

THE EPOCH TIMES LIFE & TRADITION

13

You can't always control what life throws at you, but you can control how you respond—and there's great power in that.

TIPS FOR THE UNEXPECTED HOMESCHOOLER

Page 2

THE BEAUTY OF GENEROSITY

Page 4

NOW IS NOT THE TIME TO STOP SAVING FOR RETIREMENT

Page 10

Margie Warrell

ON FACING HARDSHIPS IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

Page 3



13 Tips for the Unexpected Homeschooler

LORRIE WOLF

You never thought you would school your kids at home. But along comes coronavirus and wham! You're a homeschooler.

You may think homeschoolers have the life of Riley, with no schedule, no need for clothes other than PJs, and really no obligations whatsoever! But successful homeschooling takes grit, and surprisingly, good manners to pull off. Here are a few ways families can maintain balance and structure while running school from home:

1. Create a Command Center

Setting up a command center for all things school-related will help you and your children maintain sanity. Use your kids' backpacks as makeshift school lockers for short-term homeschooling situations. Clear off a bookshelf or order a few plastic milk crates from Walmart to hold supplies. Post everything in this area: a daily schedule, a meal plan (even if it is nothing out of the ordinary), and rules and expectations. Posting these saves you the time and trouble of multiple questions.

2. Assess Responsibilities

Make a list of what each person needs to get done in the day. Your pupils will need your help with some subjects, but not others. Make your time as productive as possible by planning strategically to help each student as needed. This will give you time for other responsibilities and free your children from feeling you are hovering too much.

3. Set a Family Schedule

Good news: You already have one! Fill your schedule with the basics of rising, dressing, meal times, reading time, and device time. Then set times for group activities. All kids should do math at the same time, science at the same time, and so on. This sets your brain to one subject instead of trying to help with four at once. Use the remaining time for "odd subjects."

Remember: The schedule is your servant, not your taskmaster. If something isn't working, change it.

4. Establish Respect

Have everyone get dressed first thing. Anyone who has ever worked from home knows this trick. It is imperative that you establish respect and are ready for the day. Teach your children that education from home is just as important as education in a school building.

5. Take the Reins

Parents, you are in charge. What you say must go, or consequences will be faced, whether those be no Paw Patrol for a little guy, or no car privileges for a big one.

6. Put Kids to Work

Your house will be messier with more people at home. Manage the mess through structured pick-up times and by having kids do chores. This is a perfect time for children to learn to wash dishes or do laundry!



With young children, use the time you might be tempted to prepare a cool lesson to play, cook, or clean with your child.

Successful homeschooling takes grit, and surprisingly, good manners to pull off.



Manage the mess through structured pick-up times and by having kids do chores.

7. Use Manners

When we are at home, we often let manners slide. We allow kids to command rather than politely request, or we accept whining and snark as alternative forms of communication. Setting a high standard ourselves gives a good example for our children. As homeschoolers, we are their sole representatives of fully-formed adults.

8. Make Work Fun

You're in charge, but you're not the bad guy. Be magnanimous. Dance in the kitchen while the family cleans up after meals. Use sidewalk chalk to practice math outside. Act out a play as part of your reading work. Even when they groan, roll their eyes, and say, "Ugh! That's the worst, Mom," they don't mean it. They really love it when you show them how to have fun while they get things done.

9. Take Breaks

One of the biggest challenges of homeschooling is getting consumed with the volume of work and hibernating like a bear. Instead, remember the tortoise and the hare. If you have the kids work fast and furious, you'll both burn out before the work is done. Take it slow. Take plenty of vitamin D breaks to soak up the sunshine, then get back to work for a while. The out-of-doors is so good for the kids and may be the only safe place other than home.

10. KIST: Keep It Simple, Teacher

Children 9 years old or under need help with reading, handwriting, and very basic math. That's easy! Don't make it harder than it is. Rather, use the time you might be tempted to prepare a cool lesson to play,

cook, or clean with your child. Even older kids will enjoy the same activities with you, and should be able to manage their heavier workloads with Mom's help as encourager, troubleshooter, and facilitator.

11. Incentivize

For some kids, just the act of completing work and going to play is gratifying enough. For others, a little incentive goes a long way. To help complete tasks, you may offer an extra outing, a special treat, or an extra 15 minutes on the Xbox. Incentives make work more fun!

12. You Are the Best Teacher for Your Child

As your child's parent, you are the one most interested in him becoming a well-formed adult. You want him to succeed in life. It is up to you to make sure he has the tools and motivation to succeed. Facilitating his education is what most teachers do. You don't need an education degree; instead, let good resources do the actual teaching, be involved as much as you can, and ask lots of questions. Trust that you can do it and work at it with the focus and intensity you give your 9-to-5.

13. Enjoy!

Even when times are tough, set the tone by keeping a cheerful disposition. With a good attitude, you may be surprised by how much you cherish this time at home with your children. This is what parents are made for, so embrace it!

Lorrie Wolf is an editorial associate at Intellectual Takeout, which originally published this article.

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK

Margie Warrell

ON FACING HARDSHIPS IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

CHANNALY PHILIPP

Margie Warrell (that's "Mar-ghee" with a hard g) grew up as one of seven kids on a dairy farm in Australia. It's a long way from where she is now, in an international business and psychology career, coaching clients such as NASA, Google, and Marriott.

A theme that's woven through her work, including her latest book, "You've Got This! The Life-Changing Power of Trusting Yourself," is "living from a place of choice and from a place of 'You decide how you want to show up' in the midst of your challenges."

When life throws you a curveball, here are some things that can help you deal with it, according to Warrell.

Choose How You Respond

When Warrell was 28, she was living in Papua New Guinea. She was nearly 5 months pregnant with her first child. She was in her boss's office when three men stormed in with sawed-off shotguns and told her to open the safe—which she didn't know how to do. After repeatedly putting a gun to her head, one of the men told her to lie down and groped her. She was terrified of being gang-raped, which was a common occurrence, she said, as Papua New Guinea was "a pretty lawless country."

She wasn't—but she found out 10 days later that her baby had died. She said she doesn't know if it was a coincidence or not. After this experience, "people were feeling very sorry for me, a lot of compassion came my way," she said.

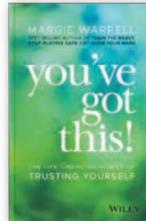
"I just remember very clearly thinking, 'I do not want to be defined by this experience. I don't want to be a victim in anyone's eyes, and I don't want to live in a place of self-pity.' And that was actually very empowering ... this moment of going, 'I do not want to be defined by something awful that's happened to me. I want to define myself,'" she said.

"Life doesn't always go our way, but we can choose what we make of it, and there's always an opportunity for us to learn something and to grow in some way."

You can't always control your life circumstances, but you can control how you respond, whether it's how you spend your time, who you choose to spend it with, or how you take care of yourself.

“Life doesn't always go our way, but we can choose what we make of it, and there's always an opportunity for us to learn something and to grow in some way.”

Margie Warrell



"You've Got This! The Life-Changing Power of Trusting Yourself" by Margie Warrell.



Author, coach, and speaker Margie Warrell.

"There's massive power in that, and looking at: What is one thing I could do? Well, where I'm at, I could just do a random act of kindness for a stranger. Maybe I could sit down with someone who I think might just need someone to listen to them. Maybe I can pick up the phone and call someone I haven't spoken to for a while, or write a card to someone. There's always something that we can do, that actually changes our lives but also improves the lives of others."

Trust that you can handle whatever comes your way, too, Warrell said, "even the negative experiences and the things you would never want—the losses, the derailed plans, the disruptions."

"When you can trust that whatever happens, you can handle it, it is massively empowering because you go, 'Well then, what do I want to do with my life? If I'm not scared of failing or falling short, if I'm not scared of what people might say, then how does that actually free me to do a whole lot more interesting things?'"

Focus on What Strengthens You

When life feels shaky, Warrell recommends to "double down on what strengthens us."

For her, it means exercising every day, and doing a guided meditation on a phone app.

It's also staying connected to the people around her that she loves, avoiding those

who are negative, and "being really conscious of not getting caught in conversations with people who aren't serving us."

It also means keeping fear in check. "All emotions are contagious. Fear is, I think, probably the most contagious of all. And fear spreads faster than any virus," she said. "If we don't keep it in check, it can totally set up residence in our heads and filter everything about our experience."

Warrell suggests surrounding yourself with brave people—that will help you be braver.

Have Faith

In her book, "You've Got This!" Warrell wrote, "My own faith has not only buoyed me through my darker hours; it has expanded my bandwidth to see the goodness in others and to respond with compassion rather than judgment, hope rather than pessimism, and courage rather than fear."

The reassurance and resilience from faith in a higher power is a balm for hard and uncertain times.

"Living from fear does just the opposite. It leaves my nails shorter, my world smaller, my stomach knotted, and my heart constricted. Little wonder those who fall into anxiety end up sick.

"Choosing to live from faith helps me feel stronger, stand taller, and speak new possibilities into life."

'Lazybones': Understanding and Overcoming Laziness

A conversation with psychotherapist Brooke Sprowl

BARBARA DANZA

Everyone needs downtime, rest, and recuperation from time to time. After a hard day's work, you probably want to relax and unwind. After strenuous physical activity, you may need to recuperate. After a period of stress or anxiety, you may seek out long-term rest. Such downtime offers an appropriate counter-balance to hard work or challenge.

Sometimes downtime can even be a productive and valuable use of time. Space to think, clear your mind, calm your heart, and leave room for inspiration and serendipity may very well be the best way to spend your time.

On the other hand, we all know what it's like to give in to laziness. Some people really struggle with shame and guilt about their

laziness and find it difficult to break away from it.

I asked psychotherapist Brooke Sprowl about the tendency to be lazy and how to best manage it.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Everyone needs a break from time to time. What do you think is the difference between well-structured downtime and laziness?

