**Live and Love Well**

In light of the ongoing corona virus pandemic, perhaps the words of C.S. Lewis (famed Oxford Professor and theologian) may inspire us to the first action of pulling togther as a people. He wrote an aritcle in 1947 about the looming threat of atomic war that most people were fearful of duirng the years following World War II. He goes on to say, “ if we were all going to be destroyed by an atomic bomb (replace atomic bomb with corona virus) let that “virus”, when it comes, find us doing sensible and human things: praying, working, teaching, reading, *listening to music, taking long walks, being charitable, being hospitable, talking to friends and neighbors (italics mine)*, playing games with family members and going about life in a generous and loving manner. Although fear and panic may arise among the masses, it may behoove one to take a proverbial deep breath and look at the realities of life through the lens of rationalism and love.

When a counseling client comes into an office, often times, emotional issues trump rational thought. The truth may be very present in the form of facts and data. However, emotionalism (trusting feelings in light of truth) adds to the anxiety and worry that accompany beliefs in those feelings. In order to restructure, or establish some emotional and rational equilibrium, the counselor helps the client see the irrational thinking about the events, caused by hyper-emotionalism, that is causing them some of their distress. In order to “combat” this anixety in beliefs that are not true, the counselor brings rational data to the table in hopes of creating a new paradigm of thinking that is more aligned with truth than feelings. What we are dealing with in regards to COVID 19 does in fact call for us to take prudent steps to safeguard our health and the health of those around us, but, as with the practice of our craft, we always act out of ration and facts.

In light of the uncertainties surrounding us, let us remind oursleves to live out of the noble, good, compassionate, true, generous and decent parts of our hearts and not give in to fear and anxiety that often robs our souls and weakens our wills to remain steadfast. Thomas Paine, during America’s fight for freedom in 1776, once said, “THESE are the times that try men's souls… *yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph*. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated”. Although this is not a fight for freedom, but a fight for our health and the world’s as a whole, let us consider living courageously and humbly with our fellow man.

These surely are times that are trying our souls. Remaining strong and vigilant through these hard times, will, perhaps in the end, make us stronger and better as individuals and as a nation. In the end, love well, since perfect love casts out all fears.

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