

Ten Tips on Navigating Global Grief

We are experiencing grief right now—global grief. The words "pandemic", "coronavirus", "COVID-19" and "isolation" are wreaking havoc on our world and changing life as we know it ... TEMPORARILY!

This is definitely a time of uncertainty and it is indeed frightening. That, we cannot change. So what CAN we do??

1. **Acknowledge and allow all feelings**, yours and of those around you. It's certainly understandable to be struggling with all that is happening. It's okay to not be okay.
2. **Be informed but not obsessed**. Seek out daily information from a reliable source. Don't spend your entire day being inundated with scary statistics. This will not serve you or anyone else well.
3. **Follow the guidelines stringently**. Know you are doing your best to protect yourself and others. Be the best example that you can be. If someone isn't doing what's right, let them know!
4. **Understand that what we are experiencing is grief**—global grief. And it can manifest itself in many different ways; sadness, depression, anger, fear, disorientation, irritability and the list goes on. It can hit us in ways we didn't foresee. It will be different for everyone. There is no right or wrong way to grieve. Allow yourself and others to feel what you and they feel, without judgement or trying to fix it. You can't fix grief, just allow it and it will dissipate in time.
5. **Re-frame the call to action**, from social isolation to what we need: social connection *and* physical distancing. Use your creativity and imagination to socially connect. We are so fortunate to have social media ways to video chat. We can visit face-to-face online. It is the next best thing to visiting in-person. Use it. Call old friends, people you haven't been in touch with. Now is the time to reconnect.



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6. **Catch your breath.** We are a society that is constantly on the go, over-stretched, ridiculously busy, trying to do it all and have it all. And now we have been forced to pause, to step off the treadmill. Can you see that there is opportunity in this? To get to things that we didn't have time for, have meaningful conversations? To reconnect?
7. **Spring clean.** Here again is the opportunity to de-clutter; mentally, physical, emotionally, spiritually. Get rid of stuff that is weighing you down. Let go of the little things.
8. **Fill your life with happy.** These are challenging times. Not only global grief, but the regular grief in life will continue as well; strained relationships, diagnosis, caregiving, financial stress etc. ... It has never been more important than now to find things that make you happy, to ask yourself, "am I happy?" And if the answer is "no", then what can you do to change that? What can you do now, at home, with your family or on your own that makes your heart sing? Singing, laughing, funny movies, great books, hilarious stories online, getting out in the sunshine, painting, journaling, etc. ... what CAN you do? Focus on that.
9. **Be the nicest person you know.** Easier said than done? Absolutely. But worth the effort, I'd say. Let go of the little things, walk away when you need to and check in with yourself frequently. Ask everyone to do the same and remember that this is all temporary. When you look back, how do you want to remember yourself in this crisis?
10. **Make random acts of kindness a part of your every day.** There is so much you can do to fuel the positive. It's already serious enough. Let's take time away from focusing on our own challenges and reach out to someone. Do something that would be meaningful for someone else. There are so many who are alone at this time, they would love to have people with them but cannot. Reach out.



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Some of the things I've seen:

- Children performing a “concert” from their porch for a lonely neighbor across the street
- Hearts in windows
- Beautiful inspiring words or funny memes posted on social media
- Neighbours in an apartment complex stepping out on their balcony every day at noon and singing together

We can learn from and support each other, fuel the positive and move forward together. Stay well and stay connected by *Just Showing Up!*

Yvonne 😊