BROOKE SPROWL: Well-structured downtime is when you build times into your day and week to rest, after having accomplished a certain amount of work. By contrast, when we indulge in downtime regardless of our obligations and productivity, this can perpetuate bad habits and inactivity.

THE EPOCH TIMES: What are some consequences of laziness that you've seen people struggle with?

MS. SPROWL: Especially with the younger generations, there's a strong desire to find a sense of meaning and purpose in their work and not just to view things from a utilitarian perspective. Often, this idealistic desire for finding their life's calling is not coupled with the psychological resilience to take risks and get out of their comfort zones. In turn, they often become resigned, withdrawn, and passive, failing to pursue anything at all.

THE EPOCH TIMES: How can one recognize laziness in oneself? **MS. SPROWL:** If your rest is not actually restorative, meaning the more you rest, the more you need to rest, you're probably in a vicious cycle of inactivity. You may even be dealing with a clinical mental health issue such as anxiety or depression that is making it difficult to get things done.

I believe that when people are in good mental and physical health, and allow themselves to rest and restore, they will ultimately be productive. If you're allowing yourself to rest and you're still not getting the energy to get things done that may mean you need to re-examine some things in your life that are chronically draining your energy. This could be a bad relationship, an unfulfilling



Allow yourself plenty of time to wind down, disconnect from digital devices, and enjoy deep, restorative sleep.

job, or an unhealthy approach to dealing with your feelings or anxiety.

If you're always drained and never have the energy to get things done no matter how hard you try, it's probably a sign that it's time to find a therapist that can help you sort out what's getting in the way of your motivation and passion.

THE EPOCH TIMES: What are some practical ways to stop giving in to laziness?

MS. SPROWL: Schedule both structured time and downtime. For example, pre-schedule certain hours in the day for work and some for rest. Take one day off per week where you just get to do whatever you want so that you can recharge and go full-

force the rest of the week.

Create accountability. Scheduling work sessions with friends can help motivate people and keep them accountable to follow through with their goals. Partialize. Break tasks down into a manageable size and approach them over time. For example, if you want to clean out your home but it feels too overwhelming, break it down into smaller tasks that feel more manageable.

For some people that might mean just cleaning out one room per day, for others it might mean just cleaning one drawer per day. Basically, choose the greatest amount you can do without it feeling overwhelming and do that every day until the task is complete.

OKSANA YURLOVA/SHUTTERSTOCK

How C.S. Lewis Would Tell Us to Handle Coronavirus

ANNIE HOLMQUIST

Last week I saw a C.S. Lewis quote shared on social media. I'd seen this quote from his essay "On Living in an Atomic Age" before, but shrugged it off as a nice thought that didn't really apply anymore.

Never mind. Swap out "atomic bomb" for "coronavirus" and the relevance of the quote becomes quite clear:

"How are we to live in [a coronavirus] age? I am tempted to reply: 'why, as you would have lived in the sixteenth century when the plague visited London almost every year, or as you would have lived in a Viking age when raiders from Scandinavia might land and cut your throat any night; or indeed, as you are already living in an age of cancer, an age of syphilis, an age of paralysis, an age of air raids, an age of railway accidents, an age of motor accidents.'

In other words, do not let us begin by exaggerating the novelty of our situation."

It's true. We tend to look at coronavirus and freak out because, as was recently mentioned, this new coronavirus is an "unknown." Yes, this coronavirus is

a "novel" disease, but as Lewis implies, there really is nothing new under the sun. Other ages have faced serious diseases and dangers. We just thought our brilliant scientific minds would exempt our postmodern era from such calamities.

Secretly, we all probably think we're exempt from death as well. Au contraire, says Lewis. "Believe me, dear sir or madam, you and all whom you love were already sentenced to death before [this coronavirus] was invented: and quite a high percentage of us were going to die in unpleasant ways."

So how do we deal with the current crisis? "The first action to be taken is to pull ourselves together," Lewis explains. Sage advice. Take a deep breath and don't panic. But after that, what?

"If we are all going to be destroyed by [this coronavirus], let that [virus] when it comes find us doing sensible and human things—praying, working, teaching, reading, listening to music, bathing the children, playing tennis, chatting to our friends over a pint and a game of darts—not huddled together like frightened sheep and thinking about [this coronavirus]. They



C.S. Lewis.

may break our bodies (a microbe can do that) but they need not dominate our minds."

Granted, not all of these things perfectly apply to this new coronavirus. It is wise to follow the CDC's advice and practice some form of social distancing, but that social distancing doesn't have to end our lives!

In fact, I've begun to see a silver lining in the dark cloud of this coronavirus. For starters, it's striking at the heart of one of the largest complaints about postmodern society: busyness.

With activities canceled, schools closing, and Americans working from home, we suddenly have a lot more time to be quiet and rest. Perhaps in that quiet and rest we'll have more time to think, and to re-evaluate our lives. Are we prioritizing important things that will last? Are we espousing the right ideas, or are we holding on to some that don't make much sense when we actually take time to quietly ponder them?

Another problem this coronavirus is alleviating is the dispersion of the family. Life before coronavirus tended to drive families in 10 different directions at once, leaving little time to spend just getting to know and support one another. Over the weekend, however, I began to see more families out walking around the neighborhood, trying to get out, but forced to spend time together. Will this time allow us to reconnect and build lasting relationships with those closest to us?

Benefits aside, how are we going to respond in this time of crisis? Lewis suggests that some may panic and kill themselves, while others may decide to live it up and enjoy life while they can.

But there's another way. Lewis reminds us that we are a part of

nature "not as prisoners but as colonists." As such, we are called not to worship nature as our mother and seek the survival of the fittest, but instead to practice "the law of love and temperance even when they seem to be suicidal." He concludes by saying: "We must resolutely train ourselves to feel that the survival of Man on this Earth, much more of our own nation or culture or class, is not worth having unless it can be had by honourable and merciful means.

"The sacrifice is not so great as it seems. Nothing is more likely to destroy a species or a nation than a determination to survive at all costs. Those who care for something else more than civilization are the only people by whom civilization is at all likely to be preserved. Those who want Heaven most have served Earth best. Those who love Man less than God do most for Man."

In a nutshell? Don't seek to just survive this coronavirus. Live a life that makes a difference for others and looks beyond this world.

Annie Holmquist is the editor of Intellectual Takeout, which originally published this article.

COURTESY OF MARGIE WARRELL



As in so many other matters, a sea change in the spirit must of our age must come not from the government, but from within ourselves.

But largesse is more than the giving of money or gifts. It is also that spirit of generosity that transpires when we give of ourselves to others.

Ripples in the Water: The Beauty and Practice of Largesse

JEFF MINICK

Largesse. What a fine word. The first syllable cracks on the eardrum, the second arrives soft as a feather.

Even more beautiful is the meaning: to give generously, to share, to bestow money or gifts on others.

Poets and troubadours celebrated the knights, barons, and kings of the Middle Ages, both real and legendary, not only for their courtesy, courage, and wisdom, but also for their largesse. In a story regarding King Arthur, for example, a visitor to his court remarks with astonishment "...whoever wants to see the son of Largesse himself need only look at King Arthur. God help me, he's so generous and worthy that in all the world there's not a man so low or so cowardly who wouldn't be improved by being around him."

American Munificence

America remains one of the most generous countries, giving money to those in need both here at home and abroad. We also admire largesse in others, the billionaire who sets up scholarship funds at a university, the recluse who after his death leaves a boatload of money to the local animal shelter, the victim of cancer who wills his small savings to medical research. Here Andrew Carnegie comes to mind: some may consider the Scots-American industrialist a robber baron, but those of us who love books remember that he gave 1,679 libraries to the American people.

Many of us are the recipients of such generosity on a more personal level. A physician offers to pay grandson Jack's medical school bills if he will join his family practice.

Single mom Myra works as a grocery store clerk, but carefully saves a little of her weekly wages for her daughter's 16th birthday party.

My mother-in-law was a grand mistress of such largesse. Before her husband's death in 1993, she and Jim lived in the same small house in Milwaukee they'd purchased after his return from the Pacific following World War II. Jim worked as a school guidance counselor and served in the Reserves, Dorothy as a part-time nurse and a stay-at-home mom for her three daughters. Children of the Great Depression, Jim and Dorothy lived frugally, invested their money in stocks like IBM, and eventually became the quintessential "millionaires next door."

When it came to family, however, that thriftiness transformed itself into largesse. Dorothy put braces on the teeth of all four of my children, gave them an abundance of gifts for Christmas and birthdays, and several times pulled my wife and me out of the flames when we experienced financial meltdowns. After her death two years ago, she left all of her grandchildren generous endowments.

Largesse of the Spirit

But largesse is more than the giving of money or gifts. It is also that spirit of generosity that transpires when we give of ourselves to others, when we listen with empathy to their troubles, picking them up and dusting them off when they have fallen, and offering encouragement and insights when asked for help.

My friend John describes himself as a spectator of life, "a man in the stands," as he puts it. That description is a bit harsh—he is more engaged in the lives of others than he knows—but John does have a knack for

being able to stand aside, look at an unfavorable situation, and propose workable solutions. Recognizing this talent in him, I have several times called on his services, using him for a listening post and then carefully considering any advice he offers. Sometimes I have declined that advice, but his words often make me look anew at the problem.

This is largesse at work, John's gift of the spirit to me.

My daughter has an equally bounteous heart. Her friends often seek her advice. Three years ago, when my life fell apart for a while, she took me without question or reprimand into her home, made me a part of her family's life, and gave me what knights once called "succor," or support in times of adversity and distress. Slowly, my heart and mind healed, in part because of her love and support.

When we can lay claim to such wise and loving friends and family members, we are indeed blessed.

Magnanimity Takes a Hike

Unfortunately, such magnanimity of the spirit all too often gives way in our larger culture and in the political realm to vindictiveness, name-calling, obscenities, and threats. Some politicians and celebrities savagely berate and belittle their opponents, attacking them through social media, on television, or at public events. Their extreme rhetoric can produce dangerous consequences when it encourages others to take to the streets, physically assaulting those with whom they disagree and threatening those they regard as enemies with mayhem and even murder.

