

## **Riding the Waves 1 : Joel Hallinan, Tess Alston, Rafael and Sofia**

A bubbling hubbub greets you when you call this happy little tribe, now happily bunkered down in Gisborne, about 54 kilometres north-west of Melbourne.

### **Why the move?**

At the beginning of July, we decided to 'run away' to Gisborne and my parent's house for the second lock-down. We just wanted to be somewhere where you could do more things. Also, during the first lockdown, we were taking turns working and looking after the two kids (aged 2 and 4), but here with my parents there are four of us to help share the load. We also didn't have as much work during the first lockdown, but now, with more on for both of us, I don't think we would have been able to do anything productive without extra help.

It's been mostly good. Even though the four of us are in one bedroom, it seems to work (Tess: but you're not the one sharing the bed with the two kids, Joel!).

### **What have been the impacts on your life together and work?**

We both work in offices and since March we've been working from home, which has been good. The kids have been a bit sad about not being able to see their friends. But we've been able to get access to the local kindergarten for Rafa, so that's helped. It's let him be a kid without mum or dad's involvement for a while.

### **What has 'got you through' to this point of lockdown?**

Tess: Chocolate has got me through! In fact we've had to move it from the pantry to the bedroom because the grandparents help themselves! But just getting outside has been really good. Working from home and with kids, you can convince yourself that exercise is too difficult, but doing it every day boosts your mood.

Joel: I've had a little competition going with my friends trying to 'walk around Australia' - within 5 kilometres of our homes, of course! We logged how far we'd gone into a big Excel spreadsheet and reached Bundaberg in Queensland before we ran out of interest. We figured that we must have stopped because the factory there ran out of rum and ginger beer!

### **What have you learned from this time?**

Well, we're both people who like to plan things, but during this year we've had to learn to just 'roll with the time'. We've also gained perspective on what's important and what's less important; that we really don't need as many 'things' - shoes, clothes etc in the wardrobe - that we used to think we did. You realise that it's your friends that you miss and are important but, really, not much else.

### **What are you most looking forward to/what changes would you like to see as we come out of this?**

It's been really nice working from home, so we'd like to see that continue in some form. Plus we're looking forward to seeing our friends and people from church, so it will be good when that resumes. And hugs - it will be nice to be able to feel free to hug again.

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