, like many kiwi men, spent many hours in the sun."

Confirms Dr Heike: "Simon has grown up in New Zealand and works outside all day which increases his risk for skin cancer.

"Melanoma is unfortunately a more and more frequently-seen cancer as New Zealand skin cancer and especially melanoma rates are rising.

"Currently we have 500 deaths a year from melanoma in New Zealand. The cause of melanoma is not entirely clear, other than UV radiation and genetic factors play a role."

She says it can also occur in places that do not see the sun, such as the inside of cheeks, gums, genital area, buttocks, soles of the feet and under nails.



"My message is to get a skin check once a year, use sunscreen and practice sun safe behaviour, like not sunbathing and avoiding exposure in the midday hours. I am also concerned about exposure to the hands and nailbeds in 'nail bars' as UV light is used to dry and harden the polish in some treatments."

Meanwhile, the original injury from the filleting knife has long healed and Simon is unfazed by the scar on his face.

"It may have been an improvement or it may not. I'm just pleased it is gone because it was going to cause a problem leaving it there and it would've been a far worse outcome."

Despite being sent back home after six weeks off work and the loss of income, Simon remains upbeat and doesn't plan to down-tools.

"I have a list of DIY jobs around home that my wife has created and it's growing ever longer," he laughs.

"It is what it is, there's no point getting grumpy and frustrated about (the lockdown). If people listen and take note and stop thinking that it won't happen to me, hopefully we'll come out the other side and we'll all be in a good space.

"I live by these principles: We live together, we share together and we grow together and if one person becomes selfish, then that can upset the apple cart."

He recalls stories from his gran living through a different lockdown altogether during the war years.

"My gran would hide under the table and cover my uncle with her body during the bombings.

"People who lived through the depression and polio, they've been through similar times and got through it. We learn from our past. My gran endured four months of bombs dropping on her house. All we're asking is four weeks."

He adds that his gran's experience of living through the true recessions of life taught him to always have enough food for a month so the family were well-stocked and prepared for lockdown.

**"I woke up this morning and I thought 'I am well, my family are well and we are all alive and that's what matters.'"**

## Whangarei Skin Clinic



### Skin Cancer Medicine and Surgery

- Surgical/Non-Surgical Skin Cancer treatment
- Radiofrequency Surgery
- Complete Skin Cancer Checks

#### LATEST UPDATE FROM WHANGAREI SKIN CLINIC – COVID-19

To ensure continuity of care for high-risk skin cancer patients we have appointments available using video or phone call.

Dr Heike Detjen

### Cosmetic Medicine

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- Microneedling
- Advanced Platelet Rich Therapy (PRP)
- Cosmeceuticals and Sunscreens

#### Opening Hours

Monday to Friday 9am - 4.30pm  
Exception Thursday 10.30am - 6pm  
(Evening Surgery)

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