As a consequence of this vast canyon of separation, many people believe that our country is now more divided than at any

time since the Civil War. The old knightly virtues—charity, courtesy, largesse—seem to have gone the way of gauntlets and greaves, shields and lances, and no legislation on earth can force us to be civil to one another.

So what to do?

Largesse Personalized

As in so many other matters, a sea change in the spirit must of our age must come not from the government, but from within ourselves.

If we possess the financial resources, we can contribute generously to institutions and causes we support: schools and colleges, charities, organizations supporting traditional culture. If we prefer to practice such liberality more intimately, we can offer that young man who just flunked out of college a job, or lend money to the niece who wants to open a floral shop, or pay, as Dorothy did, for braces for the grandkids.

More importantly, by word and example, we can teach courtesy and generosity to others. A number of writers have used the phrase "Charity begins at home." The same holds true for largesse.

When we practice such generosity, whether of the pocketbook or of the soul, when we teach magnanimity to our children, when we help troubled friends or neighbors, we cast a pebble into the waters and create ripples of kindness.

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, N.C., Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. See Jeff-Minick.com to follow his blog.

self forever? Are you going to allow your fear to dictate your life and diminish your relationships? Are you willing to go to the grave, or have one of your loved ones go to the grave without giving yourself a chance to be authentic?

Be Honest With Yourself

Ask yourself these questions: "If people treated me the way I really want to be treated, what would be different?" "Am I being treated unfairly or cruelly by someone I'm close to?" "If I felt free to be my true and best self, what would I do differently?" "How do I really feel about the people I'm close to?"

Write down your answers while being very honest with yourself. Process your answers. Read what you wrote and share it with people you trust. Is this your truth? Is it missing anything? Don't forget

to include the positive things you feel about the people you need to share your truth with. This is part of the truth too. Look at the situation from their side. Are you being unfair or leaving out anything that is relevant to them?

Be Kind and Direct

Boil down the message you want to share to its basic elements. Be kind when you are stating your truth. Assume that your loved ones have positive intentions and are doing the best they can. Communicate kindly and lovingly. There is no reason to imbue your truth with negative energy. If you are protesting cruel or unfair treatment, you may need to state limits, boundaries, and consequences if the other person's behavior does not change. You can still communicate clearly, directly, and kindly. You need to state your truth,

clearly, and directly. Don't beat around the bush. You don't need to write an essay to prove everything you are feeling. Your experience matters even if there are other relevant ways of seeing the situation. Some people feel they need to have a face-to-face conversation when they are communicating something so important to someone they care about. The problem is that they may not be willing to listen long enough for you to speak your truth, and it can be easier to distort what you are saying.

In many cases, I recommend giving the person a written version. You can still tell her face-to-face, but she also has a written copy that she cannot distort it to dispute what you are saying.

State the Positive

Don't forget to tell them about the positive feelings you have towards

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Character and the CCP Virus

JEFF MINICK

Self-preservation. It's hard-wired into our blood and bone, as it is in all species. "Flight or fight" are not just empty words. When danger confronts us, "flight or fight" kicks in, rousing our adrenaline, snapping dulled senses into overdrive, and reviving instincts as old as mankind itself.

The Ugly

In some people and places, fear about the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus, commonly known as novel coronavirus, has revealed the ugly side of this instinct.

[Editor's note: The Epoch Times refers to the novel coronavirus, which causes the disease COVID-19, as the CCP virus because the Chinese Communist Party's coverup and mismanagement allowed the virus to spread throughout China and create a global pandemic.]

In the early days of the outbreak, many dashed to the grocery stores, stripping the shelves of canned goods, hand sanitizers, face masks, and of all things, toilet paper, buying far more than normal, terrified they might face a long siege barricaded in their own homes. Sometimes shouting matches and scuffles broke out as customers fought over these items. Here in Front Royal, Virginia, I heard an older woman tell her companion with disbelief in her voice that she had just witnessed two men at Martin's, our local grocery store, yelling at each other in an argument over a pound of hamburger.

When Vermont's Middlebury College closed its campus and sent students home on account of the CCP virus, ugly jumped in the saddle and grabbed the reins. Rowdy drunken young people rioted and vandalized the campus and at least one shop in town before departing. And the point? Who knows? Maybe ugly doesn't always need a point.

Like certain staples, gun sales have shot up—pardon the pun—the last three weeks. In his online article "Gun and ammo sales spike in US on coronavirus worries," Stephen Gandel reports that many gun stores are seeing record sales of ammunition and guns to people worried about protecting themselves if society collapses and martial law is declared. Like the run on the grocery stores, these sales were driven by fear and rumor.

The Bad

Next up for consideration are the bad, all those Americans—politicians, some in the media, those who live by that adage "Never let a good crisis go to waste"—who for various reasons have helped create and drive this nation-wide panic. Some of them are simply ignorant, some enjoy the spotlight, and some, the worst of the lot, hope this crisis will damage the presidency of Donald Trump. These are the same aberrant human beings who for three years have wished for a recession in hopes of damaging the president.

Never mind that the CCP virus is throwing millions out of work, never mind that Americans are dying: it's all about getting rid of Trump.

Some private citizens also join the band of the bad. They ignore the basic precautionary measures recommended by health professionals—frequently washing their hands, avoiding crowds, coughing into the sleeve. A few young people, clearly minus a good number of brain cells, have cre-



A patient is treated by a doctor at a Samaritan's Purse Emergency Field Hospital on March 20, 2020, in Cremona, near Milan, Italy. Thanks to a 68-bed respiratory unit, 32 members of Samaritan's Purse disaster response team will provide medical care during the CCP virus pandemic.

ated a "coronavirus challenge" in which they take selfies while licking airplane toilet seats. These pictures and the "challenge" are disgusting, but if I may offer a suggestion: Why toilet seats? Why not ratchet up the challenge, go to your local grocery store, and lick the handles of shopping carts?

Now, let's turn to the good.

The Good

Self-preservation may be instinctual, but many people, perhaps most people, offer help and rescue when others are in trouble. Gestures big and small, sometimes just a word spoken in kindness, reveals this part of our nature, a light shining within us.

Here are a few instances of goodness in this time of pandemic.

Self preservation may be instinctual, but many people, perhaps most people, offer help and rescue when others are in trouble.

Yesterday the coffee shop I frequently visit—thank heavens it's still open—was largely deserted. I asked the young barista behind the bar how she was holding up.

"Oh, I'm just trying to stay calm," she said.

After a morning of reading online of the hysteria brought on by coronavirus, I wanted to stick out my hand and thank the kid for her normality, but then we'd both just have to wash up again. Instead, I smiled at her, said "I like your attitude," and took my Peruvian coffee to a table in the next room.

In Clintonville, Ohio, the Columbus Dispatch reports that Taran Tien, age 9, and

his sister Calliope, age 6, put on their best clothes, took up their cellos, and headed to the porch of a neighbor, Helena Schlam, age 78. Under self-quarantine at the insistence of her children, Schlam was delighted by the Tiens' impromptu concert.

Another recent example of good: a common enemy can make enemies friends. Around the country, we are seeing for the first time in years a spirit of bipartisanship among our political leaders. Michael Goodwin of the New York Post writes that President Trump and New York governor Andrew Cuomo, until recently bitter partisan foes, are forming a partnership to battle the coronavirus, with each man praising the efforts of the other. "We're not Democrats, we're not Republicans, we're Americans," Cuomo remarked.

When's the last time we heard anyone say that?

If we remain alert to those around us, our friends and family members, and the people we pass on the street or see in the grocery store, I suspect we'll find plenty of examples of good deeds and kind words in these uncertain times.

A Higher Power

We may also find some people looking for a deeper meaning in life, a connection to some power beyond them. For a while after 9/11, our churches filled with people seeking solace and answers to large questions: Why are we here? Does the universe have a purpose? Do we have a purpose? Coronavirus may steer some of us in search of a higher power.

Faith may even inspire some to push past the instinct for self-preservation and give of themselves, and sometimes lay down their lives, for others.

Sacrifice

In "How Early Christians Saved Lives and Spread the Gospel During Roman Plagues," Tyler O'Neil takes a thoughtful look at the

Christian versus the pagan response to plagues in ancient Rome. The pagans, including the famous physician Galen, ran for the hills; the Christians stayed and tended to the sick, sometimes dying themselves but also saving many lives. Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria described the bravery of these Christians, writing, "Many, in nursing and curing others, transferred their death to themselves and died in their stead ...(a death) that seems in every way the equal to martyrdom."

Such sacrificial efforts remain signs of our humanity. In this same article, O'Neil tells readers of Samaritan's Purse, a Christian charity that just airlifted a field hospital, 20 tons of medical supplies, and 32 medical personnel to virus-stricken Italy. Franklin Graham, the president of Samaritan's Purse, stated that "We're going to Italy to provide life-saving care to people who are suffering. There is a lot of fear and panic around the country, but we trust that God is in control."

Choices

In the dark days of the American Revolution, Thomas Paine wrote, "These are the times that try men's souls...." The battle against the CCP virus is trying our souls, allowing us to evaluate who and what we are both as a nation and as individuals. Will we turn one against the other? Will we attack opponents rather than fighting together against this invisible foe? Or will we follow the path of honor and virtue by helping the sick and those in need of reassurance and love?

Let's stand on the side of the good.

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, N.C., Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. See Jeff-Minick.com to follow his blog.

Speak Your Truth

Be honest with yourself and other people about who you really are

MICHAEL COURTER

What Is Stopping You?

Fear can stop you from speaking your truth. Take an honest look at yourself and ask yourself: "Why have I kept part of myself hidden from those I love?" Is it because you are afraid of their reaction? When I ask people this question, usually I hear some variation of "I don't want them to be disappointed in me," or "I don't want them to be angry with me."

