

# Guidance Corner

**Ya know what?** What I had in mind to write for this edition of *The Guidance Corner* is completely different than the one you're currently reading. However, life has a way of changing on a dime and forcing us to adapt to new situations. And we are aware of this: the course that we had for ourselves and where we wanted to go can suddenly swerve or take a detour that could have never been predicted. *But like this?*

Think of your life a month ago. Chances are your circumstances were some version of what we would call "normal." Yet now in the continuing COVID-19 saga, we find ourselves as a school, a community, a country and a world scrambling to recreate a new normal. Our world now looks like something out of a science fiction movie: pictures and video of empty cities, curfews and officials telling civilians to stay home while governments desperately try to keep a handle on a crisis that has gripped the world unlike anything before. I was talking with a friend in the midst of this and he likened all of this to what life was like after Thanos snapped half of life out of existence in *Avengers Endgame*. People try to "move on," they attempt to create normalcy within their contexts, but you know something isn't right, that something is just off.

**So what do we do when life is off?** How do we navigate through the uncertainty and confusion that the coronavirus has brought us? That's what we are going to discuss today.

**Stay Informed, To an Extent:** In unsure times like these many people cling to the adage "knowledge is power." We take on as much information as we can find to better understand and counteract our surroundings, as well as allows us to take back a little control from the chaos. And we must stay informed, especially as scenarios can change from day-to-day. We must remember though, that this knowledge is meant to empower us, not scare us. If you find yourself feeling anxious or rattled after watching the news, *try limiting your news consumption to 30-60 minutes a day*. Becoming gripped by panic does not end well, but knowing your limits and balancing your thirst for knowledge and having a level head to take on the challenges that these days bring is a good first step.

**Stay Connected:** Even though the term "social distancing" has only recently become part of our vocabulary, I feel that we have been practicing this concept for quite some time. Not physically, but emotionally. In the age of social media, the ability to socially distance ourselves from true connection with others has become temptingly easy. This has created a false sense of community, fake friends and an environment in which we essentially advertise a polished version of ourselves for others to marvel at, with some even calling their construct as a brand. But in this time of forced isolation, we can take back the idea of community. Take this time to reach out to family and friends, even if just to "say hi". These can be very lonely times, but only if we allow it.

**Stay Hopeful:** Avoiding fear and reclusion are vital to fending off feelings of despair. Despair can turn into a vicious feedback loop if we allow ourselves to be alone with negative thoughts. Which is why it's important to have something to strive for in these times. *What goals can you still reach even while at home? Is there anything you can do more easily because of your new circumstances? How can you improve by the time life returns to normal?* Keep those thoughts in mind, write them down if you need to, and have them somewhere you can always refer to when times get ambiguous or when cabin fever hits hard.

No one knows what our lives will look like by the end of this, or when such a reality will be more than just a fleeting thought. But despite that, know that you, your family, aren't alone in this. We are all making our way through these days, one day at a time. And as we all march towards whatever tomorrow brings us, remember you never have to do so alone.

***Mr. Anderson***

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