

Some Warm Fuzzy Thoughts From A Therapist Because We All Need It Right About Now

DR. LYNN IANNI SHARES SOME ADVICE FOR HOW TO GET
THROUGH THIS TOUGH TIME

When the world feels scary and the future seems uncertain, we're grateful to have some solid positivity from people like Dr. Lynn Ianni. She shared some comforting thoughts with us, and we felt it was just too good not to share.

After spending the weekend in semi-isolation and reflection, I want to send you all my heartfelt wishes for your physical and psychological health and provide some reassurance and strategies to manage this challenging, difficult time. You've already been inundated with practical measures, so I will try not to be redundant but instead just address and hopefully alleviate some of the psychological distress and emotionality inherent in a pandemic of this proportion.

1

It's totally ok to feel whatever you're feeling, so express your feelings in healthy and constructive ways. This is truly traumatic, but you can talk, write and exercise, and when you acknowledge uncomfortable feelings without judgement it is easier to release them. Just breathe and let them go like air flowing out with each exhale.

2

In order to stay calm in the face of chaos, acceptance of what one can and cannot do (i.e., the serenity prayer) helps to put things in perspective. Things will likely get worse before they get better, but this too shall pass.

3

You are probably already doing what you can to be cautious, make plans, and prepare, but please protect yourself not only from the virus, but from sources of unnecessary fear, including sensationalized and subjective "news" or media coverage.

4

Although we may be more isolated physically than we are used to, we are lucky to be able to maintain contact through the many modes available via current technology and will likely have more time than usual to do so! Keep in touch with those you love and remind yourself we're all in this together and we share our mutual desire to stay safe and to have this experience be behind us instead of present in all our lives.

5

Find the opportunities for growth within this challenge – read that book that's been gathering dust, learn something new, clean out your closet, take time to reflect, and prioritize being instead of busy-ness and doing.

6

Practice mindfulness in whatever form works best for you. One of my favorite exercises involves closing your eyes and repeating these words with each exhale of breath, starting with yourself and extending to others in ever-widening circles:

May my (your) heart be full of love and joy...

May my (your) life be filled with gratitude and abundance...

May I (you) be healed, physically, emotionally, and spiritually...

May I (you) be at peace with my (your) self and with the universe...

7

Remember, love and fear are mutually exclusive, so if you focus on loving and taking care of yourself and others, you will feel less helpless and more empowered, which will help you to both feel and stay safe.

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