Usually, fear of rejection, confrontation, or disappointing other people is the wall that stops us from being our real selves. My response is: Are you content to hide your real

self forever? Are you going to allow your fear to dictate your life and diminish your relationships? Are you willing to go to the grave, or have one of your loved ones go to the grave without giving yourself a chance to be authentic?

Be Honest With Yourself

Ask yourself these questions: "If people treated me the way I really want to be treated, what would be different?" "Am I being treated unfairly or cruelly by someone I'm close to?" "If I felt free to be my true and best self, what would I do differently?" "How do I really feel about the people I'm close to?"

Write down your answers while being very honest with yourself. Process your answers. Read what you wrote and share it with people you trust. Is this your truth? Is it missing anything? Don't forget

Be Kind and Direct

Boil down the message you want to share to its basic elements. Be kind when you are stating your truth. Assume that your loved ones have positive intentions and are doing the best they can. Communicate kindly and lovingly. There is no reason to imbue your truth with negative energy. If you are protesting cruel or unfair treatment, you may need to state limits, boundaries, and consequences if the other person's behavior does not change. You can still communicate clearly, directly, and kindly. You need to state your truth,

clearly, and directly. Don't beat around the bush. You don't need to write an essay to prove everything you are feeling. Your experience matters even if there are other relevant ways of seeing the situation. Some people feel they need to have a face-to-face conversation when they are communicating something so important to someone they care about. The problem is that they may not be willing to listen long enough for you to speak your truth, and it can be easier to distort what you are saying.

In many cases, I recommend giving the person a written version. You can still tell her face-to-face, but she also has a written copy that she cannot distort it to dispute what you are saying.

State the Positive

Don't forget to tell them about the positive feelings you have towards



My experience is that when people speak out loud about the things they are holding in their hearts, they experience a sense of liberation.

them. This is not about contriving a positive sandwich to embed criticism. This is the full truth from your heart! The fact that you see the positive in them is relevant, lest they get the impression that you only see the negative. In fact, you are opening up to them precisely because they are so

important to you and you want the best relationship possible with them.

My experience is that when people speak out loud about the things they are holding in their hearts, they experience a sense of liberation. Depending on the message they are communicating, the people in their lives can have a variety of reactions at first. However, this is usually followed by a new acceptance when the person speaking his truth maintains his message. The result is a greater sense of personal freedom and deeper, more authentic relationships.

Case Study: Sydney

Sydney came into my office seeking help to cope with her anxiety. She explained how her anxiety spiked every time her husband Dave came home from work. She complained about how loudly he put on television news, watching TV throughout

dinner and the evenings and mostly ignoring her. She said she has talked to him about it, but that he would make her feel defensive or change the subject. When I asked her to demonstrate how she talked to him, it became clear that she would either hint indirectly or get upset and burst into tears, while berating him for not caring enough about her.

What she really wanted was for him to turn the television off and pay attention to her when he got home, and to ask about her day and share about his. She wanted him to really see her and verbally acknowledge her efforts to love him and care for him. She also wished that they could do outdoor activities together a few times per month, just as they used to before they got married.

Within a few sessions Sydney and I boiled down the main messages she needed to share with Dave. She wanted to tell him that she loved

him deeply and she wanted more attention and closeness with him, including the specific things that made her feel loved and appreciated.

It took a few more sessions to convince her to actually tell him. Once she delivered the message in a kind and heartfelt way, she was shocked at how receptive he was. Instead of feeling anxious, she started looking forward to Dave coming home so they could share their evenings together.

Michael Courter is a therapist and counselor who believes in the power of personal growth, repairing relationships, and following your dreams. His website is CourterCounsel.com

Do you have questions about relationships or personal growth that you would like Michael to address? Send them to mc@CourterCounsel.com

COURTESY OF DEENA RIZKALLA

Deena Rizkalla is one of many professional musicians in Nashville whose livelihood has been significantly impacted by the coronavirus.

In an Age of Social Distancing, Nashville Musicians Get Creative



ANDREW THOMAS

For professional musicians, quarantines and social distancing have led to serious financial difficulties. But a group of musicians in Nashville is hosting a live, virtual concert in an effort to regain some of that lost income, and at the same time offer some inspiration and connection through live music.

Nashville musicians violinist Deena Rizkalla, 27, and percussionist Ben Andrews, 29, have been playing music professionally for several years. Rizkalla's main genre is classical while Andrews plays popular music, classical, country, and folk.

“I want there to be a sense of community and warmth and welcoming in the midst of this period of isolation.”

Ben Andrews, musician

When the Rizkalla and Andrews learned that large public gatherings and venues would be shut down indefinitely due to the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus,

commonly known as novel coronavirus, they were devastated.

[Editor's note: The Epoch Times refers to the novel coronavirus, which causes the disease COVID-19, as the CCP virus because the Chinese Communist Party's coverup and mismanagement allowed the virus to spread throughout China and create a global pandemic.]

“Crowds are our business, so when you take away crowds we have no business,” Andrews explained.

“We were all very upset, and we were kind of watching. We have gigs booked months in advance into May into June, and as the days go by, they're just dropping,” Rizkalla said.

Spring is an especially busy time for professional musicians as well, and many musicians make the majority of their income during these months. Andrews lost over \$2,000 worth of work over two days. Rizkalla and her colleagues have continued to play music despite not being able to perform in front of an audience, and Andrews has kept making music as well.

The Show Must Go On

In an effort to keep performing music despite the pandemic, Andrews and Rizkalla organized a virtual live concert called Co-

rona Concert No. 1, which streamed on Facebook on March 18.

The 12 musicians who performed in the concert followed all of the guidelines outlined by the federal government. The show took place in Andrews' basement and included a variety of genres, from classical to soul. Over 1,000 people tuned into the concert, and the musicians were able to raise almost \$5,000. Even though the concert was virtual, being able to play live music was incredibly satisfying for the musicians.

“For me it felt almost exactly the same,” Rizkalla said. “I still felt the same concert jitters that I usually do before going on stage—even more so because people were literally saying how they felt in the moment.”

Audience members made nearly 300 live comments on Facebook, and the concert received broad praise and support. People shared the concert on social media, and one person even hosted a watch party. Andrews and Rizkalla may experiment with encouraging musicians to try their own home setup, which they can feature on their platform.

“I want there to be a great sense of community both within the Nashville music community and also within the global

community at large. We're all literally isolating ourselves from each other. I want there to be a sense of community and warmth and welcoming in the midst of this period of isolation,” Andrews said.

Sharing the Beauty

Andrews and Rizkalla also hope the musicians can feel a sense of validation. Being a professional musician is an arduous line of work, and they hope audiences gather that musicians are talented, hardworking, and entrepreneurial. And of course, they hope audiences enjoy the closest thing to a live concert that they can provide.

“For me, music performance is an expression of the soul,” Andrews said. “I really believe in the power of music to transcend what verbal communication can do. Music adds an extra element that I think is so innately human that you can't get anywhere else.”

Andrews and Rizkalla hope to have weekly virtual concerts following their premiere on March 18, and hope their efforts inspire other musicians across the country who have been impacted by the CCP virus.

“When we're playing live music, you can see in real-time we're into it, and we're communicating with each other, and we're making something that we think is beautiful, and we want other people to experience this beautiful thing with us,” Rizkalla said.

ANDREW THOMAS

The written word can be a powerful force, especially when we find ourselves in times of grief. Whether it's a piece of poetry, an excerpt from a novel, or a philosophical piece, art can be profoundly impactful.

Rob Longley, an information technology manager, has been writing poetry for the last 35 years. He wrote his first poem during his freshman year in college. His first piece was for a young woman whose mother had passed away after a battle with cancer when she was in high school. Through the process of writing the poem, he learned a lot about her story that he didn't know about before.

His creative process is quite unique. “I actually hear them, and just start writing them down. Apparently it's not an uncommon practice. Brahms is noted for hearing his music before he actually wrote it down,” Longley explained.

Gold Star Families

Longley writes his poetry in the quatrain format that Nostradamus used, and many of his poems are about people looking for direction or people who are going through a difficult time in life. Longley himself was in

the United States Air Force, and has written poems for fallen soldiers and their families.

Several years ago, one of the organizers of the Gold Star Family Week-end reached out to Longley and asked if they could use one of his poems in their program guide.

Instead, he offered to write individual poems for each soldier and their family. He received a bafflingly long document of names, and four months later he had written a poem for each family.

For Longley the writing isn't about him. It's about the families. “I honestly believe that it's not so much the words themselves, but it's what you think about when you read the poems that is what's really important,” Longley explained.

Longley rarely meets the Gold Star families, and he typically looks up obituaries to get a sense of who the fallen soldier was.

“I think we're all connected, and it's not like I talk to them. I simply get a sense of who they are or who they were, and what words need to frame them,” Longley said. “I'd like to think that I'm able to give the families one more memory or moment where

they can connect with their loved one.”

Poetry for the Fallen

Longley tries to share the stories and carry on the dreams of the fallen he writes about, and aims to celebrate their lives and memories.

Longley's work has been adapted and used in a variety of fashions. In western New York, a recipient of his poems sent him a photo of the poem Longley had written for his son, inscribed on a plaque at the base of an American flag. The American Widows Project used one of his poems for their donor packet, and Army Outreach included one entitled “Under the Flag” in a package for children whose parent has been killed in action.

Longley also writes poetry for police officers and firefighters. His daughter is a police officer, and he has written poems for promotions, retirements, and officers who have been killed in the line of duty.

One poem that has stuck with him among all the pieces he has written is entitled “The Road to Life.” The poem was

written for a little boy in the Midwest who was born three days after his father was killed in action in Iraq. The poem is presented as a dialogue between the two.

