

What Is Normal Life?

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Welcome. What constitutes a return to “normal” life? Is it when schools and offices are open consistently? When we’ve reached herd immunity? When we no longer wear masks in the supermarket? On planes? (Will we *ever* not wear masks in stores and on planes?) Is it when the boredom lifts? When we’re out more than we’re in?

For now, the in-between feeling persists, the feeling of being on the verge of something but not quite there yet. Home is still where we’re safest, and, remarkably, there’s still more to discover there. Sourdough days may be long past, but Claire Saffitz will teach you to make your own croissants. You could listen to the Brahms intermezzo that influenced Branford Marsalis as he composed music for “Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom.” There’s still time to tap your backyard maples for syrup. Or just spend a while out there among the trees, senses open, forest bathing.

There is, of course, adventure yet to be mined — and beauty, too — in our own neighborhoods, as the travel photographer Roff Smith found when he began treating his morning bicycle rides like magazine assignments, taking pictures as he rode through his marshy seaside town on the south coast of England. “It’s brought home the truth that you don’t need to board a plane and jet off to the far side of the world to experience a sense of travel or the romance of difference,” he writes. “It lies waiting on your doorstep — if you look.”

P.S.

- Spend some time with this virtual memorial, with photos of objects that remind readers of loved ones who have died over the past year.
- Marvel at all the colors of Mr. Rogers’s cardigans, charted chronologically by Owen Phillips. Then head over to The Neighborhood Archive, a tremendously detailed repository of information on Mr. Rogers and his neighborhood.
- And take a listen to “David Byrne Presents: The Sound of New York,” a playlist honoring the Dominican-born musician Johnny Pacheco, who died in February.

Tell us.

What does “back to normal” mean to you? Is it an activity resumed, a reunion with loved ones, a feeling? Tell us: athome@nytimes.com. Include your name, age and location. We’re At Home. We’ll read every letter sent. As always, more ideas for leading a full and cultured life at home and near it appear below.