

# TO YOUR HEALTH

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## Connecting During This Crisis

by  
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I have given much thought to how I would write this article. I wanted to approach it differently than ones I have written in the past. It is evident that many of us are struggling, challenged by these extraordinary circumstances in which we find ourselves. We continue to be called upon to adapt our ways of living, our ways of thinking; indeed, our ways of BEING with each other.

So today, I won't cite this "research" or that "journal". Instead, I will only share with you my thoughts, with hope and grace as my guide. I am not a scholar nor a wise elder. I am just a human being trying to make my way in a very complicated world, just like all of you. And I'm writing to you today from that place of shared experience.

This pandemic has stirred chaos and panic worldwide. It has rendered us feeling helpless, powerless, and afraid, resulting in increased stress, anger, anxiety, and depression. Most of us are feeling these things to varying degrees. Many of us are acting "out of character". Is that surprising? Of course not. But it does speak volumes about how we are handling it all.

How do we get through this? The magnitude of this is overwhelming, the weight of it is difficult to bear. It may help to look back on our lives and the adversities we've faced along the way. When we do that, we realize we have never TRULY gone it alone. That realization brings some clarity, and therein lies the answer. How do we get through this? We get through it **together**.

But how do we do this together when we feel so disconnected? When we are being told to distance ourselves from each other to mitigate the risk of infection? You know the saying "desperate times call for desperate measures?" Indeed, times like this call for creative and innovative ideas. And it is

through generating new ideas and sharing them in our community that we can push back against the helplessness we're feeling. Not only can we feel useful, we can effect change.

There is no way to know the full extent of this pandemic; most reports state that things will get worse before they get better. With so much of this out of our control, perhaps a better use of our time now is to identify what we can control, and work with that each and every day.

I often notice that when something goes awry in life, it has the potential to take up so much "space" in our world. And we begin to feel that everything is going wrong. Of course, it's not. But we often cannot see the "good" when the "not so good" simply crowds it out. And therein lies our mission—to find the good in each day. It is there, we just need to be available to it. That is something we can all work towards.

It is most challenging during times like this to not think about the future, how long these restrictions may last, how long this virus will be among us. But sometimes, if we allow ourselves to go there, we often stay in that place far too long. And without even meaning to, we not only feed into the frenzy of the outside world, but into our own internal fears and anxieties as well. Instead, it's crucial that we give rise to our other voice; that of compassion, calm and reason.

It is so important now for all of us to identify what choices we can make to stay both connected and calm in the midst of this crisis. So many of us are feeling isolated and alone. People are using texts and emails to stay connected. More tech savvy folks are using FaceTime, Skype and Zoom. And for those less savvy, who knew that the good old fashioned telephone would make a comeback, appreciated now across generations? A human voice is such a gift. Still, these are not ideal, but they do allow us to nurture ourselves and our relationships in different ways, with the challenges we currently face.

As a community, we must contribute our ideas about how to stay healthy; not only physically, but emotionally and spiritually. It is imperative that we do so. But first, we must reconcile what one resident so thoughtfully shared with me, "We have to accept life as it is, not as we wish it to be." Once we do that, we may surprise ourselves with what emerges from within.

Indeed, we see it happening all over the globe, people reaching out to people in new ways that allow for closeness and connection, despite physical distance. They are reaching out from that place deep inside the human soul that transcends any limitation imposed on it. That is a beautiful thing.

It may sound trite to say "this too shall pass", but that is the reality. Until then, we must do our very best to stay present to each and every day; to be mindful of the many blessings in our lives, which could lead us to a deeper sense of gratitude, hope and peace. Be present, be patient. Know that the restrictions on this community are temporary ones; they are there to not only keep us safe, but ultimately (in time) to allow for the re-emergence of this wonderfully vibrant and thriving community that we've all come to know and love.

Finally, I'd like to share a poem that has been making the rounds on the Internet. It is truly inspiring. It so beautifully calls into focus the most important thing we have to hold onto right now- our humanity.

Peace, and stay well.

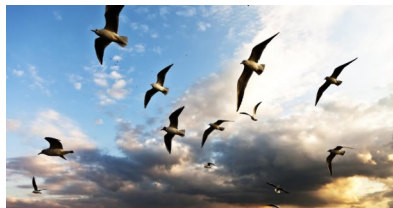
keeping their windows open  
so that those who are alone  
may hear the sounds of family around them.  
They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland  
Is offering free meals and delivery to the housebound.  
Today a young woman I know  
is busy spreading fliers with her number  
through the neighborhood  
So that the elders may have someone to call on.  
Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and Temples  
are preparing to welcome  
and shelter the homeless, the sick, the weary.  
All over the world people are slowing down and reflecting  
All over the world people are looking at their neighbors in  
a new way  
All over the world people are waking up to a new reality  
To how big we really are.  
To how little control we really have.  
To what really matters.  
To Love.  
So we pray and we remember that  
Yes there is fear.  
But there does not have to be hate.  
Yes there is isolation.  
But there does not have to be loneliness.  
Yes there is panic.  
But there does not have to be meanness.  
Yes there is sickness.  
But there does not have to be disease of the soul  
Yes there is even death.  
But there can always be a rebirth of love.  
Wake to the choices you make as to how to live now.  
Today, breathe.  
Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic  
The birds are singing again  
The sky is clearing,  
Spring is coming,  
And we are always encompassed by Love.  
Open the windows of your soul  
And though you may not be able  
to touch across the empty square....Sing.

#lockdown #richardhendrick #silverlining #love



### Lockdown

Yes there is fear.  
Yes there is isolation.  
Yes there is panic.  
Yes there is sickness.  
Yes there is even death.  
But....



They say that in Wuhan after so many years of noise  
You can hear the birds again.  
They say that after just a few weeks of quiet  
The sky is no longer thick with fumes  
But blue and grey and clear.  
They say that in the streets of Assisi  
People are singing to each other  
across the empty squares,