The Road Of Life

You may not remember me
I met you on the road
You were in a hurry
And I held a heavy load
What's that thing? you asked me
It's a tool to keep you free
So someday we can live in peace
And you can grow up just like me
Where is it you're going? I'm headed for that light
A pretty lady waits there and she'll watch you day and night
Wouldn't you like to join me? It sounds like lots of fun
No I'm here to see you off before my time is done
Nice to have met you
The pleasure was all mine
I'm afraid that I didn't get your name
Actually you did! But Dad will do just fine



Ben Andrews and Deena Rizkalla are hosting virtual concerts to help professional musicians in Nashville impacted by the coronavirus, and keep live music alive and well.

At 80, Russian Great—Grandmother Fired Up by Passion for Ice Hockey

BEREZNIK, Russia—When 80-year-old Valentina Fyodorova spotted a group of children skating across a fresh sheet of ice, she was determined to give it a try herself.

The former school principal was keen on keeping fit but had never shot a puck, let alone laced up a pair of skates.

She could have never dreamed that she would become the captain of a senior women's hockey team in her village in northwestern Russia. “It was a little scary at first, but when we started to play we forgot everything,” said Fyodorova, who learned how to skate at 79. “We forgot our fear and that we are old.”

Fyodorova is the captain and oldest member of “Ustyanochka,” a team composed mostly of women in their 50s and 60s who train three times a week in the gym and on the ice.

Fyodorova, who has three great-grandchildren, said that although she is much slower and less skillful than many younger players, she enjoys the camaraderie with her teammates.

“She leads by example. By skating and playing hockey, she shows that even at that age, you can do anything,” said Maria Onolbayeva, a former Russian national team player and Olympian who coaches Fyodorova's team.

On her red jersey, Fyodorova proudly wears number 80. It is not a homage

to one of Russia's hockey greats, but a tribute to her age.

All her teammates, in fact, wear their age on their backs.

“We are old people. We aren't embarrassed to show our age,” she chuckled. “Let everybody see it.”

Fyodorova had initially been scared to fall and break a bone, but gradually felt stronger and more confident on her skates the longer she spent on the ice.

Now skating has become second nature and she hopes to keep playing hockey as long as she can.

“After playing on the ice, you feel like you have so much more energy,” said Fyodorova who also finds time to chair the village council. “You feel lighter. You don't feel those 80 years at all.”

By Eugenia Novozhenina
From Reuters

Fyodorova poses for a photo at a locker room before a match.



REUTERS/EUGENIA NOVOZHENINA

AN ENGAGEMENT TO REMEMBER

Carly Boyd reveals her engagement ring to her grandfather, who is in isolation at his assisted living facility

LORI C. SUMMERS

Amid the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus, commonly known as novel coronavirus, a woman

unable to visit her grandfather in isolation at his assisted-living facility appeared at his window with important news. Through the glass, she revealed an engagement ring. Photos of the touching moment were taken by staff and went viral on Facebook.

When Carly Boyd's boyfriend proposed on the shores of Myrtle Beach, in Tucson, Arizona, she was over the moon. “I was very, very ecstatic about it! I cried, he cried,” she recalled, per KOLD News 13.

After sharing the life-changing news to friends and family, she and her father went to the Premier Living & Rehab Center, where her grandfather, Sheldon, lived. Upon arrival, they were told the nursing home had to restrict visitation so as to protect residents from the ongoing health crisis.

However, the staff came up with an inventive idea for the young woman to be able to see her grandfather. “They said, ‘Well, we can walk around [the building] and we can pull the blinds up, and you can tell him [through the window] and I was like, ‘Yes, I would love to!’” Boyd explained, per KOLD News 13.

The bride-to-be told media that being able to personally relay to her grandfather the news of her engagement meant the world to her. Photos taken by the nurses from inside the home show Boyd revealing her new engagement ring to him. One tearful picture shows the moment when both family members press their hands against the glass.

“I got really emotional and really sad, and I just put my hand on the window, and he put his there too. I just told him I love him, and he said ‘I love you too and I hope to see you soon’ like really see you,” she said.

Meanwhile, amid the upheaval caused by the CCP virus, commu-

nities in other parts of the country have shown support for their elderly citizens in lockdown.

In Dane County in Wisconsin, residents have put together a Facebook group for people who want to volunteer to pick up groceries, prescriptions, and run general errands for elderly neighbors in isolation.

“I just told him I love him, and he said ‘I love you too and I hope to see you soon’ like really see you.”

Carly Boyd

While in Wichita, Kansas, members of the local First United Methodist Church have been helping older residents in quarantine by providing them with food and other living essentials.

The Facebook post of Boyd and her grandfather went viral, garnering some 173,000 shares. Over 10,000 people commented and expressed how touched they were, with many sharing their own heart-breaking virus-related isolation stories.

One comment read, “Y'all this breaks my heart!!! At least they can see their loved ones through the window.”

Another noted, “I'm totally ugly crying right now! I went from smiling at the first pic to instantly crying when I saw them touching hands through the window, and the sadness on her face.”

The Epoch Times refers to the novel coronavirus, which causes the disease COVID-19, as the CCP virus because the Chinese Communist Party's coverup and mismanagement allowed the virus to spread throughout China and create a global pandemic.

EVENY ATAMANENKO/SHUTTERSTOCK



A simple, predictable bedtime routine is a good habit to embrace.

Sleep Tight: Securing a Good Night's Sleep for Your Child

A conversation with pediatric sleep consultant Tracie Kesatie

BARBARA DANZA

Sometimes it can be hard to convince our children that sleep is a beautiful thing. (Come on, kids!) Sleep is very important for the healthy development of children, however—not to mention the sanity of everyone they live with.

To understand children's sleep needs better, I spoke to pediatric sleep consultant Tracie Kesatie. Here's what she said.

The Epoch Times: We all know that sleep plays a critical role in our overall health and well-being. Why is good sleep especially important for children?

Tracie Kesatie: One of the many incredible things that happen while we sleep is that our brain processes and consolidates information. For children who are learning language skills, motor skills, and social skills at a rapid pace, getting adequate sleep is especially important.

Sleep supports a healthy and strong immune system, which is even more important for school-aged children. Too little sleep will lead to a less-than-stellar immune system and leave a child more susceptible to viruses and illnesses.

The Epoch Times: How does a child's sleep needs change throughout the different stages of his or her growth?

Ms. Kesatie: Newborns 0-3 months of age sleep anywhere from 14-17 hours during a 24-hour period; however, they typically can only stay awake for short periods of time (1-3 hours) between sleeping.

At around 6-8 weeks of age, I recommend creating a simple bedtime routine, which is a series of soothing, predictable activities that you do in the same order every night before bed. For example, a warm bath, infant massage, nurse or bottle and then a bedtime book. You also want to support them falling asleep at nighttime by keeping the environment quiet, relaxing, and lights dimmed.

Babies 4-12 months of age need between 12-16 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period. Sleep associations (walking, holding, rocking, and feeding to sleep) can be incredibly helpful during the first couple of months of life, but as little ones get older these associations can actually become problematic. During this period is when I recommend that my clients practice allowing their baby to fall asleep independently vs. placing their baby in the crib when they're already asleep.

Creating these healthy sleep habits early can be incredibly helpful. Toddlers from 1-2 years need 11-14 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period. Toddlers tend to be very busy and they don't always want to slow down or stop what they are doing, especially to go to sleep. Allowing your toddler to have ample wind-down time prior to nap time and bedtime can be essential. Furthermore, having a longer, more soothing bedtime routine can also help transition your busy little one from awake time to sleep time.

Preschoolers 3-5 years need 10-13 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period. At this age, children love to test boundaries and limits, so having clear, firm rules when it comes to sleep, particularly bedtime, is incredibly helpful.

School-aged children 6-12 years of age need 9-12 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period. At this age, children should already

have an established bedtime routine in place. The child's room should be dark, cool, and quiet and without a TV, computer, or tablet. You also want to watch for dietary habits, like consuming food or beverages with caffeine or lots of sugar, which can interrupt sleep.

The Epoch Times: What are some common mistakes parents make regarding bedtime routines for young children?

Ms. Kesatie: One of the most common mistakes that parents make with bedtime routines is not staying consistent. Children thrive with predictability and routine, and the more consistent you are with their bedtime routine, the better.

The Epoch Times: What about children who just don't want to go to sleep? When parents are engaged in a nightly struggle with their children around bedtime, what's the first thing you suggest they do to begin to reverse course?

Ms. Kesatie: The first thing I suggest in these situations is to stop the negotiations. The more you react, engage, and talk, the longer it will take your child to settle down to sleep.

The Epoch Times: What can parents do to support the changing sleep needs of adolescents and teens?

Ms. Kesatie: Adolescents need around 8-10 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period. However, they are more likely to sleep less if they have screens and electronics in their bedroom. The blue light emitted from devices such as TVs, tablets, phones, computers, etc. can actually impede the production of melatonin, thereby making it more difficult to fall asleep.

A lot of screen time also tends to lead to later bedtimes, longer sleep onset, and less sleep overall. I recommend turning off screens at least one (ideally two) hours before bed and not keeping tablets, phones, or TVs in the bedroom. If homework needs to be done on a computer or laptop in the late evening, then wearing blue light-blocking glasses can be helpful.

Furthermore, teenagers' natural sleep patterns shift towards later bedtimes and later morning wake up times, which can become problematic when you consider the early wake-up times required for most schools. Making sleep a priority and occasionally taking naps can help.

When children grow into adolescents, they can begin to manage and commit to their own pre-bed routine. Bedtime routines do not have to be complicated and can include a bath or shower, a warm cup of caffeine-free tea, brushing teeth, reading a book, and listening to a meditation, which if repeated daily, will create a routine that will help their body effectively transition from awake time to sleep time.

The Epoch Times: What do you wish more parents understood about sleep?

Ms. Kesatie: Circadian rhythm is the fancy term of the sleep-wake cycle. I wish more parents understood that this cycle is regulated by light and dark, and these rhythms take time to develop. Going outside and spending some time in the fresh air and sunshine (weather permitting) each morning can not only be a mood booster, but it can also help you sleep better at night by regulating your circadian rhythm.

