



Hello Tavor Families!

Happy Mother's Day Weekend to all celebrating! I hope you have all been staying safe, happy, and healthy in this crazy time. For me, it feels great to see the weather warming up again, although it would not be a midwestern spring without a May snowstorm or two. Regardless, more sun equates to more time outside, which, during the age of social distancing, has been lifting my spirits plenty.

There is something about being outdoors that just makes life feel more like camp. It is strange to think about how for 1-3 months of every year for the last decade, I have lived almost completely outside. I consider myself as more of an indoor kid than an outdoor kid, though I think I can exist on either side of the spectrum in the right circumstances. Camp is the right circumstance for me to embrace being an outdoor kid. I know for many other campers; it doesn't even register the amount of time that we spend outside at camp. I think that also is one reason why I feel so much happier at camp: I'm more connected to nature, and to the world. I'm not one to stop and appreciate the sunset at home, but time and time again when the sun drops onto the *chof* (lake, sort of), I'm mesmerized by the magic and beauty of it all.

As Winter truly begins to leave us, and we see Spring blossom in its stead, I've found myself needing nature more now than ever before. I'm lucky in that my home in Ann Arbor lies just a short walk away from the Arb, which anyone reading this who attended the University of Michigan will know contains endless beauty to admire. But you don't need an arboretum to admire your surroundings. Whether at camp or at home, we often have nature around us all the time. All we have to do is have the keen eye to admire it such as we do at camp. A personal anecdote is that when I was a camper, I absolutely HATED going on our *tiyulim* (camping trips). From faking a broken bone to secretly hoping I got sick, getting out of it was always on my mind. It really wasn't until a couple of years into my experiences on *Tzevet* (staff) that I understood *tiyul* really was no different from the way that we lived at camp, only with the addition of consciously existing in nature, as opposed to taking it for granted. It sounds weird to say, but quarantine has made me reconsider my relationship to nature in ways that feel similar to my acceptance of the importance of *tiyul*.

As we move forward in these uncertain times, I think it is worthwhile to consider the beauty we can find in our day to day lives. What can be like the sunset at camp? Have I been underestimating the amount of joy an hour on the lawn can bring me? Should I be praying for a minute of quiet, or do I just need to shake things up and listen to the sound of the birds chirping instead of the newscasters chirping? My challenge to you all is to look for the mundane, and to find the extraordinary in it.

With love and hopes of health,

Nathan