

Dear one,

These are difficult times. I know you are worried. It's hard to know which way is up and which is down. It's hard to know what to do and how to plan. Everything feels so unpredictable and complicated. Your body is holding so much tension, and it was already holding a lot before all this news.

This is all so hard...

I can imagine that you are trying everything in your power to handle it all. To stop your mind from spinning...to catch a moment of rest and relief. This has uprooted our normal and your plans might look bleak. You might be struggling with old impulses and temptations. Utilizing the old guard to hold you together like before. Of course you are struggling with these things...this is really hard. You are trying your best.

I can imagine times when your thoughts are buzzing and your muscles gripped with tension. Your breath is shallow and difficult to express. Your body and mind in a tug a war over which of their needs is most important. Present or future. Safety or Desire. Others or yourself.

Every option feels a little lonely.

Choices are more complicated than ever. It's just not that simple to pick a direction when you don't know where this is going. It's easy to get frozen in indecision and overwhelm. There is no playbook right now. It **IS** normal that your mind starts running when your body isn't allowed to flee. It **IS** normal to feel disconnected when you are afraid of the consequences of contact. It **IS** normal to feel numb and depressed when your heart is restricted.

This is all very hard...keep doing your best.

In moments like this we must pay special attention to ourselves. We must honor every feeling and struggle without denial or discrimination. We must acknowledge that there is never a "right" response to anything if that response isn't held in its messy context. We are unique and we must turn towards ourselves honestly and without comparison. Each of us are facing a real battle that must be held gently. We can do this together if we all take one step, one moment, one decision at a time.

Gift yourself permission to be angry and express your voice. This was not the way it was supposed to be. These emotions are essential. They will lead you to grieve what you can't control and act bravely in what you can. Take honest steps towards both. You are stronger than you think. All you need to do is be good-enough.

In moments like this we must also remember we have a common home. You are a part of a larger tapestry that will rise and fall together. We need each color and thread of life to rebuild the whole. Hear the cry of your neighbor and pray for hearts you don't know. May the lining of this illness heal divisions we have sown. If we listen through it all we will sense where new gardens could grow.

By Knox Burnett