At nighttime, the two important things to keep in mind are 1) making sure the room is cool enough and 2) making sure the room is dark enough (especially if you live in an apartment or urban area). Custom-made blackout shades are the best way to eliminate all light pollution.

Armchair Culture: There's No Need to Isolate Yourself From Great Art and History

LORRAINE FERRIER

Forces beyond your control can take away everything that you possess except one thing, your freedom to choose how you will respond to the situation. —Viktor E. Frankl, Holocaust survivor

Our normal way of life is being challenged right now. With many of us being told to stay at home in order to reduce the spread of the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus, some of us may feel as if our world has suddenly shrunk. We may have had to postpone precious events and vacations with family and friends.

But challenge can be the birthplace of creativity.

With the prospect of museums and art galleries being shut through April and beyond, why not use this as a chance to explore art and culture online. Of course, there's absolutely no substitute for seeing a great work of art in person, but many world-class museums and art institutes offer glorious peeks into their collections: from curator talks to in-depth object blogs to interactive online exhibitions.

If culture is an important part of your life, you can still plan those visits from the comfort of your armchair, as these websites testify.

Step Back in Time to 18th-Century America

"The greater part of our happiness or misery depends upon our dispositions and not upon our circumstances," Martha Washington said.

You can learn more about Mrs. Washington through the Colonial Williamsburg website, along with the many people who were integral to

(Right) Temple of Bel, cella entrance, circa 1799, by Jean-Baptiste Réville and Pierre Gabriel Berthault after Louis-François Cassas. Etching from "Voyage Pittoresque de la Syrie, de la Phœnicie, de la Palestine, et de la Basse Egypte, Paris, vol. 1, pl. 46. Platemark: 18 inches by 11.4 inches.



Miniature portrait of Martha Washington, circa 1776, by Charles Willson Peale.

the founding of America. The website is a great resource for a poignant time in American history. You can explore the timeline of events from the Stamp Act to the Revolution, for example, or explore how colonial Americans lived by learning about their food and crafts. There's the recipe for Martha Washington's favorite "Great Cake" and video tutorials for colonial crafts such as how to make a spring wreath, to name a couple.

To find out more about the exhibition, visit ColonialWilliamsburg.org

Discover Michelangelo's Drawings and the Ruins of Ancient Syria

On the Getty website, you can experience a whole world of art. Of note are the over-

views of current exhibitions at the Getty Center, such as "Michelangelo: Mind of the Master,"

which generously includes a free online audio tour of 17 of the more than two dozen drawings on display. According to the audio tour introduction, Michelangelo used his drawings to prepare paintings, and to create and explore his ideas. But only 600 of his drawings exist, as he burned many due to his fiercely competitive nature.

Engravings and photographs, from the 18th and 19th century respectively, are curated together in "The Legacy of Ancient Palmyra," an exclusively online exhibition by The Getty Research Institute. The exhibits pay tribute to ancient Syria before war destroyed the caravan city of Palmyra.

French artist and architect Louis-François Cassas drew the ancient site in 1785.



These illustrations were made into incredible etchings in his 1799-1800 publication "Voyage Pittoresque de la Syrie, de la Phœnicie, de la Palestine, et de la Basse Egypte." These "panoramic etchings conform to the voyage pittoresque tradition, inviting the viewer to simultaneously marvel at the grandeur of antiquity and lament its inevitable decay," according to the website. Then in 1864, French photographer Louis Vignes

captured the site on film.

To find out more about these exhibitions, visit Getty.edu

See Northern Renaissance Masterpieces Up Close

The Closer To Van Eyck website enables us to see the minutest of details in nearly all of the paintings of 15th-century painter Jan van Eyck and some of his followers. Considered a master of the Northern Renaissance, van Eyck revolu-

tionized oil painting by painting layer upon layer of translucent glazes, which allowed for exceptional blending and luminosity, where the brushwork is hard to see.

Many world class museums and art institutes offer glorious peeks into their collections: from curator talks to in-depth object blogs to interactive online exhibitions.

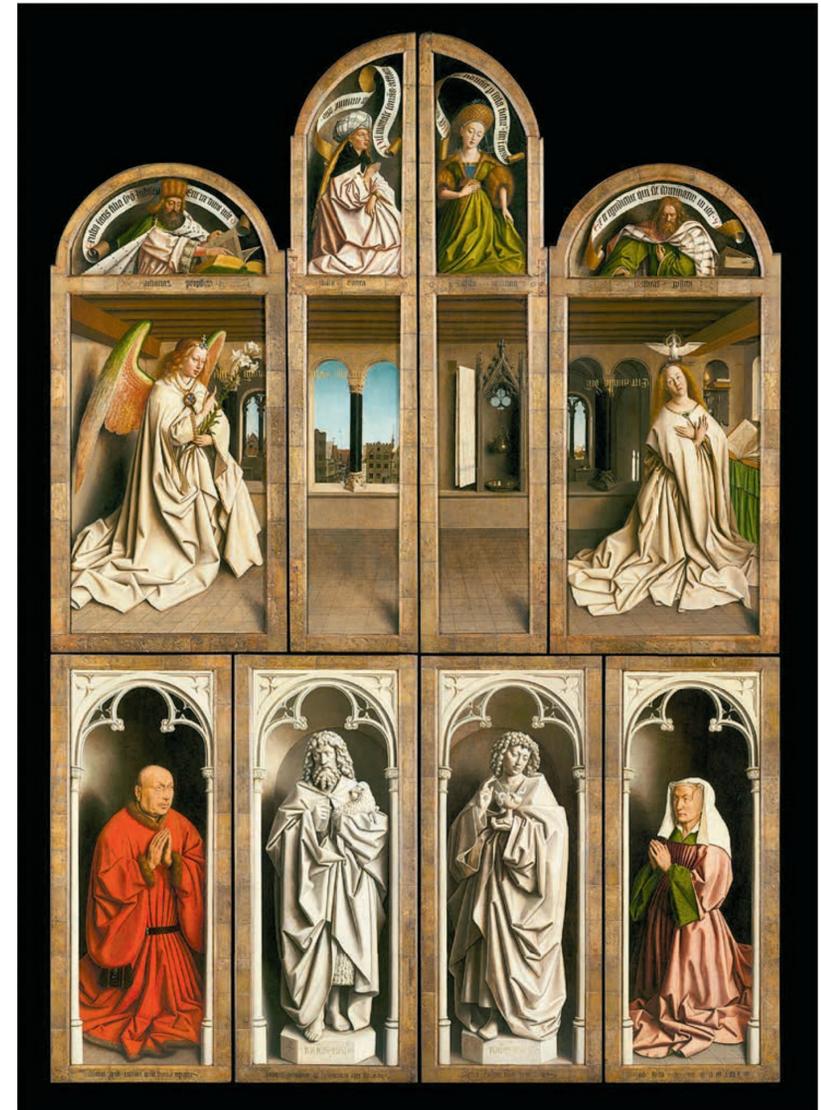
On the website, you can control what you see by zooming in or out of the high-resolution images, so much so that you can see the cracked oil paint on the exquisitely painted wood panels. Alongside each artwork are details about the piece.

Van Eyck's "The Ghent Altarpiece" can be seen before, during, and after its recent restoration, although the upper register of the opened altarpiece is yet to be restored.

A copy of the lost painting "Head of Christ" and an illuminated manuscript called the Turin-Milan Hours are among van Eyck's other works. Some of the paintings on the website can be seen as 3D objects: for example, the altarpieces in their frames.

To find out more about the exhibition, visit CloserToVanEyck.KIKIRPA.be

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Outer panels of the closed altarpiece: "The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb," 1432, by Jan (Maeseik?), circa 1390-Bruges, 1441) and Hubert van Eyck (Maeseik, circa 1366/1370-Ghent, 1426). Oil on panel. Saint Bavo's Cathedral in Ghent, Belgium.

REACHING WITHIN: WHAT TRADITIONAL ART OFFERS THE HEART

Remembering to Consider Others in Times of Suffering



Through composition, subdued color, and human emotion, Bouguereau has created a mood that is haunting because of the pain it depicts.

"The First Mourning" 1888, by William Bouguereau. Oil on Canvas; 79 3/4 inches by 99 inches. National Museum of Fine Arts, Argentina.

ERIC BESS

As the world responds to the growing concern about the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus, commonly known as the novel coronavirus, I am led to question my own understanding of compassion.

What is compassion? What does it mean to care directly or indirectly for those who suffer? During our current times, the significance of this question cannot be overstated. I look to art for insights.

A Mourning Artist

William Bouguereau, a French academic painter, was one of the most gifted artists of the 19th century. He was also resolute in his desire to be good at his craft. In his early career, he spent long spans of time attempting to master the complexities of color and form, and in 1876, after 12 failed attempts, he was elected to the French Institute's prestigious Académie des Beaux-Arts.

Bouguereau's hard work and determination paid off for him: He often won competitions at salon and international exhibitions. He was elected president of several different organizations, including first president of the Society of French Artists, the benevolent association founded by Baron Taylor to help less-fortunate artists, and the alumni association of the college in Pons.

Despite his many successes, how-

ever, Bouguereau also endured many hardships. He had five children with his first wife, and four of them died from illnesses. Even his wife died, soon after giving birth to their fifth child.

In the book titled "William Bouguereau: His Life and Works," authors Damien Bartoli and Fred Ross suggest that Bouguereau dealt with these hardships by "[re-immersing] himself in his art, his only effective palliative against grief."

'The First Mourning'

Bouguereau poured his pain and grief into his art, expressed by way of his pencil and brush. His sketchbook became a diary made by way of images. One of these images later became "The First Mourning."

