

Philo4Thought: Health + Wellness

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So here we are my dear friends, in the midst of a pandemic, navigating through it for our survival and here you are still making the time to read this piece... so for that I thank you and recognize your persistence and will to continue moving forward despite our continuous fight. You have already done half of the work by showing up here...

And you are in for a nice treat! So grab your *kafedaki* or frappe (and maybe some ice cubes to put into it if you are sitting outside) and simply sit in the sun for the next few minutes; while you soak in the sunlight from my heart to yours. May you feel the hope that lives within me flowing to you!

What day is it?

As I am writing this, I was reflecting on the fact that in my close circle and community here in the greater Philadelphia area I consistently hear the question, "What day is it?" This is something that has become more of a trend of a question to be asked it seems. With quarantine lasting for more than 3 months now the time has passed for us all inevitably but in what way and how for us? And when I personally hear the question I find that it makes me feel a sense of hopelessness, but we have the power to choose if we want to focus on that feeling or not. This is our power and we should cultivate our free will more in this sense too.

Let us take a moment collectively to ask ourselves not if we were doing enough during this time but rather if we were BEING enough for our souls and emotional well-being. There is truly no right way to feel during this testing time and many of us who have experienced the virus first hand and/or the impact of the severe symptoms from a loved family member are excused of all "expectations" we should be fulfilling.

It makes sense that within our mental health and wellness some of us are most certainly in a mindset of survival. Both those who have no idea what the virus is like directly and those who have seen the worst of it... I know that I can relate to this as well too and I still have my moments very much so at times. It is overwhelming entirely and scary. And I have to remind myself that God is more powerful than anything we can ever experience- that I know everything that is happening right now in the world is for a purpose (my faith definitely is displayed in my writing more times than not). So for those that are faithful or believe in a higher power like myself- I fervently encourage you to hone your faith and develop it now as well. It will only be a positive for you, this I promise. You will see how incredibly powerful you are more once you allow God to help you in your life.

Patience and what to do with it...

So we have been forced essentially to stay at home and wait this out. Some have handled it better than other and others not so much. But there is no right or wrong way to deal with a global pandemic (and I do wish to emphasize this again). This is a common theme at this point too. So how can we give ourselves a break and let our bodies and minds relax? Here's my 5 Steps that I stand by...

The first is to get up and step away from your phone!

Yep- that simple but also hard in the day and age we live in where we are all attached to our devices... There is a reason why I chose this step to be number one as well as it will have a beautiful domino

effect on the rest of my steps I lay out for you. Stepping away from your phone physically will literally enable you to fully come back into the present moment where you are and simply be. It is so necessary for us in this day and age where many things are constantly competing for our attention. And these are also steps that I use and highly condone in my own life!

The second is to pause when you are in the heat of a moment with yourself or with someone else and truly think before you respond. We are all conditioned in some kind of way to just give our response when really it would serve all of us better if we took those few moments to think about the content in our response- and whether or not it is worth saying. What I mean exactly by this is if the person is open to hearing an alternative perspective to their own or not and if it will help them in their endeavors.

The third is one of my personal favorites and is a breathing technique that I have integrated into my self-care routine religiously. My mentor taught me the practice and it instantaneously works for me...so if you are searching for something that you will see tangible results within minutes... this is it. Sit comfortably with your back against the chair or the wall. Adjust your posture and relax your shoulders. Now close your eyes if you wish as well and when you are ready take a deep breath in counting to 5 in your head. Then hold your breath for another 5 seconds in your mind. Lastly, breathe out fully for 5 seconds.

The fourth step is to simply allow yourself to have fun during this time. If we do this it will open more doors for us than we can even grasp. We will be in that “flow” state of mind and the effort will come more naturally to us when we sit down and put our heads down to finish our deadlines. We will therefore be more productive and produce our best work! The results will speak for themselves and I guarantee that you will finish the task at hand in less time than you were originally expecting it to take. We are human and not meant to deprive ourselves of releasing stress. When we do that it ends up having a more negative effect on us this long run. If we allow our minds to just decompress, breathe deeply, and surrender to the moment to enjoy who we are we will truly see how much more we will accomplish when we return to our work.

The fifth and final step is to remind yourself is that although we do not have control over many things we do have control over how we choose to see certain situations in our lives. How we choose to view a certain incident or past event in our life will very much play a role in our subconscious minds with how we may be tempted to see other events that will happen. We need to throw out the “victim mindset” and foster a “victory mindset”.