Kara Ross, co-chairman and chief operating officer of the Art Renewal Center, says this about "The First Mourning":

"The image is truly heart wrenching, causing the viewer to feel a great sense of compassion for the grieving couple. ... "First Mourning" was painted directly after the death of [Bouguereau's] second son. This piece is well titled because [for Judeo-Christians], it is the first time a human has had to suffer the loss of a loved one."

"The First Mourning" depicts the moment in which Adam and Eve find the lifeless body of their son Abel, who was slain by his brother Cain over a sacrifice. Bouguereau

organized the composition like a classical "pietà"—an Italian word that translates to "compassion" or "pity." Figures are organized within a triangle—the most stable compositional structure—and a figure sits with another figure sprawled across the seated figure's lap. This way of organizing a pieta is clearly seen as far back as the High Renaissance with Michelangelo's famous sculpture.

There is tension, however, between the triangular composition and the emotion displayed by the figures. The contortion of Abel's body also adds to this tension. Arranging the figures in this way has allowed Bouguereau to create a sense of movement within the stable, triangular composition. We are meant to recognize the solemn nature of the event through the triangle but feel the pain of the event through Bouguereau's masterful depiction of human emotion through body language.

Bouguereau also muted the colors, neutralizing their intensity. The gray smoke from the sacrificial altar in the right side of the background appears to fill and dominate the entire sky, and even envelopes the figures. The background and the use of subdued colors reinforces the solemnity of the event.

Compassion for Suffering

This painting makes me feel the pain of Adam and Eve, the pain that comes with losing a loved one. In this sense, Bouguereau has accomplished, at least for me, the task of a pieta: compassion. I feel compassion for the suffering Adam and Eve endured and the great losses Bouguereau experienced.

Through composition, subdued color, and human emotion, Bouguereau has created a mood that is haunting because of the pain it depicts, a pain that has been universally experi-

enced from the beginning of human history.

So what is compassion? It may not be something that can be completely described in words, so I have no absolute answer to this question. I think that part of its nature is a willingness to consider others, to put oneself in another's shoes, and to act in such a way as to cause as little harm as possible. Why? People are already suffering. Everyone is suffering. There is no reason to add more suffering to the world due to a lack of consideration.

It's easy to look at someone else's successes and come to the determination that they need less compassion. If we only look at Bouguereau's artistic successes, for example, we'd miss the fact that he suffered greatly from the deaths of four of his children and his first wife. If we remain open-minded, we might also determine that his suffering didn't stop there.

This painting reminds me that suffering isn't a competition. Life isn't a contest about who suffers more. No one wants to suffer, yet everyone does. Suffering is real, and everyone who suffers—irrespective of their social class, economic class, gender,

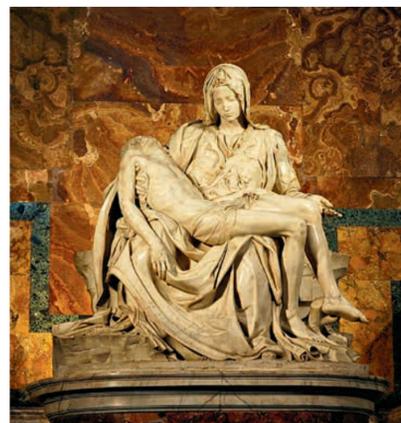
race, and so on—is deserving of consideration and compassion.

As I navigate this period of the CCP virus pandemic, I am reminded to consider others. Some of us are not sick or in need, but some are. Unnecessarily traveling and panic-buying is putting others at risk. I need to be able to take care of myself and my family during these trying times, but I also need to consider that others need to do the same.

The Epoch Times refers to the novel coronavirus, which causes the disease COVID-19, as the CCP virus because the Chinese Communist Party's coverup and mismanagement allowed the virus to spread throughout China and create a global pandemic.

Art has an incredible ability to point to what can't be seen so that we may ask "What does this mean for me and for everyone who sees it?" "How has it influenced the past and how might it influence the future?" "What does it suggest about the human experience?" These are some of the questions we explore in our series Reaching Within: What Traditional Art Offers the Heart.

Eric Bess is a practicing representational artist. He is currently a doctoral student at the Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts (IDSVA).



Michelangelo's "Pieta" housed in St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican.

A Coronavirus Emergency Plan for Paying Your Bills

NEW YORK—Lives are on hold all over the world as we distance ourselves socially to contain the coronavirus, but bills still pile up.

Some countries, like Italy and France, already enacted mortgage and rent relief, but U.S. measures are still being worked out for the most part, aside from a waiver for student loan interest.

Now is not the time for lectures on the value of having an emergency fund. "You can't just go pick up a side hustle right now," said Erin Lowry, 30, author of "Broke Millennial," a financial advice book that attempted to prepare her cohort for a rainy day such as now.

Many people, regardless of whether they can telecommute, have had their hours cut, have lost their jobs or are facing some kind of financial crisis. We are at the point of making the best worst choices.

Here are some ways to prioritize.

1. Assess the damage
First thing, Lowry said: "You have to face your numbers."

Do not think of this as budgeting, because the situation is changing so fast you cannot really think long-term. Take a breath and just deal with this month.

What bills are due? How much cash do you have on hand?

2. Stall fixed debt

Your lenders and banks have probably already sent you a very sympathetic email about how they are there for help.

"We want to share some ways we are here to help you in this current environment," Citibank says on its coronavirus web page currently.

Take them up on it.

"Consumers who are the most proactive and say, 'Here's where I stand,' will get a lot better response than those who

do nothing," said Lynnette Khalvani-Cox, CEO of AskTheMoneyCoach.com and author of "Zero Debt."

This goes for home loans, auto loans, student loans and utility payments.

We are all on spending austerity plans because of social distancing.

3. Prioritize your needs

If it comes down to it, prioritize housing, because you need to keep a roof over your head, Khalvani-Cox advised. Owners will get a lot more leeway than renters, because it takes a long time to get through a foreclosure process.

Renters, especially those dealing with a small landlord they may know personally, may feel more pressure to pay. Lowry said the key is to know the rights in your state, so you are not bullied by misinformation, like a landlord saying they can change the locks or throw out all of your stuff if you cannot pay.

"Landlords do not want property sitting empty right now, so see if you can work out a deal, like maybe you can pay 25 percent," Lowry said.

During the 2008-2009 recession, Lowry encountered a woman who prioritized her car payment over rent, because she needed transportation to get to work. Her fallback was that she could sleep in her car. "That's something that a lot of people are going to face now," said Lowry.

4. Ride your credit cards
No travel, no restaurants, no shopping

sprees at the mall, no online shopping impulse buys.

We are all on spending austerity plans because of social distancing.

But there are some essentials you might have to front if you have job loss or reduced income.

If you do not already have an adequate credit card, there could be a delay in approval and delivery of a card. But there are some credit cards you can get right away, depending on your financial fitness, like Amazon's and Apple's cards, said Matt Schulz, chief industry analyst at CompareCards.com. You can use those on your phone for mobile quick pay or for online purchases.

"With credit card debt, the advice is always to pay more than the minimum, but when it gets down to it and all you can do is pay the minimum, that's not the end of the world," Schulz said.

The key is not to miss a payment completely. You will face fees and go into a penalty interest rate, above the already sky-high average of about 16 percent even after the Federal Reserve's latest rate cut. In a recent survey, Credit-Sesame.com found that one out of five Americans missed a payment of some sort in the past 12 months. The average missed payment was just \$38, but that still dipped a person's credit score by 45 points.

"When there is financial crisis and uncertainty, managing cash and credit is going to be critical," said Adrian Nazari, CEO of Credit Sesame. "You need to sort out the least bad option."

By Beth Pinsky

From Reuters

Your Money: As US Unemployment Claims Surge, Know Your Status

NEW YORK—Applications for unemployment insurance are skyrocketing across the United States. We are only just getting started, as more businesses and institutions shut down due to coronavirus fears.

John Tirpak, executive director of the Unemployment Law Project of Washington State, has heard mostly from people with customer-facing jobs like restaurant and airline workers. "The impact of this will be disproportionately on the people who are struggling the most," Tirpak said.

Unemployment checks can help workers stay afloat financially, but the application process is daunting, restrictions are many, and rules are in flux.

Here is what you need to know about filing a claim, depending on your employment status:

"If you are fully laid off from a W-2 job Go immediately to your state's department of labor unemployment website. Washington State, where unemployment benefits are considered very progressive, has a page set up just for job loss related to COVID-19 (<https://esd.wa.gov/newsroom/covid-19>).

Every state has different requirements for how long you need to have been employed in order to qualify, how much money you will receive and the duration of the unemployment benefit.

These rules are also constantly changing as the federal government considers relief bills and individual states are passing their updates. For instance, the maximum mandated federal coverage is 26 weeks, but that will likely be extended.

"If hours were reduced from a W-2 job Try to apply for benefits to make up some of the difference between your usual wages and what you are making now, Tirpak suggested. "It won't be 100 percent, but there's no reason to quit at this time. It's good to preserve jobs," Tirpak added.

"If you do not feel safe in your job If you are called into work and do not feel it is reasonable to go in, you are ill, you are caring for somebody who is ill or you are caring for a child, you may qualify for emergency benefits.

"States are really trying to figure it out," Evermore said, noting that California and New York have been well ahead of the curve so far.

In general, if you qualify for unemployment benefits in any capacity, you could also cite safety considerations if you wanted to refuse a job interview, even if you are facing state requirements that you be ready and able to take another job. It is difficult right now to look for work in person and drop off applications, obviously.

"If you are a gig worker for a major company Drivers for services like Uber and Lyft may have a claim for unemployment because they should be considered employees, Tirpak said. His non-profit organization helps workers file claims and then represents them if they are denied, so he is intending to fight for gig workers to get benefits.

Unemployment checks can help workers stay afloat financially, but the application process is daunting, restrictions are many, and rules are in flux.

"If you are fully freelance There may be help coming for independent contractors too, said Michele Evermore, senior policy analyst at the National Employment Law Project.

Disaster Unemployment Assistance could apply to self-employed individuals. This kicks in after regular unemployment insurance gets exhausted for regular recipients, but it would apply faster if you do not qualify for that. There may also eventually be stimulus checks or other national benefits available.

"I think people are trying to do the right things. Some states are just slower because they haven't felt affected yet," Evermore said. Evermore recently published a paper questioning if state unemployment agencies are able to handle recessions. The answer was no. (<https://bit.ly/33nGqnN>)

"States have cut the number of weeks covered, at the same time increased the requirements and are denying claims more often," Evermore said.

By Beth Pinsky

From Reuters



FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES

From "Flower Fables"

by Louisa May Alcott

As the first ray of sunlight stole in, he was awakened by sweet music. It was the morning song of the bees.

"Awake! awake! for the earliest gleam Of golden sunlight shines On the rippling waves, that brightly flow Beneath the flowering vines.

Awake! awake! for the low, sweet chant Of the wild-birds' morning hymn Comes floating by on the fragrant air, Through the forest cool and dim;

Then spread each wing, And work, and sing, Through the long, bright sunny hours; O'er the pleasant earth We journey forth,

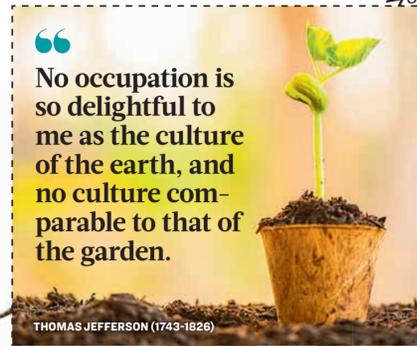
For a day among the flowers."

"Awake! awake! for the summer wind Hath bidden the blossoms unclose, Hath opened the violet's soft blue eye, And wakened the sleeping rose.

And lightly they wave on their slender stems Fragrant, and fresh, and fair, Waiting for us, as we singing come To gather our honey-dew there.

Then spread each wing, And work, and sing, Through the long, bright sunny hours; O'er the pleasant earth We journey forth,

For a day among the flowers!"



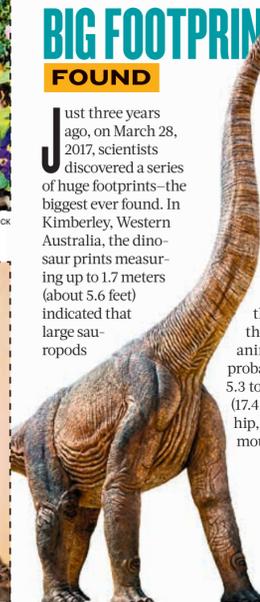
THOMAS JEFFERSON (1743-1826)

This Week in History

BIG FOOTPRINTS FOUND

Just three years ago, on March 28, 2017, scientists discovered a series of huge footprints—the biggest ever found. In Kimberley, Western Australia, the dinosaur prints measuring up to 1.7 meters (about 5.6 feet) indicated that large sauropods

had traversed the land more than 130 million years ago. Paleontologist Dr. Steve Salisbury said, "Most people would be able to fit inside tracks that big, and they indicate animals that are probably around 5.3 to 5.5 meters (17.4–18 feet) at the hip, which is enormous."



By Aidan Danza, age 13

ANIMALS OF THE AMAZON RAIN FOREST

Trees so tall and thick you can barely see the sun. Rain every day. Animals that boast gaudy colors seen nowhere else in the world. Bugs everywhere.

This could describe any rain forest in the world (and yes, there are quite a few) but the most famous is the one found in the tropics of South America, surrounding the Amazon River and its tributaries. Let's look at a couple of animals found in the Amazon Rain Forest.



AMAZON RIVER DOLPHIN

Dolphins? In a rain forest? No, I haven't gone insane. These pink dolphins swim around not in the ocean, but in the Amazon River.

Their long snouts turn from gray to pink with age, so an older dolphin dons a soft pink color. Amazon River dolphins eat fish, crabs, and turtles. Sometimes, it even teams up with the giant otter and the tucuxi, another freshwater dolphin.

It can swim up to fourteen miles per hour, but normally swims at the slow speed of one or two miles per hour. Like other dolphins, it is very playful, often playing with live fish or turtles, which they would normally eat. It can be eaten by caiman (an alligator-like reptile) bull sharks, and sometimes an anaconda or jaguar.

BLUE AND YELLOW MACAW

A huge parrot, the blue and yellow macaw is blue on top and yellow on the bottom. It lives in the forest's canopy in northern South America, and is also quite popular as a pet, albeit a very loud one. Macaws mate for life, and live high in tall trees in pre-made cavities, such as a woodpecker hole. Their hatchlings are blind, featherless, and completely helpless. When the chicks are very young, the male brings the female food, and she, in turn, regurgitates to the chicks. After their first week, the male feeds the chicks as well.

These macaws can live for 50 years in the wild as well as in captivity. They are often found in flocks but also in pairs, and communicate very loudly, with screeches. They eat seeds, nuts, and fruits and crack them open with their bills, while they hold it with their highly opposable feet.

Most of their predators are raptors that attack while the parrots are flying.



Now Is Not the Time to Stop Saving for Retirement

NEW YORK—When you see soda on sale at the supermarket, do you run screaming into the parking lot in a panic? Or do you buy six?

This is the analogy Peter Palion, a certified financial planner in New York, uses to calm worried clients about volatility in the stock market and keep them on their slow and steady retirement savings path.

While logical, it is a hard sell for many. As the market drops precipitously, it may seem like you are throwing good money after bad to keep contributing a percentage of your income to a 401(k) or a similar workplace retirement plan when you have an urgent need for cash. But as we learned from the recession in 2008-2009, stopping regular contributions and pulling out of stocks left investors further behind than those who stayed the course.

"If you're still getting a paycheck, what's the point of stopping contributions to get a little more cash? It's not like your cost of living is going up—your mortgage and utilities, are, for the most part, still very close to amount you paid last month," Palion said.

Ceasing contributions might not give you as much extra cash as you are expecting anyway, because it increases your tax bill. You also miss out on a matching contribution from your employer, which is essentially free money.

So far, between the start of 2020 and March 15, Fidelity Investments has seen 4 percent of its 401(k) account holders decrease their 401(k) contributions and 2 percent stop contributing completely. There were 7 percent who actually increased their savings rate during the period.

Those numbers are not out of line with normal seasonal behavior so far, according to Meghan Murphy, vice president of thought leadership at Fidelity, who noted that it is still too early to see trends related to the coronavirus crisis.

A Look Back

What we can do is look back at what happened during the recession in 2008-2009 and track how people fared based on their behavior.

Teresa Ghilarducci, director of the Schwartz Center for Economic Policy Analysis at the New School for Social



Research in New York, did a detailed study on outcomes that showed the negative impact on those who stopped or lessened their contributions during that time period.

What we can do is look back at what happened during the recession in 2008-2009 and track how people fared based on their behavior.

People who got out were, in essence, selling low and buying high, the opposite of that age-old investing advice. By the time the storm passed, some 64 percent of higher-income workers who were able to stay invested and ride it out, came out ahead in the end.

Lower-income workers were more likely to have stopped or lowered their contributions, and tended to have faced a temporary job loss. They contributed at lower rates overall, so had less in company matching funds, and also were in less aggressive investment mixes.

This disparity in results happens because getting out of stocks to miss the bad days also means missing the

good days. After the last recession, Massachusetts-based certified financial planner Karen Van Voorhis had new clients come to her for help getting their retirement savings back in shape.

"Even as late as 2012, they'd come to me and say, 'I'm all in cash, when's a good time to get back in.' And I'd think, looking back, 2009 would have been a good time," Van Voorhis said.

The biggest danger to retirement savers is for those with job loss who not only stop contributing but also cash out their 401(k) balances instead of rolling them over into other plans.

First of all, you face a huge tax bill. Secondly, unless you are forced to cash out of your workplace plan, it is best to just leave things where they are in today's market. And most importantly, you deplete funds that are impossible to replace.

Ghilarducci's advice to people now: Act like a rich person.

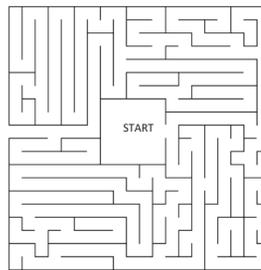
"People with assets have slower long-term thinking because of their economic position, and at times like this, they make out like bandits," she said.

So if you change your thinking from panic to thinking two years from now, you can go out and buy those bargains. "Don't use your rollover check for cornflakes. Use it to buy assets," Ghilarducci said.

By Beth Pinsky

From Reuters

AMAZING ESCAPES!



USE THE FOUR NUMBERS IN THE CORNERS, AND THE OPERANDS (+, -, AND X) to build an equation to get the solution in the middle. There may be more than one "unique" solution but, there may also be "equivalent" solutions. For example: 6 + (7 X 3) + 1 = 28 and 1 + (7 X 3) + 6 = 28

Easy puzzle 1



Solution For Easy 1

$$2 - 5 \times (6 + 9)$$

Medium puzzle 1



Solution for Medium 1

$$6 \div 0.2 \times (2 - 9)$$

Hard puzzle 1



Solution for Hard 1

$$4 \times 8 - 2 \times 82$$



Across

- Stir-fry tidbit (7)
- Bluto's bane (7)
- Shooter's ammo (4)
- Salad ingredient (11)
- A popping good treat! (4)

Down

- A yellowish veggie (8)
- "Swiss" veggie (5)
- It can be curly, Tuscan or Russian Red (4)
- Jalapeno, for one (9)
- Stew ingredient (7)
- These grow tied up to a stick (9)
- Like #9 down, but without the stick (9)
- "Ants on a log" log (6)
- Often pickled (5)

- Moussaka ingredient (8)
- Potato ____ soup (4)
- Colorful brassica (10)
- They grow on a bush (10)
- We'll need these in October! (8)

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